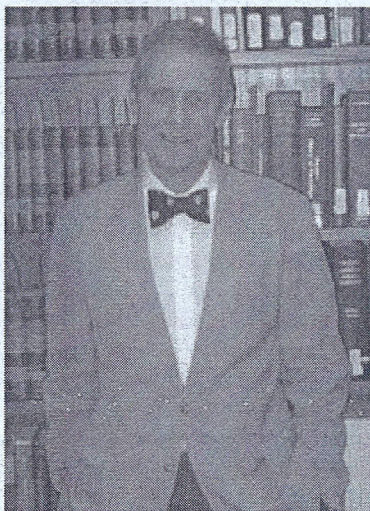


The Oslerian

A Message from the President Ciao!

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Century: Where does W.O.
Fit as a Role Model,
Teacher, and Source of In-
spiration Today (by John
Noble)



Claus A. Pierach

Greetings, fellow Oslerians!

It began years ago, when traveling in Europe you could hear with increasing frequency the salutation *Ciao!* (pronounced 'chow'), also used as goodbye. It became very fashionable, especially among young people and is today commonly heard in South America. In southern Germany and in Austria it has pretty much replaced the old greeting *Servus* and the tender farewell *Behuet' Dich Gott!* (May God keep you safe!). Around here I often hear a casual non-descript, rather meaningless *Hi!*, to me only acceptable when joyfully exclaimed.

Similar observations can be made in the salutations and closings of letters. The prefix *Dear* is at least in dry business correspondence more often than not a shameful exaggeration as is the German *Sehr geehrte*, used even when one really does not honor the one so addressed. The typical closing seems doubtful in many instances, since the so common German high esteem (*Hochachtungsvoll*) rings all too often just as hollow as the *Sincerely* or *Respectfully*. But that was not always so. A splendid example was re-

cently offered by fellow Oslerian CG Roland in the Osler Library Newsletter (104, p 1, 2005), where we read that Archibald Malloch's mother ended every letter to her son with "Believe me Your aff'te Mother, Elizabeth Malloch" and in reading the charming essay we believe her that she indeed was affectionate. William Osler varied the closing of his many letters and cards considerably and we find augmentations from a simple "yours" to "yours ever", "Affectionately yours", "your loving Egerton" to "Ever yours sincerely" and "Your loving Doccie-O". While this brief list is incomplete, I find it typical.

Now, where does *Ciao!* come from? It must have been any linguist's delight to trace this, as nicely described by M Alinei (The Problem of Dating in Linguistics [2004]) where he uses *Ciao* as a near perfect and historically traceable example. Thus, as a common greeting, *Ciao* is a newcomer, rarely found as such before the 1950's. Of course, any informal greeting makes its way into everyday use without fanfare and it may take considerable time before we find it in print. Nevertheless, E Hemingway mentions *Ciao*

in Farewell to Arms (1929), set in northeast Italy during World War I; this and later examples are to be found in the Oxford English Dictionary Online (2005).

Alas, *ciao* appears as a dialectical Venetian word already in 1829 in the first Venetian-Italian dictionary (Boerio) and even earlier, in the 18th century in comedies by Carlo Goldoni (1707-1793) who uses the Italicized variant *schiaivo*. Well, in the 16th century letters ended occasionally in the words *schiaivo vostro*, 'your slave' since to this day the word *schiaivo* (pronounced skeeavo) is Italian for 'slave'. Yes, the Italian and the English word are indeed very close relatives, since 'slave' was initially 'sclavus', derived from 'slavus' which comes from the Slavs who were in the Middle Ages traded as, well, slaves, a trade in which Venetian merchants were active at that time. It was probably somewhere between the 6th and the 10th century that 'sclavus' became 'schiaivo'. And the aforementioned *Servus!* is nothing but the Latin word for slave, still detectable in 'servant'.

