TOUR LABS AND CLINICAL CENTER

Shown here are three visitors from Pakistan and Britain who recently inspected NIH facilities. From left, Dr. Mahmuda Ismail, in charge of Female Hospital, Sibi; Miss Isabel G. Lawson, Deputy Chief Nursing Officer, Ministry of Health, London; and Dr. Nusrat Akbar, Medical Officer, Jullundur Hospital.

MENTAL HEALTH CLINICS SHOW BIG INCREASE

Some 1,200 mental health clinics are now in operation in this country, with 75 percent of them partly or entirely devoted to serving children. These clinics provided service for at least 150,000 child patients during 1950.

The above figures are based on a survey undertaken in 1950 in connection with the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth. A report on the survey, prepared by Maryland Y. Pennell and Dr. Dale C. Cameron, Division of Public Health Methods, and Dr. Morton Kramer, NIMH, was published in a recent issue of Public Health Reports.

The total number of mental health clinics in 1950 represents a net increase of almost 500 clinics over 1947. About one-third of the reporting clinics serve children only.

The Northeast region of the United States accounted for 53 percent of the clinic total, or 1.67 clinics per 100,000 population. Twenty-two percent of the clinics were located in the North Central region, 15 percent in the South, and 10 percent in the West.

Three States have no clinics -- Idaho, Nevada, and Wyoming. The other low-ranking States, except for North and South Dakota, are in the South.

The 106 cities having a population of 100,000 or more account for almost half of all clinics. About 60 percent of all clinics are sponsored by State, county, or city health and welfare agencies.

GRANTEES DISCUSS BLOOD VESSEL GRAFT STUDIES

Scientists working on the problems of preserving and implanting blood vessel grafts in humans outlined current progress in their studies in a series of six papers presented at a symposium held in Wilson Hall, January 10. The all-day meeting was sponsored by the Surgery Study Section, Division of Research Grants.

Dr. Robert E. Gross, Harvard Medical School, reported successful replacement of sections of the great arteries in 22 persons, with excellent clearance of circulation through the grafted vessel lines. The longest-term graft has been in place for three and a half years.

A report by Dr. Charles Huffman, Georgetown University, described successful use of a specially shaped notched nylon ring to hold substitute plastic blood vessels in place in humans. The ring was used without complication in two persons requiring plastic grafts in the leg.

A joint paper prepared by Dr. Brian Blades and Dr. William S. McCune of George Washington University outlined an investigation in which India ink was injected separately into the internal and then the external circulation of implanted blood vessels in a study of how they are nourished. The study indicated that most of the nourishment stems from circulation outside the vessels.

Other papers presented at the symposium dealt with the work of Drs. H. N. Harkins and L. R. Sauvage of the University of Washington; Dr. Henry Swan, University of Colorado; and Drs. C. S. Welch and A. D. Callow, New England Center Hospital, Boston.
Studies of Schizophrenia

No. 64 in a Series

Structure of steroid molecules is studied with infrared spectrophotometer by Harris Rosenkrantz of Worcester Foundation.

One of the most baffling of all mental disorders, schizophrenia accounts for a large percentage of all resident patients in the Nation's mental hospitals. Although no satisfactory cure is known, many of those admitted to mental hospitals for the first time do appear to recover. This was dramatically demonstrated last spring in a preliminary survey prepared in cooperation with seven State hospital systems by the Biometrics Branch of the National Institute of Mental Health. The survey showed that a substantial number of schizophrenic first admissions -- nearly half -- were released from the hospital within a year following admission. Why these patients improve and others progressively deteriorate is still unknown.

Because of this dearth of knowledge, NIMH has been engaged in a cooperative research project with the Worcester Foundation for Experimental Biology at Shrewsbury, Mass. The work is headed by Dr. Hudson Hoagland, whose principal collaborator is Dr. Gregory Pincus. Both scientists are noted for their wartime fatigue studies for the Army Air Force.

The principal lead which Dr. Hoagland and his colleagues are following is the relation between adrenal cortical activity and schizophrenia. Recent studies on schizophrenic patients indicate that a significant number show certain abnormalities of adrenal function. The psychotic group produced on the average too much of some adrenal steroids and too little of others as judged by normal standards in comparable age groups.

The Worcester scientists have studied responses of the adrenal cortex in normal and in schizophrenic patients to a wide variety of experimental stresses. Several of these standardized stresses have been of a psychological nature -- for example, a frustration test and a psychomotor coordination test; others have been of a purely physiological nature, such as exposures to heat and high humidity and the ingestion of a standard amount of sugar. The adrenals of about two-thirds of the patients are relatively unresponsive to these stresses as compared to normal persons, and they are also unresponsive to injections of standard doses of ACTH.

