

Dedication of the Robert J Emrick MD Library

On March 9, 1993 we dedicated GN Wilcox Memorial Hospital's new medical library to Robert Emrick, our pathologist from 1964 to 1988. Since many HMA doctors knew Dr. Emrick, we thought you might be interested in the remarks made on that occasion.

It was very gratifying to see so many of you here. Sophie Cluff admonished me to make my remarks "short and snappy"! I tried to comply, however, in deference to those who came from Oahu and the Mainland, I will risk incurring her censure.

Bob Emrick was a great colleague, friend or family member to many of us. He was a founding father of Kauai Medical Group (KMG) and was always a staunch supporter of Wilcox Hospital. He realized that our strengths are multiplied by cooperation and greatly diminished by the unpleasant turf battles which to some extent have marred the years since his passing. These would have disturbed him greatly. It is propitious that we should be dedicating this library today because the tide has changed and it seems that "The Medical Group" and "The Hospital" are on the path of cooperation that will serve Kauai's people first, and not any special interest group primarily.

Bob died on October 4, 1988. In the 4 1/2 years since his death, it is amazing how many new faces there are on our staff. More than half of the doctors today and many other hospital and KMG workers either did not know him well or never even met him. Some have never even heard his name.

In 1909, Sir William Osler said on the occasion of dedicating a hall to him at the Maryland Medical and Chirurgical Johns Hopkins, "These [events] illustrate how quickly the memory of a name perishes. In how many minds did the mention of David Hosack arouse a thrill of remembrance? His works—and they were good ones—have perished, and his more enduring association is with the hall which bears his name. We can imagine a conversation in the library—AD 2009—between 2 assistants wearily sorting a pile of second-hand books just in. "What are we to do with all this rubbish by a man named Osler? He must have had very little to do to spoil so much paper. Where did he live anyway?" "Oh I don't know. Baltimore I think. Anyway, they have a hall there that bears his name."¹ This holds equally as well for Bob Emrick whom we honor today.

I suggest that some of you gathered here—colleagues, friends, family—submit short remembrances of Madeleine and Bob Emrick which we can bind and store in the library, so that those curious members of our medical community in years to come can learn just what kind of people the Emricks were. Perhaps we may not see their likes again.

Bob Emrick was a child of the coal mines of Ohio. Born to a family of modest means, he did not have the financial resources to enter medicine right away. He was fond of telling friends about his first job while still in high school—working for a bookie in small towns of southeastern Ohio. Later he was a court stenographer. He met his wife Madeleine in Ohio where she was studying art at Ohio State University. Madeleine, who grew up in Lebanon Springs, New York, must have been a free spirit in her own right because she

left the Berkshire mountains before WWII to spend some years in Honolulu. After the war, her humanitarian convictions led her to leave Hawaii to volunteer for work with Quakers caring for displaced persons in France and Spain.

After they married, Bob went to Ohio State University Medical School in 1957. Upon graduating, since Madeleine had told him so much about Hawaii, they returned to The Queen's Hospital for his internship. The next year, Bob worked in rural Hawaii—mostly at Laupahoehoe on the Big Island. The Emricks then moved to Boston where Bob did a pathology residency at the Mallory Institute; after completing this, he moved to Kauai in 1964 to be our first full-time pathologist.

When I came to Kauai to interview for my first real job as a physician, Bob Emrick was one of the initial people I met. We developed a fast friendship. Many was the hour we spent in his office discussing medicine and life in the old cafeteria and in our Kalaheo homes. To me, he was always kind and generous; but there were those he didn't tolerate. Few, if any of them, ever gained his affection. In the 14 years that I knew him, I never saw him put his or his family's interests above those of our community or hospital—neither in desire for income nor in property or prestige. I think that he feuded with those he perceived had a *me-first* approach to life.

Lewis Landsberg, in a recent article on altruism in medicine, writes: "[Doctors], by our behavior, have contributed to public disaffection with medicine. We have squandered what was once our most precious asset: the overwhelming trust and gratification of the people we serve. What has happened to alienate the public? We are perceived as self-interested businessmen rather than as dedicated physicians or scientists. We have contributed to the commercialization of medicine, a commercialization that I believe is at the root of many of our problems."²

Bob Emrick would have agreed with this. Bob didn't cotton to businessmen-physicians. I can say this comfortably here, because the businessmen-doctors wouldn't bother to come here today. They weren't Bob's friends.

It is fitting that we dedicate this room to one who was very committed to this institution. It affirms what he stood for, since the library is a crossroads where all of our staff will gather for inspiration and enlightenment.

Some who are here may not know how generous Madeleine and Bob were to the Wilcox Hospital Foundation. Indeed, Bob was one of its founding members. The Emricks donated substantial sums to our Foundation, and after Bob's death, Madeleine stipulated that a portion of their bequest be earmarked toward establishing this library. Since they had no children to carry on their kind works on Kauai, in this way the Emrick name will not be threatened with extinction on this speck of firmament they loved so much.