A few languages use as a closing formula an offer

(Continued on page 2)

Ciao! (continued from page 1)

of service. Old fashioned Germans prefaced the signature on their letters with *Stets gern zu Diensten*, always glad to be of service. In Swedish slang you may bid farewell by saying *tjenare*, a linguistic twist from *Hur kan jag sta till tjant?* How can I serve you? (*Att tjana* to serve). And the Spaniards are 'at your service' by saying *A sus ordenes*.

In The Terri Schiavo Saga, so well described by CC Hook and fellow Oslerian PS Mueller (Mayo Clin Proc 80;1449-60; 2005) and subtitled The Making of a Tragedy and Lessons Learned, it struck me as peculiar, that her last name, here differently pronounced from the Italian, means slave or servant. While we do not know how much she suffered, I think she indeed served us well by bringing so many aspects around death and dying to the forefront, making us think about these legal and ethical aspects in addition to the many facets of medicine apparent in her case.

There was an often heard song in Germany and

Austria in the thirties, summarizing some aspects of this essay. First sung with a sweet and slightly schmaltzy melody (P Kreuder) in a movie (Burgtheater), it became so popular, almost a folksong, that it is still occasionally heard today. It nicely contrasts some farewell greetings from *servus* through *Lebwohl* (live well) to *Adieu* (which morphed into the common German goodbye 'tschuess') and clearly gives preference to *Servus* by suggesting, one should *Sag' beim Abschied leise "Servus"* (when parting say quietly 'servus') where nowadays one might say *Ciao!*

It is indeed a pleasure to be of service to you and I hope to see you in Halifax in May 2006.

Ciao!

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AAHM Invites AOS Members to Halifax Meeting

The American Association for the History of Medicine extends an invitation to all members of the American Osler Society to attend their meeting in Halifax, Thursday through Sunday, May 4 to 7, 2006. The AAHM is offering reciprocity to AOS registrants. Jacalyn Duffin will give the AAHM presidential address on Friday. The clinician-historian breakfast will take place at 7 AM on Saturday and will feature Gary Belkin, Chris Crenner, Margaret Humphreys, Rob Martensen, Jock Murray, Steve Peitzman, and Walter Schalick as teachers. Charles Roland and Bruce Fye will lead a luncheon session on Saturday at noon, the topic to be announced. There is also a book show, to which AOS members are invited. The AAHM is in the process of obtaining CME credits for their meeting, as well.

The AAHM-AOS liaison committee has been actively exploring the future relationship between these two organizations. Should the AOS continue to meet in tandem with the AAHM and, if so, how often? The 2006 meeting and also the 2007 meeting (scheduled for Montreal) will provide ample opportunity for us to seek common ground.

The liaison committee is chaired by Paul Berman. Other members representing the AOS are Sandra Moss, Richard Kahn, and Cynthia Pitcock. As most of you know, the future of the relationship between the AOS and the AAHM has been a subject of great interest to many Oslerians, and last year was made a major theme by our president, Chester Burns. Some persons believe the two organizations should go their separate ways; others urge a close, cooperative relationship; and many are simply indifferent. There is a sense that amateur historians who practice medicine and professional historians who do not practice medicine can learn a great deal from each other. Paul Berman (docpb@crocker.com) would welcome hearing from AOS members prior to the meeting. —CSB

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Shown on the next page is a breakdown of AOS income and expenses for the calendar year 2005. The balance of liquid assets as of December 31, 2005—of which 43% is in the McGovern Lectureship account, 18% in the Bean Award account, and 39% as unrestricted funds—stands at an all-time high. The positive balance for the year is explained mainly by two generous contributions from the John P. McGovern Foundation and by another successful year with Fidelity Investments. On the downside, major expenses for the year included the necessity to purchase 324 volumes of *Persisting Osler III* (\$12,026.88) and shipping thereof on account of our contract with Krieger Publishing Company and poor sales; a substantial deficit for the meeting, primarily due to the banquet and continuing medical education expense; and the purchase of 30 new John P. McGovern Lectureship Award medals and 50 Lifetime Achievement Award medals. Notes to the table on the following page are as follows:

