



USA Anthroposophic Pharmacy Journey 2026

A report and newsletter
reflection

Overview

In May 2026 I had the privilege of travelling to New York State and Wisconsin to spend time with people and places deeply involved in anthroposophic medicine and pharmacy. What follows is not simply a formal report, but a shared reflection on what I saw, learned, questioned, and brought back with me.

I am very grateful to those whose financial support helped make this possible. Because many of you are also colleagues and friends in the work, I have tried to keep the living thread of the journey intact — the meetings, the conversations, the practical pharmacy work, the humour, the landscapes, and the questions that continue to work on me.

Purpose of the Visit

The purpose of the visit was not so much to gain a basic understanding of anthroposophic pharmacy, but to experience how it lives in another place. I wanted to stand alongside others doing this work, see how the growing, pharmacy, clinical practice, community life, and landscape speak to one another, and feel what becomes possible when the work is carried within a larger organism.

Working as a compounding pharmacist in Aotearoa New Zealand, I carry a deep and committed relationship to this work already. What I was seeking was the experience of meeting the same impulse in a different setting — to be refreshed by it, challenged by it, and to bring home questions about how anthroposophic medicine might continue to develop here in a way that is true to this land.

Camphill Copake: Community, Land, and Medicine



Healing Plant Gardens, new laboratory behind

The first part of the visit was based around Camphill Copake. There was a strong sense there of medicine being held within community life rather than separated from it. Meals, conversations, land work, clinical work, and spiritual study all seemed to belong to one larger whole.



One of the early highlights was spending time with the vegetabilised metal beds and hearing Albert speak in the main hall on anthroposophical pharmacy as a modern Rosicrucian-chemical path. The lecture moved from Hermes, Paracelsus, Goethe, and Rudolf Steiner into very practical questions of how substance, process, and human intention come together in pharmacy.



*Sunday Lunch at
Aillinn House*

There was also something very nourishing in the ordinary human details: shared lunches, walks through the village, conversations with Steven at the medical office, and joining work in the Red Barn. Pressing *Petasites hybridus* after its seven-day rhythmical fermentation process, talking with Marc about ashes and colloidal silica, and transplanting seedlings into the garden all helped ground the more esoteric content in hands-on work.



Heart Spring Gardens at MettaBee Farm

Travelling with Marc and Albert to MettaBee Farm in Hillsdale opened another important window into the work. Heart Spring Gardens, having lost their previous growing land, have been offered a new home at MettaBee. This is their first year there, and it was moving to see both the fragility and the promise of a new beginning.

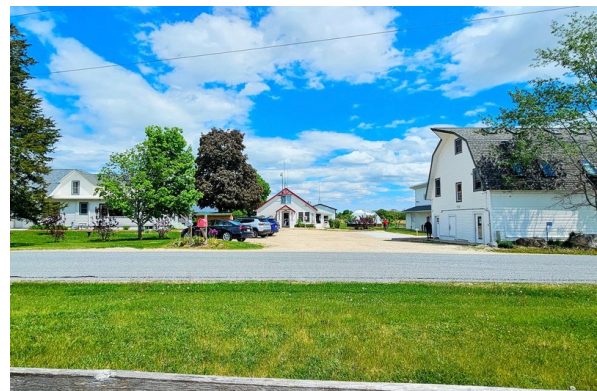


We met with Ben Davis, Jean-David, Steven Johnson, and others, walked the planned growing areas, looked through the greenhouse, and spoke about the future vision. Some beds will be cultivated more formally, while other areas along the stream are being allowed to develop in a more naturalised way, with plants such as *Aconitum*, *Hemlock*, and *Helleborus* present.

I had brought small gifts from home — a piece of pounamu, together with Liz Alington's

writings; tinctures of Kawakawa and Kūmarahou, and some Healing Lands Bush Bitters and Pounamu Salves. The Bush Bitters Salve was put to immediate use on a tick bite, with encouraging feedback the next day. It was a small moment, but one that made the exchange feel very real: not just visiting and observing, but bringing something of home into relationship.

