

NEWS and NOTES

This department furnishes information concerning institutions, organizations, and individuals engaged in work on leprosy and other mycobacterial diseases, and makes note of scientific meetings and other matters of interest.

Mr. Robert Watelet Receives the 1980 Damien-Dutton Award



Mr. Robert Watelet

The 1980 Damien-Dutton Award has been given to Mr. Robert Watelet.

Mr. Watelet was born in Farciennes, Belgium, on 24 May 1926 and began his career in leprosy in 1950 under the Belgian Red Cross in the environs of Pawa in the Equator Province of the Belgian Congo. Recognizing the significance of the sulfone drugs, which were being introduced into this area at that time, he helped organize and direct teams of trained national workers to participate in antileprosy work as part of an integrated general health care delivery sys-

tem. Thus even at a very early date, Mr. Watelet was a key person in establishing a system that contains what is frequently viewed as an ideal leprosy service today.

In June 1960 the Belgian Congo became the independent nation of Zaire, and political unrest at that time obliged Mr. Watelet temporarily to participate in other antileprosy activities. To prepare himself more adequately for his service he spent a year in training at the Christian Medical College, Vellore, India. Following this preparation, Mr. Watelet was designated a career work-

er in the Belgian Program of Cooperation with the Developing Countries and assigned to the Hôpital de la Rive (The National Leprosarium) in Kinshasa. In 1963 Mr. Watelet became the representative in Zaire for Les Amis du Père Damien (APD) and the Fondation Père Damien (FOPERDA).

Of particular note in Mr. Watelet's devotion to the cause of leprosy patients in Zaire are the following activities: 1) beginning a program of physical rehabilitation for leprosy patients at the Hôpital de la Rive, including the first manufacture of protective footwear for leprosy patients in the country; 2) establishment of vocational rehabilitation programs for leprosy patients through the creation of numerous small industries to enable patients to attain economic independence; 3) valuable service as a liaison between the voluntary agencies working in Zaire and the Zairian government; and 4) organization of both local and

national programs for the celebration of World Leprosy Day in Zaire, including the preparation of promotional literature, broadcasts, and management of contributions received.

In 1978, Mr. Watelet was appointed an Attaché to the "Commissaire d'Etat à la Santé Publique" (Ministry of Public Health), signifying recognition by the Zairian government of his contributions to health care in the country.

Mr. Watelet represents the large body of dedicated and deeply devoted professionals who, although not physicians, are instrumental in maintaining and advancing leprosy care programs under extremely adverse circumstances in a spirit of humility, selfless commitment, and tireless service.

Arrangements are still pending at present as to the exact date when the presentation of the Award will take place.—(*Adapted from materials provided by Dr. Wayne M. Meyers and the Damien-Dutton Society*)

Previous Recipients of the Damien-Dutton Award

1953 Stanley Stein, U.S.A.	1967 Dr. Howard A. Rusk, U.S.A.
1954 Rev. Joseph Sweeney, KOREA	1968 Dr. Franz Hemerijckx, BELGIUM
1955 Sister Marie Suzanne, FRANCE	1969 Dr. Victor George Heiser, U.S.A.
1956 Perry Burgess, U.S.A.	1970 Dr. Dharmendra, INDIA
1957 John Farrow, U.S.A.	1971 Dr. Chapman H. Binford, U.S.A.
1958 Sister Hilary Ross, U.S.A.	1972 Dr. Patricia Smith, VIETNAM
1959 Dr. H. Windsor Wade, PHILIPPINES	1973 Dr. Jacinto Convit, VENEZUELA
1960 Mgr. Louis Joseph Mendelis, U.S.A.	1974 Dr. José N. Rodriguez, PHILIPPINES
1961 Dr. Kensuke Mitsuda, JAPAN	1975 Dr. Oliver Hasselblad, U.S.A.
1962 Rev. Pierre de Orgeval, FRANCE	1976 Dr. Yoshio Yoshie, JAPAN
1963 Eunice Weaver, BRAZIL	1977 Drs. Paul and Margaret Brand, U.S.A.
1964 Dr. Robert G. Cochrane, GREAT BRITAIN	1978 Dr. Fernando Latapí, MEXICO
1965 John F. Kennedy, U.S.A. (Posthumous)	1979 Dr. Stanley G. Browne, U.K.
1966 Peace Corps, U.S.A.	