1. This includes \$235.00 for sales of *The Persisting Osler* and \$2,873.86 in royalties from the American College of Physicians for *The Quotable Osler*.
2. The generous contributions from the John P. McGovern Foundation include \$5,000.00 toward the McGovern Lectureship and \$7,500.00 for unrestricted use.
3. This consists of a \$243.71 refund from the Westin Pasadena.
4. Meeting expenses included \$3,300.68 for Continuing Medical Education.
5. The McGovern Lectureship expenditures for 2005 included \$2,825.00 for purchase of 30 new medals. The honorarium for the lectureship was increased to \$2,825.00.
6. Miscellaneous expenses include \$80.00 dues to the American Association for the History of Medicine as a constituent society; \$1,050 for review of financial records and preparation of a tax return by the C.C. McGregor Company, and \$3,980.00 for design and casting of 50 medals for the newly-created Lifetime Achievement Award. —CSB

Income, Expenses, and Liquid Asset Balances, 1999-2005

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
START BALANCE, 1 JANUARY	328,415.54	437,635.88	439,237.65	447,236.97	377,566.91	477,546.88	522,103.45
<i>Income</i>							
Dues and initiation fees	9,775.00	6,400.00	9,900.00	14,865.00	14,535.28	15,661.92	10,723.44
Meeting income	39,875.00	33,945.00	33,575.00	39,060.85	49,547.88	48,098.31	28,091.00
Latchkeys, ties, T-shirts	1,095.00	830.00	1,329.00	805.00	1,303.55	960.00	603.00
Book sales and royalties	180.00	135.00	85.00	5,831.50	15,247.45	4,732.12	2,908.36 ¹
Educational Endowment Fund	13,154.34	975.00	20,855.00	540.00	1,320.00	1,895.00	1,075.00
Friends of 13 Norham Gardens	200.00	355.00	355.00	185.00	345.00	680.00	425.00
Friends of Osler Library	200.00	455.00	460.00	160.00	195.00	1,065.00	700.00
McGovern lectureship/contributions	46,662.66	26,000.00	36,849.20	10,000.00		12,500.00	12,500.00 ²
Miscellaneous income	20,053.39	30.27			750.00	15,273.90	243.71 ³
Appreciation of equities	40,546.44	-13,001.98	-22,233.11	-48,670.55	91,610.34	34,966.62	28,405.24
Total Income	171,743.83	56,123.29	81,175.09	22,776.80	174,854.50	135,832.87	607,778.20
<i>Expenses</i>							
Administrative assistant		1,500.00	6,000.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	9,500.00	8,000.00
Supplies and postage		273.40	293.85	1,247.87	4,514.71	1,651.86	1,259.00
Printing	497.18	1,502.58	1,677.64	1,566.28	1,038.01	1,030.05	1231.22
Latchkeys and other merchandise	700.00	1,606.04					
<i>Persisting Osler I, II, and III</i>	9,894.00		882.00	3789.58			
Meeting expenses	20,660.60	27,233.93	37,134.72	30,835.87	43,510.82	45,566.15	35,139.02 ⁴
McGovern Lectureship Account	5,731.88	3,790.89	6,162.21	4,830.00	3,740.00	2,780.27	8,797.79 ⁵
Wm. B. Bean Educational Endowment	4,691.80	3,775.60	4,388.00	3,309.05	2,738.07	139.99	4,500.00
Deposits for future meetings	2,545.00	4,500.00	1,271.18	19,457.03		500.00	718.75
Friends of Osler Library	1,000.00	1,000.00	610.00			505.00	
Friends of 13 Norham Gardens	1,000.00	500.00	480.00			380.00	
Subventions for books	12,000.00		4,199.20	17,000.00	7,294.71	16,530.12	12,026.88
Web site	245.00		1,195.00	600.00		500.00	500.00
Refunds	325.00	1,275.00	790.00	1,630.00	45.00	2,345.00	1,960.00
Money management fees	2,851.03	3,567.64	3,460.02	1,661.18	3,107.87	6,201.25	3,874.47
Miscellaneous expenses	380.00	3,996.44	4,631.95	2,020.00	4,385.34	5,016.25	5,398.20 ⁶
Total disbursements	62,521.49	54,521.52	73,175.77	92,446.86	74,874.53	91,276.30	83,405.33
END BALANCE, DECEMBER 31	437,635.88	439,237.65	447,236.97	377,566.91	477,546.88	522,103.45	524,372.87

