

"History is the witness that testifies to the passing of time; it illumines reality, vitalizes memory, provides guidance in daily life and brings us tidings of antiquity" – Cicero (106BC – 43BC)

The following chronicles the early beginnings of the Alberta College of Family Physicians (ACFP). This article, written by Dr. M. Dolgoy, was published in *Canadian Family Physician*, February 1969.

The First Ten Years of The College of General Practice (Alberta Division) - M. DOLGOY, M.D.

A decade is but a brief span in the annals of an organization. Yet, when measured in human dimensions - and an organization is but the extension of the men and women who comprise it - a decade is laden with heartbeat and hope, shadow hours of failure and the brightness of attainment.

During the decade recently concluded, the College of General Practice of Canada, Alberta Division, has made meaningful forward strides. This progress has surpassed by far the expectations of that fall day in 1954 when, spurred by professional considerations, the Provincial Chapter of the College was established.

Unto its membership, the College, Alberta Division, has afforded the blessings of increase of knowledge, heightened sense of professional pride, and the warmth and inspiration of friendship. In terms of the broader national scene, our organization has been accorded recognition as a highly significant force in the ranks of Canadian Medicine.

The written minutes of this dynamic segment of years — replete with promise and challenge — are the mine of retrospect from which this compilation has been gleaned. In undertaking such an effort one must, of necessity, evaluate and cull. As a consequence there will be omissions such as are imposed by the disciplines and limitations inherent in a project of this nature. In this cognizance, the compiler tenders his apologies, adding the assurance — though he is mindful that with men of understanding and goodwill such is unnecessary — that no slight has been intended.

Now we have moved into the second decade. Janus-like we assess our body — traversing the years to the hour of founding for the guidance proffered by experience and contemplating tomorrow in the glow of hope and anticipation.

Calgary's Palliser Hotel was the setting for the meeting of Alberta general practitioners who weighed the founding of a Provincial Chapter of the College of General Practice of Canada. Dr. Pat Rose presided at the session which opened at 5:00 p.m. on September 28th, 1954.

It was moved by Dr. J. J. Dobry and seconded by Dr. C. L. Pearson that permission be requested of the Board of Representatives of the College to organize an Alberta Chapter. The motion was carried.

Dr. W. W. Eadie was elected Chapter chairman as well as the first Alberta representative to the College.

At that time Dr. Rose was a member of the Board of Representatives of the College and had been named honorary treasurer of the organization. The College had been founded in June, 1954 and Pat was nominated by interested general practitioners to represent Alberta in the early deliberations.

On October 21st, 1954, there appears in the minutes a letter from Dr. R. F. Taylor, our first secretary, to Dr. John Scott, Dean of Medicine at the University of Alberta, citing the *"desirability of having Class A teaching hospitals take the lead in general practice training programs,"* expressing *"the hope that General Practice internships will eventually be of three years' duration"* and emphasizing the *"value of preceptor-ships."*

In November, 1954, an executive meeting was held in Edmonton. Among resolutions adopted were the following:

- A three-member credentials committee, with headquarters in Calgary, should be set up to facilitate the processing of applications;
- The chairman of the committee on education and hospitals should be regarded as a member of the executive to facilitate discussions with officials of the University and various hospitals.
- Dr. J. R. Ibberson, treasurer, was instructed to draw up tentative plans for a national meeting of the College in Red Deer.

It is interesting to note that the only educational programs available in 1954 for general practitioners were the following:

- (a) an annual University refresher course;
- (b) a traveling service team from the University of Alberta Hospital which visited the five districts;
- (c) 10-hour courses in basic sciences sponsored by the Edmonton General Practice Association.

On April 14th and 15th, 1955, the Alberta Division of the College of General Practice held its first sectional meeting in Red Deer. The meeting was honoured by the presence of Dr. M. Stalker, of Ormstown, Quebec, president of the College of General Practice of Canada.