New analytical procedures for steroid analysis have been developed by the Worcester group and these are now being used to identify more sharply the disturbances of steroid hormone metabolism characteristically found in schizophrenic patients.

With the opening of the Clinical Center at NIH, further studies of this elusive disease will be undertaken.

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Hamster Try-Outs

Try-outs for NIH's annual Hamster show will be held in Wilson Hall, Wednesday, January 16, beginning at 12 noon, according to Director Jack Beecher. Employees who wish to participate and who have acting, singing, dramatic, or production experience are asked to turn out. The show is scheduled for presentation in mid-February.

Equipment Loans

Laboratories and offices at NIH are reminded that equipment for short term use is available on loan from the Purchase and Supply Branch. Information on available equipment may be obtained from the Central Storeroom, Ext. 508.

Exhibit

"Weight Control -- an Experiment in Group Therapy" is the title of an exhibit now on view at NIAMD in the lobby of Bldg. 4. Prepared by the Division of Chronic Diseases and Tuberculosis, BSS, the exhibit will be displayed through January 18. An attendant is present from 11:30 to 1:30 each day to answer questions.

Graduate Courses

With more than 150 courses to be offered, the spring semester of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Graduate School will begin on February 4. Registration is from January 26 to February 2.

Courses of interest to NIH employees include Design of Experiments in Biological Sciences, Biochemistry, Advanced Organic Chemistry, foreign languages, personnel administration, and photography. Last year, more than 5,000 Government employees were enrolled in the school. For detailed information, write or call the USDA Graduate School.

Surplus Disposal

Institutes wishing to dispose of surplus equipment may do so from January 15 to January 31 when Purchase and Supply holds its quarterly "sale" of surplus property. For further information, call the Property Unit, Ext. 609.
STUDY SECTION MEETINGS

The following Study Section meetings are listed for the convenience of NIH people who wish to arrange visits with members while they are here. Unless otherwise indicated, the meetings will be held at NIH.


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The first word that the Communists were releasing the names of 3,198 American prisoners of war in Korea reached Betty Morar on her way home from work one evening, a week before Christmas. The hoped-for official telegram from the Defense Department arrived the next morning, notifying her that her husband George was on the POW list compiled by the Reds.

For Betty, a clerk-typist in the Purchase Section of Buildings Management Branch, it was the first time she had received word from her husband since lost last September when she was notified that her husband, a B-26 crewman, was listed as missing following a night bombing mission in North Korea. At the time his plane crashed, he had flown 23 night missions and expected to be home for Christmas.

In the face of such news, it is hard to keep one's hopes from out-running the facts. Betty knows this. She knows that detailed, authenticated information is yet to come, that the prisoner list includes the names of only one out of four missing Americans, that nothing is known about the condition of the prisoners or the possibility of early release.

A World War II WAAF, Betty met her husband while still in service. They were married in Florida on New Year's Eve in 1947. After George was sent to the Far East last summer, Betty returned to her home in Rockville, where she is presently living with her parents. She came to NIH last November.

The Morars have a three-year-old son, Lee. On the advice of a chaplain, Betty has told him nothing yet about the news of his father. Two days before the missing-in-action telegram arrived last September, the youngster received a toy elephant from his father.

Morar, a master sergeant, received the Distinguished Flying Cross a day before his plane crashed on a night mission, bombing supply lines. He had arrived in Korea only three weeks earlier.

A recent radio broadcast, Betty said, announced that 800 letters written by American prisoners had reportedly been released by the Communists. She is hopeful that direct word from her husband will arrive before long.

NIH Spotlight

Betty Morar

NMI SCIENTIST CITED FOR FILARIASIS WORK

Dr. Leon Rosen, NMI scientist stationed in Tahiti, has been cited by the South Pacific Commission, an intergovernmental agency, for his outstanding contributions to tropical disease research. The citation was accompanied by an award of 800 pounds, to be used to further Dr. Rosen's filariasis studies.

The filariasis research and control project, to which Dr. Rosen was assigned two years ago by the Laboratory of Tropical Diseases, is directed by the Institut de Recherche Medicales de l'Oceanie at Tahiti, in cooperation with the University of California Medical School at Los Angeles.

Dr. Rosen has been conducting entomological studies of filariasis, a parasitic disease that afflicts about 60 percent of the Tahitian population and occurs in practically all warm countries. Causative agent is a long, threadlike worm which lives in the lymphatic vessels of man.

