

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 28

DECEMBER 2006

QUEEN SQUARE NEWS

DEATHS

It is with sadness that we report the following deaths:

As we were just about to send out this newsletter we learned of the sudden death, in his sleep, of our President **PROFESSOR IAN MCDONALD** on Tuesday 12th December. A memorial service will take place early next year and details will be e-mailed to those on our e-mail list. Others should make enquiries from the Institute Secretary, Robert Walker (r.walker@ion.ucl.ac.uk). Ian's death is a huge loss to Queen Square and to the world of neurology. A full appreciation will be in the next newsletter.

JOHN YOUNG at the age of 85. He was the oldest and longest serving chairman in the British Brewing industry, having been at the helm of Young's of Wandsworth, South London for more than four decades. Besides his service to the brewing industry, John Young was a tireless worker for charity, notably as Chairman of the Governors at the National Hospital for which he helped to raise millions of pounds for new wards, one of which was named after him, and equipment. He was awarded a CBE in 1975 and became a Freeman of the City of London in 1986. He was a champion of heavy horses and the brewery still keeps 10 horses for the daily delivery to local pubs, and six of them can be seen pulling the Lord Mayor's coach through the City every year.

DR. J. D. HOOD died on 19th July 2005. He was one of the most distinguished neuro-otological scientists that this country has ever had and was probably the best known scientist in this field in the UK and abroad. He obtained his D.Sc. in Physics with honours from Durham University in 1944. Three years later he obtained his M.Sc. by thesis on the subject of Audiometry and Hearing Aids from the Faculty of Biophysics from the University of London. His career is indelibly linked to the National Hospital. He joined the MRC Otological Unit in 1944 with such forefathers of neuro-otology as Charles Hallpike and Sir Terence Cawthorne. He also met there his long term collaborator, Dr. Margaret Dix. In 1970 the Otological Research Unit was transformed into the Medical Research Council Hearing and Balance Unit of which he became Director the same year. This unit changed its

name to the to the MRC Neuro-otological Unit in 1980, to reflect the changing nature of the work produced by Unit members of staff, namely with a greater consideration on the neural control of balance. Dr. Hood remained Director of the MRC Neuro-otology Unit until his retirement in 1989 when all the members of staff in this Unit, were absorbed into a larger MRC Unit, the Human Movement and Balance unit, under the directorship of Professor David Marsden. The work carried out by Dr. Hood in these various MRC units in Queen Square contributed to maintain the high international standards of British standards of British neuro-otology and its recognition around the world. His first papers were on the issue of loudness recruitment, auditory adaptation and fatigue, which underpinned the audiological distinction between nerve deafness and end organ deafness. Habituation, adaptation and fatigue remained critical topics in Dr. Hood's research for as long as his career, his vision being such that he was able to transfer these concepts successfully from the auditory to the vestibular system. He was a great believer in the importance that neuro-otologists, clinical and researchers alike, should remain in contact with both components of the VIII nerve in view of processing similarities and anatomical proximity of the cochlea and vestibule. His later work, particularly in the vestibular field, gradually encompassed other central processes and sensory inputs into balance control. He was a pioneer in the understanding of optokinetic mechanisms and described ocular and central abnormalities of the optokinetic system, including cerebellar and basal ganglia disorders, in particular the parkinsonian syndromes. He proposed the concepts of visual vertigo and optokinetic effects on balance, which he later developed, as a fruitful field of research. Other pioneer work that he promoted was the study of vestibular abnormalities in migraine, a subject heavily under research today.

The British Society of Audiology, of which he was a founder member and Chairman, was very close to Dr. Hood's heart. In 1985 he delivered the Littler lecture, the most prestigious award of the BSA, later published as a paper entitled "New perspectives in the investigation of disorders of balance" British Journal of Audiology 1986; 20:195-207. That paper summarises some of the many contributions of Dr. Hood, illustrating the remarkable evolution of somebody initially interested in the physics of the inner ear into a pioneer investigator of complex multisensory, central concepts of balance control.

Dr. Hood was remarkable in his ability to train scientists and encourage them to remain in the field of neuro-otology. Perhaps as a result of early negative experiences as a non-medic in a medical world, I speculate, Dr. Hood was a firm believer in horizontal democratic ways of conducting research in a multi-disciplinary team – and "boy, did he succeed!" Everyone will remember his gentle, rational manners and his endless patience, explaining and discussing old and new ideas with his colleagues, research fellows and technical staff. He will be equally remembered by his enormous scientific contribution as much as by his gentle but effective leadership.