Officers of the Chapter, Dr. W. W. Eadie, president; Dr. R. F. Taylor, secretary; and Dr. J. R. Ibberson, treasurer, all of whom had rendered yeoman service in guiding the unit during its initial year, were re-elected at the annual meeting on October 9th, 1955. The parley was addressed by Dr. J. Howard Black, of Vancouver, president of the College. He stressed that the new concept of a general practitioner should be basic — that is scientific with the ability to look after a person as a whole human being.

In September, 1955, conversations were held with Dr. John Scott, University of Alberta, Dean of Medicine, during which he requested that a certain number of members of the College undertake to act as preceptors for medical students during the summer between their third and fourth years. The plan called for the physician to take the student with him on hospital and house rounds and to have him as an observer in his office. The student was to be provided with room and board and a small remuneration to cover travelling expenses.

However, it wasn't until February 1958, that plans were finalized for the establishment of preceptorships in Alberta. The plan was headed by Dr. H. A. Lloyd and Dr. Pat Rose. The

project functioned successfully from 1959-1962. An average of 27 students took part each summer. In 1963, preceptorships were replaced by the University of Alberta Family Study Plan.

The second Scientific Session of the College was held in Red Deer on March 8th and 9th, 1956. Members from Edmonton and Calgary presented the program. Attendance at the meeting was limited. The executive, however, was not disheartened and set about with alacrity to lay plans for the future.

Cheering news was offered the College at its annual meeting on September 23, 1956, by treasurer John Ibberson. In his financial statement, Dr. Ibberson reported that the Alberta Division of the College had money in the bank for the first time.

Comprising the executive elected at the session were: Dr. J. R. Ibberson, president; Dr. V. Speckman, vice-president; Dr. R. Woolstencroft, secretary; and Dr. M. Sereda, treasurer.

More than 60 doctors attended the Chapter's third annual Scientific Session in Edmonton on January 22nd and 23rd, 1957. More than two-thirds of those present were from outside Edmonton. A program highlight was the General Practice Workshop on the opening afternoon. Making up the Workshop were four panels on different topics, each moderated by a general practitioner.

Limited attendance again plagued the fourth Scientific Session held in Lethbridge in January, 1958. Excellent scientific papers were presented and host doctors went all out to assure visitors a good time.

Officers chosen by the session included Dr. H. A. Lloyd, president; Dr. A. A. Gorman, secretary; and Dr. Max Dolgoy, treasurer. Dr. Lloyd was named representative to the Board of the College, serving faithfully in that capacity until 1963.

In accordance with a view that a different area be picked for succeeding scientific sessions, Banff was chosen. The move proved a propitious one and a new era in the history of the Alberta Chapter was inaugurated. The fifth Scientific Session held there in January, 1959, proved an overwhelming success. Registration topped 100, with participants coming from all over the Province as well as from Saskatchewan and British Columbia.

The College and the Section of General Practice of the C.M.A., Alberta Division, sponsored a combined meeting in January, 1959. A new venture on the Provincial level, the session was enthusiastically received by the profession. The happy partnership still continues.

Guest speaker was Dr. R. O. Brandenburg of Mayo Clinic, a wonderful choice who added significantly to our convention. There was the gratification, too, that we had succeeded in going big time in arranging the convention. Since then, we have never looked back in our planning, nor have we taken second place to any similar organization in providing continuing education.

We derived pride, too, from a feature address by our own Pat Rose, president of the College of General Practice of Canada for that year.

A new executive was chosen — Dr. R. Woostencroft, president; Dr. N. L. Smith, secretary; and Dr. T. C. Saunders, treasurer. On February 7th, 1959, the new executive held a meeting at the Calgary home of the president. A heated discussion resulted in a decision to hold a three-day

meeting, January 27th, 28th, 29th, 1960. It was also decided that the next nominating committee select a vice-president in order to assure continuity. Embers undoubtedly remained from the confab for some four hours later the president's home burned down.

