In 1992, the Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology (WLM) Board of Trustees voted to establish an International Laureate of the History of Anesthesia Program to promote understanding of the importance of the heritage of anesthesia and to an outstanding contributor to this heritage every four years.

The medal, owned by only six people in the world, is named for Nicholas M. Greene, M.D., whose original idea and execution of this idea we continue to this day. This is the most prestigious award that the WLM bestows to an outstanding scholar and contributor to the field of anesthesia history.

Dr. Greene envisioned awarding the title “Laureate of the History of Anesthesia” as the premiere international honor for scholarship in the field of anesthesia history. In his own words describing this post, he wrote: “Though accompanied by no prescribed duties, the post of Laureate carries with it the expectation that the Laureate will remain active in publication of historical materials and will contribute to the education of anaesthetists and others, by lectures and participation in panels and seminars.”
George S. Bause, M.D., M.P.H.
2016 Laureate of the History of Anesthesia

The WLM is pleased and honored to induct the 2016 Laureate of the History of Anesthesia, George S. Bause, M.D., M.P.H., at 8:00 a.m. on Sunday, October 23, 2016, in Room W375b at McCormick Place, prior to his Lewis H. Wright Memorial Lecture, in Chicago, Illinois.

George Stephen Bause is the oldest child of Suzanne Bause and USAF Colonel Henry Bause (Ret.), onetime chaplain to Cape Canaveral’s astronauts. An Eagle Scout and military dependent – living in 12 homes in 20 years, including four years in Europe – George learned to pack items, cross borders and appease authorities who would later challenge him as the “Indiana Jones of anesthesia antiques.”

As Edinburgh’s St. Andrews Scholar (1975-76), George forsook the Scottish Universities Research Reactor for Pennsylvania’s Ursinus College. There, while computer-sweeping Homer’s Iliad for musical backdrop, he met future wife Ramona and earned his B.S., cum laude (1977, Biophysics). Following his M.P.H. (Epidemiology), M.D. (1981), and anesthesiology training at Johns Hopkins University, Dr. Bause drafted a protocol for America’s first Fellowship in Geriatric Anesthesiology (NIH-Hopkins).

He launched departmental anesthesia museums at Johns Hopkins and then at Yale, while an associate professor. Since 1987, Dr. Bause has curated ASA’s Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology (WLM). While a clinical associate professor at Case Western Reserve University, he shipped rare books or hand-carried anesthesia antiques back to the WLM from all seven continents. Curator Bause has amassed the world’s finest collection of pre-1850 anesthesia inhalers, including ones designed by Robinson and Squire.

Dr. Bause’s popular “Anesthesiology Reflections” and 605 total publications (348 in peer-reviewed journals), exhibits, and acquisitions were hailed as “simply stunning” and “nearly unfathomable” by the editors-in-chief in 2015 of Anesthesiology and the Journal of Anesthesia History (JAH), respectively. The past editor-in-chief of Anesthesia & Analgesia named Dr. Bause “the driving force” behind his journal’s only historical issue. JAH’s editor-in-chief accused “founding deputy editor” Bause of delivering “ripping lectures” on six continents as anesthesia history’s “best ambassador.” A member of the “highest-per-mill-IQ” Triple Nine Society and American Osler Society, Dr. Bause is the only physician-fellow of the American Academy of the History of Dentistry and is the current president of the Academy of Anesthesiology.

Dr. Bause was awarded the Laureate by an international panel of judges of notable medical historians and active leaders in the history of anesthesiology, critical care and pain medicine.