

## Happy Birthday Homeopathy

by author Jo Twiss, DCH

This month, thousands of homeopaths around the world are celebrating the 250th anniversary of the birth of Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy. Over two-dozen homeopathic groups from five continents are organizing activities in their own countries, part of a coordinated worldwide Homeopathy Awareness Week, April 10 to 16, 2005.

Canada's Homeopathy Awareness Week (HAW) activities are sponsored by the West Coast Homeopathic Society (WCHS). The Society has members from across Canada who are presenting free educational events designed to introduce the benefits of homeopathy to the public. These events will include lectures, information booths, mini-clinics, "meet and greets," and open houses. Most events will include draws for first-aid remedy kits provided by HAW's corporate partner Dolisos Canada, a leading manufacturer of homeopathic products. Other WCHS homeopaths will offer various draws, coupons, and special rates during this week.

### The Founder of Homeopathy

Homeopathy is a distinct system of medicine that provides natural, gentle, and effective treatment for almost all manner of physical, mental, and emotional conditions and diseases. It is based on universal principles, some of which had been alluded to by many of history's great thinkers. However, it took the brilliant German physician Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843) to bring these disparate theories together into one unified system of medicine.

### The Law of Similars

Hahnemann was motivated by a desire to end the barbaric medical practises of his day—bleeding, purging, and toxic chemicals—and to develop a more humane and effective method of treating patients. His first breakthrough came in 1790 when he discovered that a common malarial treatment, quinine, could cause the same symptoms it was used to cure. He tested quinine on himself and was amazed to find that he developed the same symptoms as malaria. This discovery led him to develop the cornerstone of homeopathic philosophy—that a substance is capable of both causing and curing the same symptoms—known as the Law of Similars.

In subsequent years, Hahnemann and his family and friends tested many other commonly prescribed substances, meticulously recording details of any symptoms or changes that they experienced. The results of these early tests or "provings" were compiled into the first homeopathic materia medica, which was published in 1805.

### The *Organon*

Hahnemann's experiments led him to discover other tenets of homeopathic medicine that he described in six editions of his most popular book, known as the *Organon*. Successive editions of the *Organon* revealed a radically different understanding of health, disease, and curative action. They also presented his developing protocols for manufacturing and administering homeopathic medicines.

Over the past two centuries, millions of people have benefited from Hahnemann's development of homeopathic medicine. These include Canadian suffragist Emily Stowe, Indian nationalist Mahatma Gandhi, and the late Queen Mother who lived more than 100 years. Today, homeopathy is widely practised around the world.

You can learn about the benefits of homeopathy at HAW events this month. Check the HAW page on the WCHS website at [wchs.info](http://wchs.info) for up-to-date information on activities planned in your community.

*Jo Twiss, DCH, is President of West Coast Homeopathic Society and practises classical homeopathy at the Peace Arch Homeopathic Centre, White Rock, BC.*