AMERICAN COLLEGE OF GASTROENTEROLOGY, 1932–2007
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AMERICAN COLLEGE OF GASTROENTEROLOGY, 1932–2007

Seventy-Five Years of Commitment to Clinical Gastroenterology, Gastroenterologists, and Patient Health

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF GASTROENTEROLOGY
Bethesda, Maryland

2007
On the occasion of its 75th anniversary, the American College of Gastroenterology dedicates this volume with gratitude to

**Albert Carl Svoboda, Jr., MD, MACG**
(July 27, 1931–September 14, 2006)

His vision, collegiality, and dedicated service as Chair of the ACG Archives Committee and his editorial contributions helped to engender this project and to enrich the life of the College. Dr. Svoboda exemplified the spirit of physician volunteerism as ACG Governor and Chair of the Board of Governors, and by representing the College at the AMA House of Delegates. We regret that he is no longer with us to open the pages of this book.
The American College of Gastroenterology is a national organization with a strong grassroots constituency. In this book, we attempt to record its seventy-five-year history by presenting facts without embellishment. However, it may not be possible to have a historical document written entirely in a blandly objective manner. The writing style is not consistent from chapter to chapter, as many sections will read as the contributors submitted them, with sentiment and personal recollections.

Many individuals contributed to the development of this text in important ways: preparing material solicited by the Archives Committee; reviewing and editing drafts; retrieving data stored in the College archives; and contributing ideas, personal anecdotes, encouragement, and administrative support. We regret that all information submitted could not be included due to constraints imposed by space and cost limits. We have recognized all contributors in the Acknowledgments section.
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Albert C. Svoboda, Jr., MD, MACG
Arvey I. Rogers, MD, MACG
Thomas F. Fise

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Robert E. Kravetz, MD, MACG

The American College of Gastroenterology extends grateful appreciation for the significant contributions of the editors of this book. Their extensive knowledge of, and unparalleled enthusiasm for, the history of ACG, combined with Herculean efforts to corral and integrate the recollections and contributions of many, have resulted in a work that will stand as an important and enduring contribution to the College.

ACG Archives Committee,
Subcommittee on 75th Anniversary
Arvey I. Rogers, MD, MACG, Chair
Robert E. Kravetz, MD, MACG
Marvin M. Schuster, MD, MACG
Edward S. Schneir, MD, MACG

From the initial inception of the 75th-anniversary history project, this brain trust worked tirelessly to envision and to execute this ambitious effort. The College recognizes with thanks the particular contributions of Dr. Schneir, past Chair of the Archives Committee, whose 1997 history of ACG provided the strong foundation for the current volume. With Dr. Schneir’s death in 2007, the College has lost a great friend and dedicated archivist of ACG history.

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This book came to fruition under the leadership of several ACG Presidents, without whose support for the project and commitment to its success this volume would not have been possible.
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The College acknowledges the indispensable role and contributions of the ACG Archives Committee, particularly its past Chair, Dr. Svoboda, and current Chair, Dr. Olden, to the development of this book and to preserving the history of the College for generations of gastroenterologists to come.

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The leadership of the College gratefully recognizes the able assistance of ACG staff to the development of this book.

ACG Archives

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The College extends its appreciation for the gracious collaboration of staff from the Dittrick Medical History Center at the Allen Medical Library at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, home of the ACG Archives. The generous contributions of archival materials, historical photographs, guidance, and the loan of medical artifacts to ACG’s archival projects generally, and to this volume in particular, are recognized with thanks.

Peter R. McNally, DO, FACP  
Dr. McNally, a past Trustee of the College, in his capacity as a U.S. Army physician, made an important contribution to the archives of the College by facilitating the gift of old volumes of The American Journal of Gastroenterology from the medical library of the Letterman Army Medical Center at the Presidio of San Francisco, California.

Thanks

Thomas F. Fise  
(ACG Director, Policy & Strategic Initiatives; ACG Executive Director 1984–2005)

The College recognizes Tom Fise’s encyclopedic knowledge and keen understanding of ACG’s past, present, and future. ACG is grateful for his contributions to our growth and numerous achievements, and we value his long and humble service to ensuring that our physician leaders shine. The ACG leadership thanks Tom for his role as a dedicated guardian of the College’s traditions, its reputation, its resources, and its most valuable asset, its people.

Bradley C. Stillman  
(ACG Executive Director)

The College is grateful to Brad Stillman for his energy, vision, and service to making ACG’s goals a reality. His capable leadership heralds the arrival of a new era for ACG.

Sandra Tillisch-Svoboda  
The College thanks Sandy Svoboda, whose loving support for her late husband, Al Svoboda, included significant administrative contributions to the genesis of this book.
In November 1932, a small group of physicians forms the Society for the Advancement of Gastroenterology. They perceive the need for an association for physicians with a clinical or research interest in gastrointestinal (GI) diseases. December 27: The society is incorporated by twelve physicians from New York City, Brooklyn, and Long Island.

1934

Plans for expansion of the Society for the Advancement of Gastroenterology are detailed in an undated document, probably written sometime this year. The society's flagship publication, *The Review of Gastroenterology*, makes its debut in March. One of the society's charter members, Samuel Weiss, MD, of New York City, is selected as editor. In September, the organization's name is changed to the National Society for the Advancement of Gastroenterology.