Uriel Pharmacy: Process, Substance, and Community



Archangel Uriel; Tool Shed Restaurant; Uriel Pharmacy, East Troy

The second part of the journey took us to Uriel Pharmacy in East Troy, Wisconsin. Arriving there felt like entering another expression of the same work: more focused around the pharmacy itself, but still held by people, rhythm, place, and shared intention. The course days began early, with breakfast, a morning meditation using chakra visualisation and the Peace Dance verse, followed by an Echo session where people shared what had arisen overnight from the work of the previous day. I appreciated this rhythm very much. It allowed the practical pharmacy work to be carried not only technically, but inwardly as well.



Much of the week centered on the creation of the copper fertiliser used in the vegetabilised metal growing process. Beginning with malachite, the work moved through a threefold dissolving and contracting sequence. It was demanding, intricate, and at times humbling. The process required attention at every stage: how the substance was dissolved, how it was brought back, how heat, timing, gesture, and observation all mattered. It made very clear the anthroposophic emphasis that the way a substance is treated — the process itself — is not secondary, but essential.

What was especially valuable for me was seeing how this work was held in an actual pharmacy setting. It was not presented as an idea floating above practice, but as something worked through on benches, with equipment, raw materials, documentation, questions, interruptions, and all the ordinary realities of making medicines. That was very encouraging. It helped me feel again that anthroposophic pharmacy asks for both exactness and imagination.

Alongside the copper work, we had sessions on topical preparations, oral dose forms, sterile preparations; triturations, tinctures, globuli, capsules, syrups, injectable and eye preparations, organ therapies, and the many practical questions that arise when theory meets pharmacy benches, starting materials, excipients, people, and regulation. I found it particularly useful to see how familiar principles were interpreted in another context, with different regulatory pressures, different source materials, and a different scale of work.



Main Production Area



There was a great deal of technical detail, but it never felt merely technical. Questions of substance, form, rhythm, gesture, and therapeutic intention were constantly present. The sessions brought home for me that anthroposophic pharmacy is not only about knowing which preparation to make, but about learning how to meet the substance in a way that allows it to become medicine.

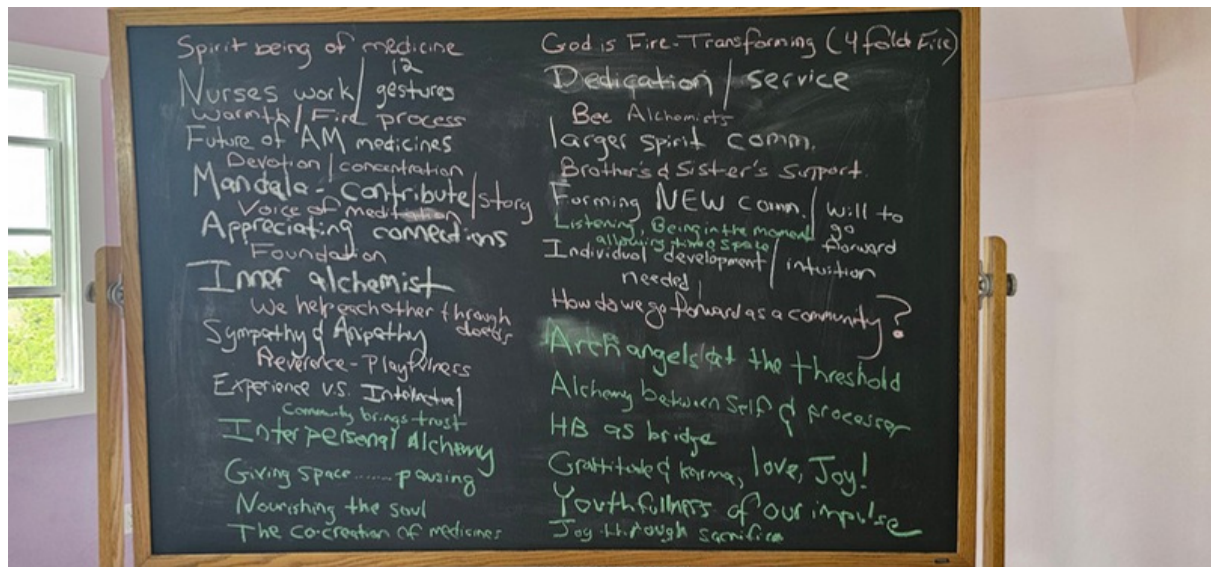
There were also rich lecture sessions from Mark McKibben, Albert Schmidli, and Steven Johnson. These lectures gave the practical work a wider context and helped me place what we were doing at the bench within the longer biography of Uriel Pharmacy, the questions of American geographic medicine, and the inner path of medicine-making itself.