Argentina. *Leprosy conference held.* La Sociedad Argentina de Leprología celebrará la II Sesión Ordinaria y Asamblea Anual, el Sábado 13 de Diciembre del corriente año en el Policlínico Carrasco, Boulevard Avellaneda 1400, Rosario. El tema central de la mesa redonda fue la fisiopatología de la reacción leprosa.—(*Adapted from materials provided by Dr. J. C. Gatti*)

India. *Ten year report from Acworth issued.* The Acworth Leprosy Hospital Society for Research, Rehabilitation and Ed-

ucation in Leprosy has issued a ten year report of activities for the period of 1970–1980. The research activities of the Society have focused primarily on epidemiology, laboratory studies, clinical studies, and clinical trials of drugs. Rehabilitation projects have involved production of protective footwear for leprosy patients, creation of tailoring and carpentry sections, and financial assistance to leprosy patients to help them start their own businesses. Educational commitments included sponsoring both popular and scholarly lectures on lep-

rosy; publication of leaflets, letters, posters, and charts; scientific meetings; and exhibitions. Additionally, a total of 20 research papers by persons associated with the society have been published in scientific journals during this period.—(*Adapted from the report provided by Shri S. S. Naik*)

Microbiological meeting held. The Association of Microbiologists of India and The Foundation for Medical Research, Bombay, jointly sponsored an International Symposium on *Mycobacterium leprae* and other atypical mycobacteria from 5–6 February 1981 at the Hotel Poonam International, Worli, Bombay. Problems of cultivation, identification, integration of knowledge concerning the various mycobacteria, and techniques of study were discussed. A total of 25 papers presented by invited scientists from India, Japan, United Kingdom, Belgium, U.S.A., Canada, Federal Republic of Germany, and Senegal were presented. Approximately 250 persons were in attendance.—(*Adapted from materials provided by Dr. P. R. Mahadevan*)

Ireland. *Four scientists win award in recognition of leprosy research.* The UNESCO Science Prize for 1980 has been awarded jointly to a group from the Laboratories of the Medical Research Council of Ireland, Dr. J. G. Belton, M.R.I.A., Dr. M. L. Conalty, M.R.I.A., Dr. J. F. O'Sullivan and Dr. D. Twomey, M.R.I.A., for the discovery of the anti-leprosy agent clofazimine, and to Dr. L. Mata of Costa Rica for his work on malnutrition and infection.

The Prize, which was to be presented at UNESCO House in Paris at the end of May, is awarded biennially to an individual or group to acknowledge "an outstanding contribution, through the application of science and technology, to the development of a developing Member State or region." It is open to all Member States of the United Nations, each government being entitled to nominate one candidate. This is the first occasion an Irish nomination has been made.

In 1944 a Medical Research Council of Ireland team, headed by the late Dr. Vincent C. Barry, was set up to develop new

antituberculosis agents and, since then, has also been engaged in the development of compounds for other bacterial diseases and for the treatment of cancer.

In the course of their investigations a series of compounds (rimino-phenazines) was discovered, many of which were found to be active against tuberculosis in experimental animals. Because it was observed that these agents concentrated within cells of a type in which leprosy bacilli were known to develop, arrangements were made for a clinical trial of the most active compound, B663 (clofazimine), in leprosy by Drs. S. G. Browne and L. M. Hogerzeil in Nigeria. This and other extensive trials established clofazimine as a first line drug in the treatment of leprosy.

Three members of the group (Dr. M. L. Conalty, Dr. J. F. O'Sullivan and Dr. D. Twomey) visited India in March/April 1980 under the auspices of the Department of Foreign Affairs to advise on the manufacture of clofazimine by IDL Chemicals Ltd. of Hyderabad and Bangalore, who, in collaboration with the Central Drug Research Institute of the Indian Government, are to undertake the production of clofazimine for sale in India on a non-profit basis.