1936

In June, the society's first annual scientific convention takes place in Atlantic City, New Jersey. A total of twelve papers are presented.

1938

At a special meeting of the membership, the name of the society is changed again to the National Gastroenterological Association. In January, the first headquarters opens in New York City with a staff of three.

1939

The number of issues of the review is increased from four to six per year. Because of the association's many Latin American members, a Spanish edition is initiated.
1940–1949

1941 Daniel Weiss is appointed as the association’s first executive director.

1946 The Bulletin of the National Gastroenterological Association is first published; it would cease publication in 1982.

The association holds its first post-war scientific convention, which is a huge success.

An annual prize contest is inaugurated for the best unpublished contribution to gastroenterology. The contest is discontinued in 1973.

1947 On October 10, the commissioned Ryan Report, A Study on Organization of the National Gastroenterological Association, is issued. On November 17, the Executive Board receives the report.

The number of issues of The Review of Gastroenterology is increased from six to twelve per year.

1948 The Board of Trustees revises the constitution and bylaws and reorganizes the administration of the association. Limits are placed on the terms of office, and a vice president is elected from each of four designated regions of the country.

1949 President William Morrison helps establish the association’s first postgraduate course.

1941 1946 1947 1948 1949

1950–1959

1955 First editor-in-chief Samuel Weiss retires and is named editor emeritus.

1958 The Stuart Distinguished Lecture is inaugurated to honor physicians who have made exceptional contributions to gastroenterology.

1955 1966 1968

1966 The Samuel S. Weiss Award for outstanding service to the College is awarded biannually.
1950–1959

- **1950** The association’s leaders establish the Board of Governors, which replaces the old National Council.
- **1953** The Ladies’ Auxiliary, which has supplied helpful support to the organization through the years, is formed.
- **1954** The annual convention format is changed to three days of meetings followed by the postgraduate course.
  
  *The Review of Gastroenterology* is renamed *The American Journal of Gastroenterology.*

- **1955** The name of the organization is officially changed from the National Gastroenterological Association to the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG).
  
  The inaugural meeting of the Board of Governors is announced by its first chair, Henry Baker, MD.

- **1958** Upon the renewal of the meetings of the World Organization of Gastroenterology (OMGE), the College begins sending representatives to all OMGE meetings.

1970–1979

- **1970** An Advisory Council of Past Presidents is formed.

- **1973** Richard Marshak, radiologist at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City, establishes an award for the best radiological paper published in the journal.

- **1974** The Henry Baker Presidential Lectureship is established.

- **1977** ACG is designated a separate and alternate delegate to the American Medical Association House of Delegates.

  ACG establishes the David Sun Memorial Lecture, to be given annually at the postgraduate course.

  The College sends an official delegation to the First International Conference on Gastrointestinal Cancer, held in Israel.

- **1978** The Ladies’ Auxiliary establishes a lecture to be given annually by an outstanding woman in the field of gastroenterology.

- **1979** The first retreat of the Board of Trustees is held at Hilton Head Island, South Carolina.
1980–1989

1981  Daniel Weiss, executive director for forty years, retires.

ACG leaders recruit a management firm, the Professional Relations & Research Institute, to manage the business affairs of the College. Gardner McCormick is recruited to serve as executive director.

A Board of Governors’ task force meets at the Rye Town Hilton in New York to discuss the future of the Board of Governors and its relation to the membership and the Board of Trustees.

The College serves as the host organization for the Inter-American Society of Gastroenterology held in Bal Harbour, Florida.

1982  The College celebrates its fiftieth anniversary.

Guidelines for the training of gastroenterologists are prepared and published.


1983  The constitution and bylaws are revised to further streamline the organization.

The Research Committee becomes a standing committee.

Clinical research awards are established, and the first three winners are announced.

1985  ACG begins offering a board review course in alternating years at the annual meeting.

The three U.S.-based societies devoted to GI medicine—the American Gastroenterological Association (AGA), the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE), and the ACG—hold their first joint conference.

Daniel Barrett of the Professional Relations & Research Institute replaces Gardner McCormick as executive director.

The National Affairs Committee is established.

1986  The Ad Hoc Membership Committee sets goals to increase membership among women, trainees, and the academic community.

John Papp testifies on Capitol Hill regarding proposals for methods by which Medicare will pay physicians.

1987  ACG retains the Washington-based firm Health & Medicine Counsel of Washington, and later Medical Advocacy Services, Inc., to represent clinical gastroenterological interests politically.

In January, Thomas Fise becomes the fourth executive director of the College.

The first ACG Clinical Achievement Award is presented to Leonidas Berry, MD, in recognition of a lifetime of distinguished contributions to clinical gastroenterology.

1988  ACG headquarters moves to Arlington, Virginia.

The first ACG self-assessment test is introduced.

At ACG’s annual meeting, the first practice management seminar is introduced to aid members in coping with practice management problems.

1989  The Board of Governors now has representation from every state.

The title of master of the American College of Gastroenterology (MACG) is introduced.