The 1960 meeting in Banff -the sixth Annual Scientific Session - found 91 doctors in attendance. Guest speakers were Dr. H. B. Atlee, of Halifax, N.S., Dr. J. Wendell MacLeod, Dean of Medicine University of Saskatchewan. Dr I. W. Bean, of Regina, chairman of the College's Board of Representatives, spoke on behalf of the College. He described political developments in Saskatchewan and the steps taken by the medical profession in that province to effect a plan that is mutually satisfactory to the government and the profession.

At this meeting we were also introduced to the work of Dr Stan Greenhill, who had been appointed in 1959 as Professor of Preventive Medicine at the University of Alberta. It was evident that closer liaison was in the offing between the University and the Alberta Division of the College.

Another feature of the 1960 meeting was the inception of a convention curling program. Dr. Max Dolgoy was elected president; members of his executive were: Dr. J. H. Weddell, vice-president: Dr. E. R. Haynes, secretary; and Dr. D. G. McAlpine, treasurer.

During this term Dr. Harvey Black replaced Dr. N. L. Smith as secretary. Noel unfortunately suffered a coronary and had to restrict his activities for a year or so.

Banff was the setting, too, for the well-attended eighth Annual Meeting. Guest speakers were Dr. Douglas Cameron of McGill and Dr. Phil Bernatz of Mayo Clinic. Chairman of the Board of Representatives, Dr. Irwin Bean, spoke on the College's discussions re Fellowships. Dr. Victor Johnson, executive director of the College, emphasized the organization's refusal to lower its standards, pointing up the place of continuing education as a fundamental requirement for College membership.

Alberta Division representative, Dr. H. A. Lloyd, reported that departments of General Practice were being established in many hospitals and that residencies in General Practice were becoming available.

Officers chosen at the session included: Dr. J A. Weddell, president; Dr. J. Moriarty, vice-president; Dr. J. C. Staples, secretary; and Dr. A. M. Leacock, treasurer.

During the summer of 1961, discussions continued with the University of Alberta which resulted in a formula for the Family Study Plan. Main aim of the program is to expose undergraduates to a new type of learning experience — one that will be shared by all those taking part. An inevitable by-product would be the exposure of students to the challenge, fascination, and satisfaction to be derived from general practice — seeing and studying the family away from the hospital.

The College again met at Banff on January 24th, 25th, 26th, 1962. Guests were Dr. Martin Hoffman of McGill and Dr. Donald Williams, Professor of Continuing Education at UBC. Named to the executive were: Dr. D. G. McAlpine, president: Dr. J. Moriarty, vice president; Dr. H. A. J. Schwartz, secretary; and Dr. J. A. O'Brien, treasurer. An imposing task confronted them — the national convention was to be held in Edmonton in 1963.

There was no scientific session in 1963. The annual meeting that year was combined with the national parley in Edmonton. It was a great privilege for Alberta members to meet their confreres from the other provinces of Canada. The organizational talents of Alberta members coupled with the cooperation afforded by the national office resulted in a highly successful national convention.

The newly-elected provincial executive - Dr. J. B. Corley, president; Dr. L. G. Ivie, secretary; and Dr. H. H. Black, treasurer; all of Calgary, forthwith set about making plans for 1964. Banff again was chosen as the site for the convention and the Scientific Session. The Calgary group outlined its thinking relative to a new plan for training medical graduates for general practice. Introduction of an internship geared to this purpose, was proposed. A "first" was in the making.

The Family Study Plan, which it was hoped could be inaugurated in 1961, finally was started in the fall of 1963. Groups of two or three 4th year students were delegated to a general practitioner who was a member of the College of General Practice. Each student was assigned two families. He visited them in their homes and prepared a study of each family from the medical, economic, and sociological viewpoint. Subsequently he reviewed his families at a seminar where he was questioned by his fellow students and a group of doctors.

In 1964 the plan was changed to involve only 3rd year students. As a result of the Family Study Plan, a number of College members were officially appointed to the Faculty of Medicine as instructors.

