



This Halloween, we're sharing treats, not tricks! Between our collections and programming, you can discover connections between the past and present, and the worlds of science, art, and more. Our current exhibit, *American Medicine at a Crossroads*, continues into November for your viewing pleasure. Make sure to register for our upcoming virtual programs on unique chapters in American medical history!

THREE-PART VIRTUAL  
PROGRAM SERIES

## THE THOMSONIANS

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2025  
7-8 PM

Explore this 19th-century herbal medicine system that aimed to regulate body heat through a six-step healing process. Founded by itinerant healer Samuel Thomson in 1805, the movement grew rapidly, with millions of users by 1830.

A photograph showing several glass jars filled with dried herbs and flowers, with fresh yellow daisies and green leaves in the foreground.

When: Wednesday, October 22, 7-8 p.m.

Where: **Virtual Program**

Join medical historian and author John S. Haller, Jr. virtually to explore a unique movement encompassing both medical and business techniques. Founded by Samuel Thomson (1769-1843), this 19th-century system of alternative medicine was based on herbal treatments designed to regulate the body's heat through a six-step process of healing. Thomson began his practice in 1805 and, with the help of others, sold "rights" to his patented medical system to an estimated 2 million Americans by 1830. **Registration required.**

[Register for the Virtual Program](#)

## Forest Immersion has Sold Out

As the upcoming *Forest Immersion* program has sold out at Mt. Airy Forest, we want to remind readers of our two virtual programs in October and November with medical historian and author John S. Haller, Jr. If you haven't already, see medical history come to life through our *American Medicine at a Crossroads* exhibition, featuring rare books and items from our collections. Find out about and register for all upcoming programs through our [events calendar](#)!



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## A Spooky History of Plants



As Halloween approaches, we've unearthed in our collection *Plant Lore, Legends, and Lyrics* (1884) by Richard Folkard, a fascinating Victorian-era exploration of the mythic and folkloric dimensions of the plant world. Chapters like "Plants of the Devil" and "Plants of the Witches" reveal how superstition and symbolism mixed with botany in early modern Europe.

From herbs believed to grant flight to those said to ward off evil, Folkard's work offers a glimpse into the cultural imagination surrounding plants once feared or revered for their otherworldly powers—a reminder of how deeply human history and plant lore are entwined.

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**November 1 is the deadline to apply for  
2026 Fellowships and Artists-in-Residence**

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