BRITISH LECTURER

Dr. C. H. Andrewes, Director of the World Health Organization Influenza Center, was a guest lecturer at NIH, January 9. The British authority is associated with the National Institute for Medical Research in London and has published widely in the field of pathology, especially in relation to the viruses and cancer.
NIH SCIENTIST BACK FROM FOOD PARLEY

United States delegates to a tripartite conference on food in civil defense returned recently from London, where they explored potential needs for nutritional research, examined common experiences with food planning, and established liaison for exchange of information on future efforts.

The 25-man delegation from this country met with specialists representing Canada and Great Britain. Dr. James M. Hundley, Chief of NIAMD’s Laboratory of Biochemistry and Nutrition and consultant to the Federal Civil Defense Administration, served as leader of the scientific section and vice chairman of the U.S. delegation.

One of the major problems considered by the conference, Dr. Hundley said, was the need for devising a simple method for determining the nutritional status of populations. Delegates agreed on the need for more research in this area.

Britain’s experience in handling World War II food programs came in for extensive examination, inasmuch as the British had dealt with practical wartime problems which unbombed Americans and Canadians had not been called upon to face. An impressive achievement here, Dr. Hundley said, was Britain’s food salvage operations in bombed areas — recovery of food supplies subjected to fire, water, and bomb damage.

Civil defense food planning in Britain has been well planned and realistic. Part of its success, according to Dr. Hundley, stems from the fact that Britain’s civil defense effort was never entirely dismantled, as was true in the United States at war’s end. Another factor is the deep concern of the British with their dependence on food imports — about half of their food is shipped in from other nations. This largely explains why their food supplies are still tightly controlled by the Ministry of Food.

As a defense measure, the British are purchasing new equipment for their Queen’s convoy; truck units outfitted to cook and serve food on a mass basis in emergencies. Each unit consists of 18 trucks which can serve from 6,000 to 8,000 meals a day. They were used during the last war and were staffed by the Women’s Voluntary Service.

In matters relating to food technology, Dr. Hundley said, the United States has established an undisputed leadership. An example of what has been accomplished, a new type of dried eggs was produced in the U.S. especially for this conference and served to the delegates at a conference luncheon. The new product, the British said, is far superior to that used in the last war.

The diet of the average Briton today continues to be limited in variety although satisfactory from the standpoint of essential nutrients. The common vegetables are cabbage, Brussels sprouts, and potatoes. Game is plentiful, salad vegetables scarce, and red meats and cheese still rationed. Gastro-nomically, British meals have little appeal to Americans. Some foods are overcooked and most are seasoned scarcely at all.

NIAMD TECHNICIAN CLOSES LONG CAREER

A 41-year career devoted entirely to the Public Health Service came to an end this month with the retirement of Mr. Melancton M. Feeser, research technician in NIAMD’s Section on Pharmacology and Toxology.

The veteran employee, one of four at NIH who recently received 40-year Length of Service Awards, joined PHS in 1910 as a laboratory attendant in the Hygienic Laboratory’s Pharmacology Division. In those pre-World War I days, when the entire Public Health Service annual budget was little more than a million dollars, lab attendants were paid from $40 to $50 a month.

Among the early projects on which Mr. Feeser worked was Rocky Mountain spotted fever under Dr. Thomas B. McClintick. This work stands out in his mind because of a laboratory accident that occurred in the course of inoculating gophers. The top of a syringe came off, spraying virus material in the faces of attendants, including Mr. Feeser. Fortunately, none developed the disease.

Mr. Feeser remembers Dr. McClintick as the first Hygienic Laboratory employee to own an automobile, which he used to park in the animal shed during bad weather.

After the Hygienic Laboratory was moved to Bethesda, Mr. Feeser served under Dr. M. I. Smith in Pharmacology, testing drugs in experimental guinea pig tuberculosis.

Born in Charlestown, W. Va., in 1888, and reared on a farm, Mr. Feeser entered PHS at the age of 22. His only son, Sylvester, is an assistant purchase officer in the Federal Security Agency. The Feesers have two grandchildren, a girl, 7, and a boy, 3.

For Mr. Feeser, retirement means, among other things, ample time to pursue his hobby of carpentry. He has a well-equipped shop in the basement of his home at 4543 MacArthur Boulevard, with enough leisure now to put it to good use.

A gift contributed by Mr. Feeser’s friends and associates at NIH was presented to the retiring employee by Dr. W. H. Sebrell, Jr., Director of NIH.