The plan underwent a revision in 1965. The student was called upon to spend one afternoon a week in the doctor's office instead of being assigned a family. The plan is proving a success. However, though medical classes continue to grow in size, the number of suitable and willing general practitioners has not increased. More assistance will be needed in this area.

Dr. Garth Diehl, Winnipeg, national treasurer of the College, addressed the ninth annual Scientific Session in Banff in January 1964. The speaker noted the burgeoning costs involved in maintaining the national office. He stressed the necessity for raising annual dues if the headquarters was to be adequately staffed.

The general body named the following executive: Dr. J. C. Staples, president; Dr. E. R. Haynes, president-elect; Dr. L. J. Patterson, secretary; and Dr. H. H. Black, treasurer. Dr. John Corley was appointed as our member to the Board of Representatives.

The meeting adopted the Socratic method of holding panel discussions. These were conducted by Dr. Raymond Sobel of the Department of Psychiatry, University of Washington. Dr. Sobel, who delivered the first Mead Johnson Annual Pediatric Lectureship, also conducted the round table family interviews.

A highlight of the annual banquet was the presentation of gavels to all Chapter past presidents.

A highly important executive meeting was held in Red Deer on November 15th, 1964. Dr. J. Staples was in the chair. This session heard Dr. J. Corley, of Calgary, set forth a program for instituting general practice training in Calgary. He was authorized to bring his idea to the next meeting of the Board of Representatives. The Calgary pilot project would be the first of its kind in Canada.

Alberta Chapter's 14th Annual Scientific Assembly

The College of Family Physicians of Canada (Alberta Chapter) completed a varied scientific assembly program in Banff on January 29.

Held at the Banff School of Fine Arts, and attended by 130 doctors, the meeting featured a symposium on the theme "Problems of drug abuse". Symposium contributors discussed this topic with particular reference to the situation in Alberta, and Dr. Lionel Solursh of Toronto presented two papers: "Abuse of amphetamines" and "Hallucinogenic drug reactions". Dr. Solursh was able to stand-in- at short notice-for Californian symposium contributor, Dr. Sidney Cohen, whose home was hemmed in by the recent floods in that state.

During a panel discussion at the meeting on the subject "Alcoholism, a treatable disease", the Alberta government's consultant on alcoholism, Mr. George Strachan strongly urged understanding and empathic treatment of alcoholics by family physicians.

Dr. Laurence Earley, associate professor of medicine at the University of California, described the physiology, indications, and complications of diuretic therapy in a lucid presentation. "An ideal therapeutic agent," said Dr. Earley "would be one which reversed a pathophysiologic process close to its origin, such as the treatment of hemorrhagic shock by transfusion, or the treatment of bacterial infection with an appropriate antibiotic. In most patients with edema, therapy with diuretic agents falls far short of such a direct attack on the disease process, and at best, diuretic therapy may offer little more than cosmetic improvement."

Dr. Claude Allard, director of laboratories at the Montreal Heart Institute, delivered the Mead Johnson lecture. Its subject: "Hyperlipidemia- screening and characterization". Dr. Allard said that the hyperlipoproteinemia is prevalent in North America and constitutes a serious risk factor for coronary disease. Its management, he said, "calls for early and routine screening methods and adequate differential diagnosis." He urged the setting up of lipid clinics in which physicians, nutritionists, and biochemists could discuss and select an appropriate drug and/or diet therapy.

During scientific sessions, Dr. John J. Zack- president-elect of the College of Family Physicians of Canada- presented the Alberta Chapter's Community Medicine Award to Mr. Fred Engel of the University of Alberta.

Election of officers at the meeting included: Dr. I. N. Henderson, Edmonton, (president); Dr. T. C. Saunders, Calgary, (past president); Dr. G. D. H. McQuitty, Calgary, (president-elect); Dr. A. J. Blunden, Edmonton, (secretary); Dr. H. M. Brand, Edmonton, (treasurer).