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Aequanimitas

The Oslerian is published approximately four times a year by the American Osler Society, Inc., a non-profit organization. Members of the American Osler Society are encouraged to send news items of interest, including but by no means limited to their personal activities and accomplishments and accompanied by photographs or other illustrations. For distribution of reprints and other materials of possible interest to AOS members, please send 180 copies. Your ideas for The Oslerian are of course most welcome! Direct all correspondence by mail, fax, or e-mail to the Secretary-Treasurer.

The AOS Visiting Professorship and the 21st Century

Where does W.O. Fit as a Role Model, Teacher, and Source of Inspiration Today?

During the 20th century, the philosophy of medical practice and the teaching of William Osler were perpetuated by Osler's students and later by their students. These students of the students of Osler were the teachers and practitioners of medicine for the next 30-40 years, until about 1960. Shortly after this time, the American Osler Society was formed to ensure the continuation of the traditions which he had so effectively propounded in medical education and clinical practice. The AOS has been very effective in carrying out this mission. In the past three years the AOS has sought to expand its outreach to new members by expanding membership, compiling a list of Recommended Readings for Medical Students led by Frank Neelon and developing a Video on the Teachings of William Osler under the leadership of Robert Stone.

Medical practice however continues to change. While preparing to plan the establishment of an AOS Visiting Professorship, questions have been raised about the applicability of Osler's 19th century insights and recommendations for students who will be faced with 21st century problems and resources that are already vastly different from those available to Osler. Without question, many of Osler's teachings and quotes retain their relevance, however many of his important principles do not fit the realities of modern day clinical practice. The importance of aequanimitas, watchful waiting over the natural course of illness; of working and living in day-tight compartments; the focus the individual physician rather than on teams of physicians simply do not fit into the 2006 work week of busy practitioners. The Alabama Students of today are not isolated as in Osler's time. Rather, they are more likely to be overwhelmed with e-mails, telephone calls, emergencies and the constant oversight of regulators and payors.

The American Osler Society Professor of tomorrow may be well advised to choose Oslerian topics and describe their evolution over the past century by linking Osler's contributions to the refinements of his successors; individuals like Francis Weld Peabody, Michael Balint, George Engel, David Seegal and Ed Pellegrino, to name a few. End-of life care would be incomplete without reference to the writings of Cecily Saunders, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross and Timothy Quill.

Models for successful teaching in busy rural practices published by Cross, Bjorn And Burgher, "The Problem Oriented Medical Practice" and the American College of Physicians publication "Community Based Teaching: A Guide to Developing Education Programs for Medical Students and Residents in the Practitioner's Office, 1997 open opportunities for a major updating of "Principles of Practice-both Oslers and ours."

William Osler tackled more than just clinical medicine. He strongly supported the development of well trained physicians who would practice throughout the rural areas of Canada. He testified at the debates on the reorganization of the (national) health service of the United Kingdom, and insisted that for physicians, medicine should trigger be a life long quest of learning in the humanities as well as in science. The importance of humanism in medicine is re-emerging. The Arnold Gold Foundation has developed a public foundation fostering humanism in medicine, the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship helps hundreds of graduate students each year to dedicate their time and service to helping others.

The interest in developing an AOS Visiting Professorship was enthusiastic at last year's meeting, Twenty four members expressed interest in participating in the project. It has become quite evident that there is a need for us to refine the goals and objectives of the Professorship to ensure that our AOS Professors are able to apply Osler's Principles to the real time issues of patient care and modern medical practice.

I would like to propose that we work on the mission, design and plan for initiating the Professorship between now and our meeting in Halifax. Individuals interested in the design and formulation process could gather on the day before the meeting to make preparations for a brief presentation to the membership during the meeting.

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