A governor is designated for every province in Canada.

ACG develops “Current Topics in Gastroenterology.”

“The Governor’s Update” is designed to encourage all ACG governors to communicate regularly with their constituents at the local and state levels.

In May, Chesley Hines, Jr., MD, FACP, and Sarkis J. Chobanian, MD, MACG, are invited to testify before the House Ways and Means Committee.

Thomas Fise is appointed ACG Washington representative to work with the National Affairs Committee.
1990–1995

1990 Regional postgraduate courses are initiated.
The Regional Council of Governors is established.
The ACG Patient Care Committee Speakers’ Manual program is initiated.
The Ad Hoc Committee on Women in Gastroenterology is formed.
President Ronald Reagan is awarded the American College of Gastroenterology’s Distinguished Service Award.

1991 ACG initiates challenge to the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) on global surgery and the Resource-Based Relative Value Scale (RBRVS) fee schedule.

1992 The ACG, AGA, ASGE, and the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) establish the Gastroenterology Leadership Council (GLC).

1993 As a result of President Clinton’s proposed national health care reforms, ACG mandates a special dues assessment in March to marshal resources to participate in health care reform and to begin the push for a Medicare colorectal cancer screening benefit. ACG initiates a working relationship with Patton Boggs as legislative counsel.
ACG sponsors its first summer camp for children with GI conditions.
The first ACG legislative fly-in takes place.
AGC’s first GI physiology course is held in conjunction with the annual scientific meeting and postgraduate course.

1994 The ACG Institute for Clinical Research & Education (ACG Institute) is established. During the first year, more than $8 million is raised to educate physicians and the public about common GI diseases.
Astra Merck Inc. awards grant to AGA for *H. pylori* research.

1995 ACG practice management publications are released to aid the GI practitioner.
The International Relations Committee initiates an international training grants program that supports bringing selected physicians from around the world to the United States or Canada for additional education, training, and clinical research under ACG supervision.
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>The ACG Institute, with support from Astra Merck, initiates the ACG National Public Information and Education Campaign on GERD. The first ACG Board of Governors course is held. The William D. Carey Award, Freshman Governor’s Award, and Senior Governor’s Award are established.</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>In May, ACG trustees visit the White House to receive a briefing from leading Clinton administration officials on the Medicare program, the prospect on legislation to enact preventive benefits for colorectal cancer screening, HCFA’s anticipated rule-making on practice expenses, and the recently concluded balanced budget agreement. In August, President Clinton signs into law the bill enacting a Medicare colorectal cancer screening benefit. The first GI structure and function course is held in conjunction with the annual scientific meeting and postgraduate course.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Christina M. Surawicz is elected as the College’s first woman president. The Junior Faculty Development Award grant is increased to $40,000 per year for two years.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>The first GI pharmacology course is held in conjunction with the annual scientific meeting and postgraduate course.</td>
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</table>
2000 In July, ACG President-elect Rowen K. Zetterman (also acting as chair-elect of the Board of Regents of the American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine) presented testimony before the House Energy and Commerce Committee relating to HCFA’s site-of-service differential policy, including the proposed legislative fix crafted by ACG’s National Affairs Committee.

Virginia state Senator Emily Couric is awarded the American College of Gastroenterology’s Distinguished Service Award in October for her successful efforts in sponsoring Virginia’s new colon cancer screening law, which is the most comprehensive in the nation.

2001 The Junior Faculty Development Award grant is increased to $50,000 per year for two years.

2002 The ACG Institute begins a capital campaign with the goal of doubling its grant-making capacity and resources available for educational programs.

In November, the College introduces an irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) education campaign with the publication of evidence-based recommendations on IBS treatment as a supplement to *The American Journal of Gastroenterology*.

2003 The ACG Clinical Achievement Award is renamed the Berk/Fise Clinical Achievement Award in honor of J. Edward Berk and Thomas Fise.

First ACG Governors fly-in to Washington, DC, is held.

The College introduces the patient education component of the multiyear, multimedia IBS campaign initiative.

*The American Journal of Gastroenterology* Lecture is initiated at the annual meeting.

Joel Richter, MD, MACG and Nicholas Talley, MD, PhD, FACG become the first co-editors of *The American Journal of Gastroenterology*.

2004 The first GI recertification course is held in conjunction with the annual scientific meeting and postgraduate course.

The annual David Y. Graham Lecture is established at the annual scientific meeting.

2005 In February, ACG moves to its new headquarters building in Bethesda, Maryland.

The Junior Faculty Development Award grant is increased to $75,000 per year for two years.

The first phase of the ACG Institute’s $12 million capital campaign is achieved.

The *ACG SmartBrief* twice-weekly electronic newsletter is established.

2006 Thomas Fise, Esq., retires as Executive Director; Bradley C. Stillman, Esq., becomes the College’s fifth Executive Director.

ACG introduces ACG Education Universe, an online, self-directed continuing medical education program.

ACG introduces the online self-assessment test, a detailed examination for trainees and established practitioners.

The Emily Couric Memorial Lecture is founded to honor the Virginia state senator who helped establish state-based guidelines for colorectal cancer screening.