Representative to the board of directors will be Dr. R. F. Robertson of Edmonton, and the following were elected committee chairmen: Dr. H. A. J. Schwarz (membership); Dr. J. R. Settle (hospitals); Dr. A. Keleman (convention); and Dr. J. G. Mills (research).

The postgraduate award (Schering) went to Dr. R. L. Hay, and the postgraduate award (Upjohn) to Drs. J. B. Corley and J. A. Weddell.

Alberta Chapter

(Inaugural Meeting held September 28, 1954 in the Palliser Hotel, Calgary)

Officials:

1954	President Secretary Treasurer	Dr. W.W. Eadie, Edmonton Dr. R.F. Taylor, Edmonton Dr. J.R.Ibberson, Calgary
1955		As above
1956	President Secretary Treasurer	Dr. J.R. Ibberson, Calgary Dr. R. Woolstencroft, Calgary Dr. M. Sereda, Edmonton
1957	Vice-President	As above with the addition of: Dr. Victor Spackman
1958	President Secretary Treasurer Delegate to the Board	Dr. H. A. Lloyd, Edmonton Dr. A.A. Gorman, Edmonton Dr. M. Dolgoy, Edmonton Dr. H.A. Lloyd, Edmonton (1958-63)
1959	President Secretary Treasurer	Dr. R. Woolstencroft, Calgary Dr. N.L. Smith, Calgary Dr. T.C. Saunders, Calgary
1960	President Secretary Treasurer	Dr. M. Dolgoy, Edmonton Dr. E.R. Haynes, Edmonton Dr. D.G. McAlpine, Edmonton
1961	President Secretary Treasurer	Dr. J.A. Weddell, Red Deer Dr. J.C. Staples, Red Deer Dr. A.M. Leacock, Olds
1962	President Secretary Treasurer	Dr. D.G. McAlpine, Edmonton Dr. H.A. J. Schwarz, Edmonton Dr. J.A. O'Brien, Edmonton
1963	President Secretary Treasurer	Dr. J.B. Corley, Calgary Dr. L.C. Ivie, Calgary Dr. H.H. Black, Calgary
1964	President President-Elect Secretary Treasurer Delegate to the Board	Dr. J.C. Staples, Red Deer Dr. E.R. Haynes, Edmonton Dr. L.J. Patterson, Red Deer Dr. H.H. Black, Calgary Dr. J.B. Corley, Calgary (1961-68)
1965	President Secretary	Dr. E.R. Haynes, Edmonton Dr. I.N. Henderson, Edmonton

Treasurer

Dr. A. Kelemen, Edmonton

Upjohn Postgraduate Study Award Winners:

1958	Dr. L. E. Johnson, Wetaskiwin
1959	Dr. W. R. V. Laing, Hanna
1960	Dr. A.B. King, Vermilion
1961	Dr. A.R. Kempton, Leduc
1962	Dr. S.S. Hein, Rocky Mountain House
1963	Dr. J.C. Staples, Red Deer
1964	Dr. T.J. Walker, Fort MacLeod

Schering Postgraduate Study Award Winners:

1959	Dr. E.G. Evans, Vermilion
1960	Dr. J.R. Ibberson, Calgary
1961	Dr. S.J. Cornish, Claresholm
1962	Dr. W.H. Mulloy, Calgary
1963	Dr. E.J. Baker, Cereal
1964	Dr. J. Smulski, Edmonton
1965	Dr. K.T. MacQuarrie, Killam

Addendum – August 2004

Dr. M. Dolgoy, M.D., M.C.F.P.C., resides with his wife in their West Edmonton home. Dr. Dolgoy practiced family medicine until he was 87 years, and still serves as a scrutineer for the Alberta Medical Association. Now 92 years of age, Dr. Dolgoy and his wife participate in their bridge club each weekday. Mrs. Dolgoy, as she has done for several years, volunteered her time to work on the political campaign of a candidate in the recent federal election, and is now part of the campaign team for a candidate in the upcoming Edmonton City Mayor election. Dr. Dolgoy was delighted that his article will be posted on the website of the ACFP.