100 Years of Dental Hygiene
Rochester and Beyond

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Today’s Objectives

• Examine the development of the dental hygiene profession by exploring the archival collections at Bibby Library, Eastman Dental Center.

• Discover the history of oral health care in Rochester

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Who was the first dental hygienist?
*Irene Newman*

In what decade did the dental hygienist’s uniform change from dresses to pants?
*1970’s*

Who is the father of dental hygiene?
*Alfred Fones*

What movie star said if she had not been an actress she would have been a dental hygienist?
*Julia Roberts*
“There is a school that we all know and love. True to it and worthy we will ever be. The School we love so true, tho we wander near and far, we’ll all remember you. Time for work, time for play and time for fun and teas, too soon it comes time to go, this we all now know”.

Joy Cooper
Class of 1927
Bibby Library Dentistry Archives

- Images, print materials from early 1900’s-present
- Dental history in Rochester, School for Dental Hygiene, Rochester Dental Dispensary, Eastman Dental
- Online Exhibits
A Profession is Born

- 1902: Dr. Wright suggested a “specialist” to help patients maintain good oral health
- 1910: increasing demand for dental hygienists
- 1913: Dr. Alfred Fones
- 1917 licensure
- More schools open

Alfred C. Fones
“Father of Dental Hygiene”
Impact

- Improved oral health
- New avenue of employment for women
Rochester Dental Society

Established free dental clinics throughout Rochester
George Eastman’s Rochester Dental Dispensary

• 1915 Eastman donates funds for new dispensary

• Dispensary dedicated May 9, 1917
Harvey J. Burkhart, DDS

• First director, RDD
• Served until his passing in 1946
• “European Dental Clinics”
Harvey Burkhart: the School for Dental Hygienists

• Identified need to train hygienists
• 1915: asked Eastman’s permission
• 1916: applied to state
Objections

• “Young woman can’t learn skills”
• “No woman in the workforce”
• “She would lower the tone of dentistry”
• “Will take business away from dentists”
School for Dental Hygiene 1916-1965

- Opened October 9, 1916
- Catharine Strong Hall for lectures
- Enrollees from all over nation
Admission Requirements

- Female
- One year high school
- “Temperament, training and personality”
- “Mental poise and equilibrium that will stand the test when working upon nervous and excitable adults and children”
“Always a matron to look over the girls”

1. Miss Bessie L. Miller
2. Deborah Hardy, RN
3. Miss Burrell
Curriculum

• 8 month course
• Taught by local doctors and dentists
• Lectures and practical work
• Field trips
1940’s?
Early Publications
Duties of the Hygienist

- Prevention, education, prophylactics
- Instrumentation
- Remove tartar, stain and accretions from teeth
- Not allowed to go below the margin of the gums
SDH – A Leader

- **First** school of its kind recognized by NYS regents
- **First** school of its kind in US recognized by a state authority
- One of **First** three schools of its kind in US
- **First** graduation of its kind in US: 1917
- **First** licensed hygienist in NYS was SDH graduate: Hazel Badgero, 1917
School for Dental Hygiene First Graduating Class 1916-1917
1920’s and 1930’s

• 1923: ADHA
• SDH alumni: first officers
• Licensing requirements of other states
• Need for broader curriculum
• National Dental Association: “train more hygienists”
• SDH turned away applicants
Dental Hygienists
Will Hold Party
Wednesday Night

A get acquainted party will be sponsored by members of the Rochester Dental Hygienist Association for members and non-members Wednesday at 8 p.m.

Mrs. Evelyn Barnes, chairman, will be aided by the following: Cards, Mrs. Marion Strassenberg, Mrs. Camille Sheehan, Miss Alameda Butts, Miss Dorothy Arrington; games, Miss Ruth Ferris, Miss Ione McNally, Miss Elsie Killipp, Miss La Doma Brandt; refreshments, Miss Edith Hardy, Miss Jean MacDonald, Miss Lucille Wintish.

Mrs. H. J. Burkhart Gives Tea For Dental School

Mrs. Harvey J. Burkhart, wife of the director of the Rochester Dental Dispensary entertained delightfully at tea yesterday afternoon at her home in Barrington St. for the eighty-five members of the graduating class of the School of Dental Hygienists.

Presiding at the flower decked tea table were Mrs. B. L. Wunder, Mrs. Ralph S. Voorhees, Mrs. Hubert S. Whitmore and Dr. Ruth Vann.

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Alumni Association

- Organized 1917
- Annual meetings, banquets and dances
- 1950 - the ‘Burkhart” room
- Established scholarships
- Published NYS Dental Hygiene Quarterly
- 1964 changed name
- Your history/historian
Gender

- Strictly for women
- Men discriminated against
- 1963 - ADHA eliminates “female” from bylaws
- 1965 1st male graduate
- 1974 1st male delegate to ADHA
- 2012 – 99% female
Post World War II

Dr. Basil G. Bibby, Director

Dr. Ruth Vann, Principal
1940’s and 1950’s

- **Compensation**
- 1948 hygienists administer fluoride
- 1951 license required in all states
- 1952 ADA establishes accreditation standards
- 1954 SDH becomes 2-year program
- More programs open in colleges
- Research activities
New Dorm
1960’s-Endings & Beginnings

• 1962 SDH accredited
• 1964 board approves transfer of school to MCC
• School becomes AAS program at MCC
• 1965 last graduating class at SDH
• Dr. Chell Gilda, heads program at MCC
1970’s-Into the Future

• Local anesthesia
• Practice without supervision
• Dental Hygiene research
• Dental therapists, Advanced dental hygiene practitioners
• Diverse career paths
• Role in prevention, education and improved oral health still prevail
Our wish to thee, dear RDD
Is this: May all prosperity
Attend you on your journey far,
And so, old school, our au revoir.

Class of 1925