Mark spoke about his own biography and future of Uriel Pharmacy, which was particularly helpful for understanding that Uriel is not simply an institution or a manufacturer, but a living organism with its own history, challenges, responsibilities, and future questions. Hearing about the development of the pharmacy made me think about the long patience required for this work, and about how an impulse can be carried by people over time through very practical decisions.

Albert's lectures opened the more esoteric and alchemical stream behind the pharmacy work. The Rosicrucian-alchemical path; and the elemental trials on the esoteric path helped me sense again that pharmacy is not just the handling of substances, but also a schooling of perception, patience, courage, and exactness. I found myself listening not only for information, but for indications of how to stand more rightly in relation to substance and process.

Steven Johnson's contribution around geographic medicine was also very significant for me. It touched directly on questions I carry in New Zealand: how medicines arise out of place, how landscape and substance speak differently in different parts of the world, and how we might develop an anthroposophic medicine impulse in Aotearoa that is not a copy of Europe or America, but is in genuine conversation with this land.

The lectures also carried very practical guidance. I came away with a number of "gold nuggets", including: "Stick to what you do"; "What does the spiritual world support?"; and "It is okay to adjust to what is needed." These phrases have stayed with me because they speak both to discipline and to flexibility. They felt like reminders to remain faithful to the work I am actually called to do, while also being awake enough to adapt when the situation, the substance, or the place asks for something different.



Echo board

Questions and Learnings I Brought Home

- The importance of process, not just substance, in the making of medicines.
- The value of growers, pharmacists, practitioners, and communities working in conscious relationship.
- The need to keep asking what a plant, mineral, or preparation wants to become, and what pharmaceutical process can help it do that.
- The possibility of exploring local substances more deeply, including questions such as what New Zealand minerals could have a place in future preparations.
- The encouragement to keep developing anthroposophic medicine in Aotearoa in a way that is true to this land, rather than simply copying overseas forms.
- The reminder that the journey took place between Ascension and Whitsun, which gave the whole visit a particular spiritual atmosphere and timing.

A Personal Reflection

The enduring memory of the trip is of a group of people gathered around the future of anthroposophic medicines with real intensity, warmth, and devotion. Growers, pharmacists, doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners, naturopaths, herbalists, and others each carried their part of the work. It was not neat or abstract. It was alive, practical, sometimes complex, and full of questions.



For me the journey became one of self-affirmation. It gave me a glimpse of a possible path forward for anthroposophic medicine in Aotearoa — with all the twists, turns, backtracks, and unexpected openings that any real path contains.

The timing of the visit, held largely in the space between Ascension and Whitsun, also gave the journey a particular quality. It felt less like a professional development trip alone and more like a threshold experience: receiving something, testing it inwardly, and then asking how it might become fruitful here.

With Thanks

Thank you again to everyone who helped make this journey possible. Your support did not just fund travel; it enabled relationship, learning, practical experience, and renewed courage for the work here. I hope this report gives you a sense of what was received and how it may continue to bear fruit. Indeed the first step is the November Retreat: Making Medicine to be held at Mangarara Farm in Hawkes Bay.

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Banner Image at top: view of Hudson Valley from on top of Monument Mountain, Great Barrington.