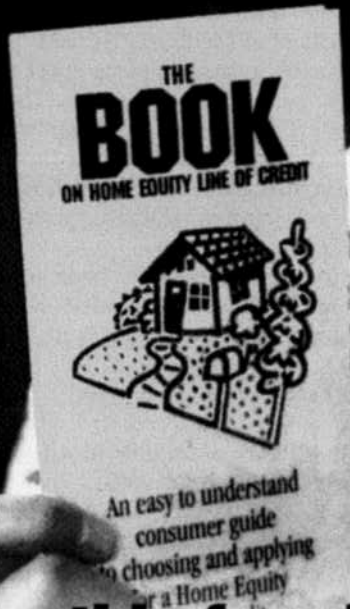
Sadly for those who knew her, Madeleine developed cancer a little over a year after Bob died. She succumbed in September, 1990. I, who knew her well, felt that she had no desire to live without her beloved Bobbie, her companion at Honua Farm. To the many people who knew and loved her, this Library is a tribute to Madeleine Chevalier Emrick as well as to Bob.

(Continued on page 198) ►

"The Book" will be available 7/15/93.

"We are so committed to providing the best HELC, we decided to write the book."

Norman Nakasone
Manager Consumer Loan Dept.



Use this free book to shop wisely for a Home Equity Line of Credit.

This little book can help you find the right Home Equity Line of Credit. It helps you to compare one with another, step-by-step. It shows you everything you need to know in order to apply. Appraisal fees, points, finance fees, closing costs, pre-payment penalties,

interest caps, all of these banking terms are explained in easy to understand everyday language. Come into any CPB branch throughout Hawaii for "The Book." It will put you on the road to being a smarter Home Equity Line of Credit shopper.



Central Pacific Bank
We Put You First! Member FDIC

Main Branch / 220 S. King St. / Phone 544-0500

DEDICATION OF THE ROBERT J EMRICK MD LIBRARY ON KAUAI

(Continued from page 196)

A Chinese sage said: "To die but not to perish is to be eternally present." This room will carry the spirit of the Emricks in it and will maintain their presence for those of us who use it.

The Robert J Emrick Library makes me proud of our institution. This library was slow in coming, taking more than 4 years since Bob's death to materialize. There were revisions, new wings, ICU renovations, changes in Wilcox's administration—and Hurricane Iniki.

That the library is here at all has as much to do with the quiet perseverance of Sylvia Duarte, our medical staff services factotum, who followed the idea from its inception through the many snags and roadblocks we experienced. I'm sure that if Sylvia were not here the idea might have foundered. Sylvia was one of those whom Bob Emrick held in high esteem (although she probably did not know it).

Sometimes as we pay so much attention to acquiring *state-of-the-art* technology, I fear we may lose sight of the importance of an excellent hospital library. While equipment is phased out rather quickly to make room for newer, more expensive and sometimes better technology, we have not always kept pace with our storehouse of knowledge—our library.

For the past few months, I have been immersing myself in the life of Sir William Osler—America's preeminent physician—whose name may not be as familiar today as it was 50 years ago. Osler was a great bibliophile and believed that the medical library was the cornerstone of medical practice. Indeed, he was a curator of the renowned Bodley Medical Library at England's Oxford University.

William Osler wrote: "To study the phenomena of disease without books is to sail an uncharted sea, while to study books without patients is not to go to sea at all...for the general practitioner a well-used library is one of the few correctives of the premature senility which is so apt to overtake him. Self-taught, he leads a solitary life, and unless his everyday experience is controlled by careful reading, or by the attrition of a medical society, it soon ceases to be of the slightest value and becomes a mere accretion of isolated facts without correlation. It is astonishing with how little reading a doctor can practice medicine, but it is not astonishing how badly he may do it³."

He goes on: "Books are tools; doctors are craftsmen, and so truly as one can measure the development of any particular handicraft by the variety and complexity of its tools, so have we no better means of judging the intelligence of a professional than by its general collection of books. A physician who does not use books and journals, who does not need a library, who does not read one or two of the best weeklies and monthlies, soon sinks to the level of the cross-counter prescriber; and not alone in practice, but in those mercenary feelings and habits which characterize a trade⁴."

Osler also seems to speak to us in a letter he wrote in 1908 to the physicians in Vancouver, British Columbia, on the occasion of their organizing a medical society. "I am very glad to hear that you have started a library. There is no better index of the intellectual status of the profession in any town than the condition of its medical library. It will do you all so much good to work at it, particularly in connection with the medical society. Let me indicate briefly the lines along which you should develop:

1) The current journals, general and special, taking particularly those not likely to be subscribed for by the individual members;

2) as soon as possible fill up one or two sets of first-class journals: the *Lancet*, the *BMJ*, the *American Journal of Medical Sciences*, the *Annals of Surgery* and the journals of that type;

3) of the books, get the good systems and special works in each department rather than ordinary school texts...I hope that every physician in the place will feel that he or she should help as much as he or she possibly can, not only by his or her individual subscription, but, when he or she feels he or she can afford it, by an occasional donation. Tell some of the members from me, please, that money invested in a library gives much better returns than mining stock⁵."

