



The New Orleans Pharmacy Museum Self-Guided Tour

Please be aware of your physical distance and your visit length.

SECOND FLOOR

Living Quarters and Architecture

The second and third floors of the building served as living quarters during the time of the Dufilho pharmacy. The pocket doors that divide the first and second rooms, topped with decorative glass, were commonly used to divide large living spaces into more intimate parlors. The triple hung windows that grace both the building's street-side and rear walls (opening into the loggia) provide another opportunity for air circulation and double as the entryways into the living quarters from the stairwell; fourteen foot ceilings provide room for the hot air to rise, further cooling the living space.

Exhibits: First & Second Rooms

The second-floor houses both seasonal exhibits and additional permanent collections. Upon entering, along the left wall resides the Museum's oldest piece of furniture: a cypress pharmaceutical cabinet dating from the 1790s. The graceful, curved-glass cabinets were carved in New Orleans c. 1860 and were shipped to the Legoll Pharmacy in New York; returned to Louisiana upon their donation to Tulane University, they currently house a large collection of the Museum's shelf bottles.

Historic Midwifery and Obstetrics

This exhibit examines the practice of midwifery in Louisiana from the colonial era through the 20th century, when home-based births attended by midwives were largely replaced by births in hospitals attended by obstetricians. Highlighted are the stories of 18th century French midwives Catherine Moulouis and Marie Grissot, and 19th century plantation midwife and free woman of color Aimée Potens. Follow a chronological arc - from the contents of a 19th century midwifery bag, herbal remedies, a birthing stool, and newspaper advertisements from working midwives in New Orleans; through the progressive regulation of midwives in the late 19th century; to the early 20th century implementation of public health legislation that sent nurses into communities to teach sanitation to unlicensed midwives, and required the use of drops of silver nitrate in babies' eyes to prevent the transmission of gonorrhea.

Also, on display is a collection of obstetrical and gynecological instruments. This is accompanied by explanation of some of the difficulties accompanying childbirth – from the life-threatening

possibility of contracting puerperal fever before doctors understood the critical importance of handwashing, to pain management, to the stories of early cesarean sections.

To Make Common Ink

This exhibit explores the colorful history of ink and ink making. Topics include iron gall ink history, chemistry, and corrosion, as well as alchemy and pigment making, rubric, verditer and verdigris. Included in the display are scrolls made with inks formulated by ink maker and artist **Thomas Little**, creator of the exhibit in collaboration with the Pharmacy Museum.

Dr. J. William Rosenthal Spectacles Collection

This extensive collection of eyeglasses, ophthalmic instruments and texts includes items from the United States, Europe, Japan and China, chronicling the development of vision care from 1750 to the 1950s. In addition to a large variety of spectacles in many designs, view eye baths, surgical instruments and charms that speak of both religious and superstitious beliefs associated with the eye. The collection has been on permanent donation from Dr. J. William Rosenthal—a local ophthalmologist, author and ophthalmic consultant for the Smithsonian Institution—since 1998.

Local Excavated Bottles

Sharing space with the Rosenthal Spectacles Collection is the Museum's assemblage of bottles from pharmacies operating in the New Orleans area in the 19th and 20th Centuries. Many of the bottles have been excavated locally and donated to the Museum; two indexes of historical local pharmacies provide a more personal connection to the history of pharmacy in New Orleans.

The Housecall – The Afflicted, The Indecent, & The Indisposed

Upon the transfer of the building from Dufilho Jr. to Dr. J. Dupas in 1855, the second floor living quarters were converted into offices for the doctor's medical practice; operation of the pharmacy and medical practice were continued until Dupas' death in 1871. This exhibit explores the role of the physician during the 19th Century and pays tribute to the building's legacy as a place of both medical and pharmaceutical significance.

The exhibit is arranged to represent a "sick room". Nineteenth century physicians often traveled to treat the infirm in their homes, as the unsanitary condition of hospitals discouraged patronage by patients who could afford home healthcare. The half-tester bed and armoires are of the Mallard School and were carved in New Orleans in the 1860s. Half- and full-tester beds were common as they supported mosquito netting in the summer and warm drapery in the winter. On display is a collection of bedpans, a wheelchair, a doctors' bag, a home electrotherapy device and a selection of treatments for ailments ranging from malaria to neurasthenia to constipation.