In addition to the foregoing, Drs. O'Sullivan and Conalty, in collaboration with Dr. N. E. Morrison of Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A., are now in the fourth year of a project, funded in part by the World Health Organization, to develop new analogs of clofazimine, which would be active against clofazimine-resistant strains of *M. leprae* should these emerge.

The members of the Irish research team, who were to be presented with the Prize on 25 May 1981 during the 112th session of the Executive Board of UNESCO, were nominated to UNESCO by the Irish Government in consultation with the Irish National Commission and on the advice of the Royal Irish Academy.—(*Adapted from materials provided by Dr. M. L. Conalty*)

Italy. *Leprosy symposium meets.* The European Leprosy Symposium, a symposium on leprosy in light skinned people, was held at the Gran Hotel Miramare, Santa Margherita Ligure, near Genoa, from 1–3 May 1981. A total of 23 presentations in

six different sessions was given as well as extensive case presentations. Among the topics discussed were diagnosis, laboratory methods, identification of *M. leprae*, epidemiology, immunology, clinical classification, histopathology of the skin, nerve damage, reactions, management of complications, chemotherapy, and patient compliance with chemotherapy.—(*Adapted from official program and correspondence*)

People's Republic of China. *ILA President visits China.* At the invitation of the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, Dr. Michel F. Lechat, President of the International Leprosy Association (ILA), spent three weeks in China from 16 March to 4 April 1981.

The locations visited by Dr. Lechat included the National Institute of Dermatology, Tai-zhou, Jiangsu, leprosy institutions in Shanghai (Zeng Yi Hospital), and Qinghu (Jiangsu), research laboratories, and leprosy control stations in urban and rural areas in Shanghai municipality, and Guangdong Province. Discussions were held at the Ministry of Health in Beijing and at the

Academy of Sciences regarding cooperation between the ILA and Chinese scientists. Dr. Lechat gave a series of lectures on the "Epidemiological basis for leprosy control" and other related topics in Yangzhou, Tai-zhou, Shanghai, and Guangzhou (Canton).

On the occasion of his visit to the National Institute of Dermatology, Dr. Lechat presented Professor Ye Gan-yun, Vice Director, and Contributing Editor to the INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LEPROSY for China with those issues of the JOURNAL known to be missing in the library of the Institute.—(*Adapted from materials provided by Dr. Lechat*)

Switzerland. *Financial problems of tropical diseases research discussed.* Greater financial resources must be mobilized by the international community if promising new research results are to benefit persons suffering from tropical diseases, participants agreed at the third meeting of the Joint Coordinating Board, Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, held on 10–11 December



Dr. Michel F. Lechat presents missing issues of the JOURNAL to Dr. Ye Gan-yun.

1980 at WHO headquarters, Geneva. Members of this governing body of the Programme approved a 1981 work program and budget of US\$ 30 million, a real increase of 4.5% over 1980. Concern was expressed, however, that contributions pledged for 1981 fall seven million dollars short of this figure.

The financial problem was elucidated by Dr. A. B. Morrison (Canada), chairman of the Programme's Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee. He said that unless inflationary and currency pressures are compensated for, the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the program could be crippled in the short term. Over the long term, additional resources must be mobilized to permit large scale trials of new tools for prevention and treatment presently under development such as anti-malaria and anti-leprosy drugs as well as field testing of a leprosy vaccine.—(*Adapted from Trop. Med. Hyg. News* 30 [1981] 15–16)

Availability of new publication detailed. The *EMR Newsletter*, No. 1, October 1980 is the first of a series which will deal with health problems and health activities in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region. Regarding leprosy, the newsletter reports that large scale and well organized programs are in operation in Egypt, Pakistan, and Sudan. Control programs are in preparation in Somalia and the Yemen Arab Republic. Additional control programs in the region will require further review to achieve maximum effectiveness. A strong need still exists to disseminate knowledge about diagnosis, treatment, and prevention both among leprosy workers and the general public.—(*Adapted from WHO Chronicle* 34 [1980] p. 488 and p. 490)

The Netherlands. *Dutch leprologist honored.* Dr. Derk Luitjen Leiker has recently been awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Amsterdam in recognition of his contributions in the fight against leprosy.