On October 17, 1929, shortly before the great stock market crash, Henry Cushing, another great founding father of modern American medicine and Osler's biographer, spoke at the blessing of the William Welch Medical Library at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. He said: "The dedication of a library is usually a commonplace event which calls for certain platitudes, perhaps even a prayer. The generosity of the donor is praised, the genius of the architect; the educational needs of the people (other than those present) are recalled, and assurance given that they will be met so far as a meager endowment permits. [Finally] with some relief all adjourn for lunch⁶."

Harvey Cushing had obviously been to more of these affairs than I have. I'm sure that Madeleine and Bob would appreciate his words and smile wryly at how similar this event is to others. Like Sophie Cluff, they would have said: "Dave, for God's sake get this over with!"

They also would have appreciated what Cushing said about making the library accessible to *all interested health providers* — nurses, doctors, therapists.

At the present time, there is a rule that says that only Wilcox doctors and staff can use the library. Knowing the Emricks as I did, I think this would have upset them. I turn again to Cushing who wrote: "Given a good working library rich in its books of reference, its usefulness depends on the *encouragement and convenience it offers to the reader*, no less than on the infectious enthusiasm of its working staff. A library unexercised, and which takes no chances in life, is susceptible to the deterioration and sclerosis certain to attend a poor circulation. [Therefore] a library must make unselfish use of its possessions even at the risk of an occasional loss⁷."

I reread a section of the *Tao Te Ching* a few days ago that reminded me of Madeleine and Bob. I have copied it for those who are interested. The Emricks were the type of people whom the Chinese sage Lao Tse was speaking about 2,500 years ago when he wrote⁸:

He who knows men is clever;
He who knows himself has insight.
He who conquers men has force;
He who conquers himself is
truly strong.

He who knows when he has enough
is rich,

(Continued) ►

And he who adheres to the path of
Tao is a man of steady purpose.
He who stays where he has found
his true home endures long,
And he who dies but does not perish
is forever present.

David J Elpern MD
Kauai

REFERENCES

1. Cushing H. *The Life of Sir William Osler*. Complete in One Volume. Oxford University Press, London. 1940:862-63.
2. Landsberg L. Altruism in Medicine: Prescription for the nineties. *The Pharos*. 1993;56: 9-10.
3. Osler, W. Reprinted as No. XII in *Aequanimitas and other Addresses Books and Men*, 1901.
4. Cushing H. *The Life of Sir William Osler*. Complete in One Volume. P. 619, Oxford University Press, London. 1940:448.
5. Cushing H. *The Life of Sir William Osler*. Complete in One Volume. P. 619, Oxford University Press, London. 1940:800.
6. Cushing H. The Binding Influence of a Library on Subdividing Profession. *Bull of Johns Hopkins Hospital*. Jan 1938;46:29-42. Reprinted in J H Alumni Mag Jan 1930;18:105-120.
7. Cushing H. The Doctor & his Books. *Amer J Surg*. Jan 1928;4:100-110.

WE KNOW THE ISLANDS... AND WE KNOW ISLANDERS...

You've come to expect our kid-glove service — and we're proud of servicing Hawaii for twenty-five years.

- Professionally Planned Office Moves
- Inter-island Household Moves
- Mainland and International
- Storage—Personal and Business

Large or small, we're your best friends when it comes to moving and storage.



MOVING STORAGE

We're Right Here. Your Kamaaina Movers.

456-4200


For moves from the continental U.S. to Hawaii
call Dyer International, Inc. 1 800 932-9955



*Medford and
Masu Dyer*



PUC 137C ICC MC133909



KIRK CASHMERE

ATTORNEY AT LAW

emphasizing

HEALTHCARE LITIGATION & REGULATORY MATTERS

including

- Provider Fraud & Abuse
- Credentialing & Staff Privileges
- Peer Review
- Insurance Reimbursement
- Provider Contracting
- Bioethics & HIV Issues


Member:

- ABA Forum on Health Law
- National Health Lawyers Association
- American Academy of Hospital Attorneys

City Financial Tower
201 Merchant Street, Suite 2300
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813


Telephone: 523-7600
Facsimile: 526-1100

Courtesy 20% Discount to HMA Members



Meet by the Sea

at the Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua




137th Annual Scientific Meeting

October 14-17, 1993

Featuring

- > Three days of scientific sessions with top notch speakers
- > Presidential Inauguration festivities
- > Golf and tennis tournaments



Program will be mailed in mid-July.

HAWAII MEDICAL JOURNAL—VOL. 52, No. 7—JULY 1993

199