

## MESSAGE FROM THE ARCHIVIST

I sit down to write this note on the day of the groundbreaking for the new Harold and Bibby Alfond Center for Health Sciences. This marks a new chapter in the history of the osteopathic profession in New England. The construction of a new medical school building and the impending move of the College of Medicine to Portland has given me the opportunity to reflect on the several decades of work that made the creation of UNE COM possible. Informal discussions in the 1950s, negotiations with Northeastern University, a tragic night on Boston Common, and a fortuitous meeting of neighbors in Kennebunk all led to a small Franciscan College in Biddeford, Maine.

The New England Osteopathic Heritage Center continues to honor the men and women who advocated for the profession, built hospitals, and created the only osteopathic college in New England — all while practicing medicine. This past year we were able to digitize several collections. The Gene Yunoschot, Ph.D., collection includes a variety of records from the early years of the school. The Stanley Kimball, D.O., collection documents the osteopathic profession in the 20th century in Massachusetts and includes a variety of records from Kimball's aunt, Anna Tinkham, D.O. Both collections can be viewed at our digital repository [dune.une.edu/neohc](https://dune.une.edu/neohc). This year we began an exhibit series shining a spotlight on individuals and groups who were instrumental in creating UNE COM. The first exhibit, on Dr. William Bergen, will be installed this winter in the Alfond Center for Health Sciences on the Biddeford Campus.

The past year has seen a return to regular operations. I was very happy to attend the Maine Osteopathic Association meeting in June and have the chance to reconnect and make some new connections. Nothing can replace seeing and meeting folks face to face. In the past year we have added several smaller collections from the families of D.O.s and have been able to purchase some items from private collectors. In the coming year we are hoping to continue to expand our holdings, digitize more collections, and restart our oral history project.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you who supported the work of the New England Osteopathic Heritage Center this year. The center has always relied on the osteopathic community for help in expanding the collections and programs.

Thank you and Happy New Year!

—Zachary Enright  
NEOHC Archivist

New England Osteopathic Heritage Center  
University of New England  
11 Hills Beach Road, Biddeford, Maine 04005, U.S.A.

INNOVATION FOR A HEALTHIER PLANET



# NEW ENGLAND OSTEOPATHIC HERITAGE CENTER NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2023



A New Medical Resource for New England

The New England College of Osteopathic Medicine







### Historical Spotlight

## WILLIAM BERGEN, D.O.

UNE COM Founder

When UNE COM opened its doors in 1978, it was the culmination of over two decades of work by a dedicated group of osteopaths from across the region. William Bergen, D.O., a family practitioner from Kennebunk, was instrumental in bringing an osteopathic medical college to Biddeford, Maine.

Born in Far Rockaway, New York, in 1932, Dr. Bergen graduated from the University of Detroit in 1953. Upon returning from army service, he entered the Kirksville College of Osteopathy and Surgery and graduated in 1959. Dr. Bergen then completed his internship at the Osteopathic Hospital of Maine and opened his own family practice in Kennebunk in 1961, where he would continue to practice for the next 30 years.

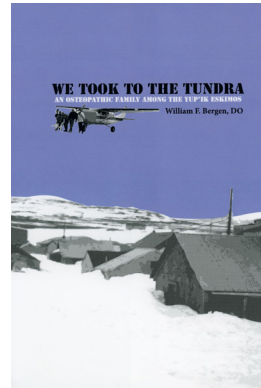
Dr. Bergen joined the effort to bring an osteopathic college to New England in the 1960s. He became secretary of the New England Foundation for Osteopathic Medicine, and, when plans fell through to open a school at Northeastern University in Boston, he advocated for a Maine location.



In 1975 Dr. Bergen had just moved to a farm in Kennebunk next door to Jack Ketchum. Mr. Ketchum was a financial advisor hired by St. Francis College Board of Trustees to help address increasing debt and decreasing enrollment. After meeting over a backyard fence, Dr. Bergen and Mr. Ketchum hatched a plan to bring a New England college of osteopathic medicine to St. Francis.

Dr. Bergen continued to serve UNE COM as a trustee for many years. In 1991 Dr. Bergen closed his practice in Kennebunk and moved to the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region in Alaska. In Alaska he delivered medical services to an underserved community. After five years he and his family moved back to Maine, practicing at the Aroostook Medical Center and completing his book, *We Took to the Tundra: An Osteopathic Family Among the Yupik Eskimos*.

Dr. Bergen passed away April 29, 2009.



## CONTRIBUTE TO OUR COLLECTIONS

Are you interested in donating to the New England Osteopathic Heritage Center? Do you have papers, photographs, videos, newsletters, or other materials that document the osteopathic profession? Consider donating them to the NEOHC. At the NEOHC we are able to preserve those materials and make them accessible to researchers all over the world.

If you are interested in contributing to the NEOHC but do not have materials of historical value, consider participating in our oral history project. We are looking for D.O.s and those with experience in the osteopathic field of all ages and experiences – from students to the retired. This year we are continuing to document the experiences of D.O.s during the COVID-19 pandemic. This can take a variety of forms including journals, essays, videos, and musical performances. Any format that expresses your experience is welcome.

If you or anyone you know is interested in contributing to or participating in the oral history project, or in donating materials to the NEOHC, please contact archivist Zachary Enright, at [zenright@une.edu](mailto:zenright@une.edu) or (207) 221-4324.