Dr. Leiker began his career in leprosy work as a missionary doctor in the former Netherlands New Guinea. Later, he turned to research, dealing with the creation of classification norms among other problems, and is the author of over 80 publications.

A co-founder and advisor to the Netherlands Leprosy Relief Association, Dr. Leiker is presently a senior staff member of the leprology department at the Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam. Additionally, he is a member of the WHO Expert Panel on Leprosy and medical advisor to the All Africa Leprosy and Rehabilitation Training Centre, Addis Ababa, as well as to ILEP.—(*Adapted from materials provided by Dr. W. F. Ross*)



Dr. D. L. Leiker receiving honorary doctorate during ceremonies at the University of Amsterdam.

U.S.A. *Two NCIH activities announced.* The National Council for International Health (NCIH) will hold its 1981 International Health Conference from 14–17 June at the Marvin Center, George Washington University, Washington, D.C., with the theme "The Training and Support of Primary Health Care Workers." Participants will have an opportunity to gain practical experience in the policy and implementation of training and supervising health care workers. Designed for all persons interested in international health assistance, the conference program includes seminars, plenary sessions, and skills development workshops. Sessions are structured to facilitate discussion and communication among a wide range of health professionals. A pre-conference workshop entitled "Training Methodologies and Techniques" and an International Health Affairs Luncheon featuring officials from the Cuban Ministry of Health are among the numerous other activities planned for the conference.

Following the conference, a 2½ day post-conference course entitled "New Developments in Tropical Medicine" will be held in the same location from 18–20 June under the joint sponsorship of George Washington University and Johns Hopkins University. The course is designed for professionals concerned with health care in the tropics and for those interested in exotically-acquired diseases of travelers and refugees. Lectures, panel presentations, and participant-oriented discussions are to focus on the following five areas: 1) primary health care in the tropics, 2) health problems of refugee populations, 3) parasitic infections in the tropics, 4) tropical diarrheal diseases, and 5) tropical medicine in temperate climates.—(*Adapted from announcements of the conferences*)

Details announced on leprosy seminar. The 25th International Seminar on Leprosy, from 13–19 September 1981, and the Workshop on Training, from 21–25 September 1981, under the joint sponsorship of the American Leprosy Missions, Inc. and the United States Public Health Service will be held at the USPHS Hospital, Carville, Louisiana, U.S.A.

The purpose of the International Seminar on Leprosy is to provide an up-to-date review of clinical leprology and leprosy control. The seminar is open to physicians, nurses, and other paramedicals planning to work or presently at work in leprosy endemic countries.

The Workshop on Training is designed to enable participants to learn about educational innovations dealing with self-instructional materials and to learn themselves how to prepare such materials for inservice training of paramedicals. The workshop will be taught by Dr. Charles R. Ausher-

man, who has wide experience in this field in developing countries. The workshop is open to anyone who participates in the leprosy seminar.

There are no fees for participating in the seminar or workshop, and room and board are provided without charge. The only cost to the participant is transportation to New Orleans and return.

Applications must be received no later than 1 August 1981 and should be sent to Dr. W. F. Ross, American Leprosy Missions, Inc., 1262 Broad Street, Bloomfield, New Jersey, U.S.A.—(*Adapted from seminar advertisement*)

C. D. Enna retires. Dr. Carl D. Enna retired as Chief of the Surgical Department and Clinical Branch, USPHS Hospital, Carville, Louisiana, effective 2 January 1981 after 17½ years at the hospital.

Dr. Enna, who also served as Associate Professor in the Department of Anatomy, Louisiana State University School of Medicine, New Orleans, Louisiana, was the author of over 70 scientific publications involving clinical and experimental aspects of reconstructive surgery and other aspects of leprosy.

In 1970, Dr. Enna received the Stanley Stein Award of the Herman and Ruth Goodman Foundation in recognition of his service to the patients at Carville, and in 1976, he received the "Alumnus of the Year" award from the University of Kansas Medical School Alumni Association. His contributions to Carville were recognized at a retirement reception in his honor held at the hospital on 18 December 1980.—(*Adapted from materials provided by the USPHS Hospital, Carville, and correspondence*)