This obituary has been written by Adolfo Bronstein at the request of the British Society of Audiology

PROMOTIONS, HONOURS AND AWARDS

DRs MIKE HANNA and GERAINT REES have been awarded Personal Chairs, and DRs RALPH DEICHMANN and DR JOHN ASHBURNER Personal Readerships.

PROFESSOR PAUL TOFTS has been appointed to the Foundation Chair in Imaging Physics at the University of Sussex, DR GAVIN GIOVANNONI to the Chair of Neurology at the Royal London Hospital, PROFESSOR DAVID BAKER to a position at Queen Mary College, London. Dr HOLGER KAUBE to a Chair of Neurology at Southampton and PROFESSOR BOB TURNER to a Directorship at the Max Planck Institute in Leipzig, Germany.

PROFESSOR ANDREW J. LEES was presented with the 2006 Movement Disorders Award by the American Academy of Neurology in San Diego in April 2006, and PROFESSOR NIALL QUINN was

awarded Honorary Membership of the Movement Disorder Society at its 10th Congress in Kyoto in October 2006.

PROFESSOR GEOFFREY RAISMAN has been awarded the Reeve-Irvine Medal by the University of California for his research work in Spinal Repair.

PROFESSOR RAY DOLAN has been awarded the Golden Brain Award for 2007 from the Minerva Foundation.

PROFESSOR KARL FRISTON has been elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society.

PROFESSOR MASUD HUSAIN has been awarded the Graham Bull Prize in Clinical Science by the Royal College of Physicians.

MSC AND DIPLOMA PRIZES

IONNAI SEVASTOU won this year's Hayman Gorlov prize, for the year's best M.Sc. Clinical Neuroscience student, and JO QWAN won this year's Pat Harris Prize, for the year's best Diploma in Clinical Neurology student.

RETIREMENTS AND FESTSCHRIFTS

PROFESSOR DAVID G THOMAS, Professor of Neurological Surgery, retired at the end of September 2006 and a Festschrift for him took place on 21st June 2006 at the Institute of Child Health. PROFESSOR JOHN CLARK also retired on 30th September 2006 and a Festschrift for him was held in October 2006.

DR CHARLES CLARKE, Consultant Physician at NHNN since 1996 and at Whipps Cross Hospital since 1979 retired this summer. He has had a parallel career as a climber and is current President of the British Mountaineering Council.

JANET TOWNSEND, joined IoN as Assistant Secretary for Students in 1990, having previously worked 30 years at Senate House. She retired at the end of April 2006 after 16 years at Queen Square, and a farewell reception was held for her on 5th May. Her help and kindness were greatly appreciated by generations of visitors to Queen Square. Her email address is: chrisandjanet@copsewoodway.fsnet.co.uk Her successor, in the retitled post of Administrative Director, Education Unit; is Daniela Warr. She commenced her duties on 3rd July 2006.



Janet Townsend

DR NICK MURRAY, Head of Clinical Neurophysiology is retiring at the end of December. A Festschrift will be held in his honour at Queen Square on 19th January 2007.

ADDRESSES

ANNUAL ADDRESS

PROFESSOR COLIN BLAKEMORE delivered the Annual Address on 3rd October 2006. He spoke on “MRC, NIMR and UCL: Lost in Translation?”

CARMICHAEL MEMORIAL ADDRESS

PROFESSOR HANS HULTBORN, University of Copenhagen and President of the European Physiological Societies, delivered the 9th Carmichael Memorial Lecture, “Fundamental properties of motoneurons are controlled by neuromodulators: consequences for their function and dysfunction” on 14th November 2006 at Queen Square.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

PROFESSOR GEOFFREY RAISMAN delivered his Inaugural Address on 11th January 2006. It was entitled “Repairing the Spinal Cord: Ripples of an oncoming Tide”. The lecture was followed by a Reception in the Art Workers Guild at 6 Queen Square in association with the British Neurological Research Trust.

OTHER NEWS

UK DEMENTIAS AND NEURODEGENERATIVE DISEASES NETWORK

The Institute of Neurology, University College London, in partnership with the University of Newcastle, is leading a new £20 million initiative to speed up the development of new medical treatment for dementias and neurodegenerative diseases. The coordinating centre for the new UK Dementias and Neurodegenerative Diseases (DENDRON) Network is based at the Institute under the direction of Professor Martin Rossor.

NEW COURSES AT THE INSTITUTE

A new M.Sc. in Clinical Neurology (extension of the existing Diploma Course) and a Dual Paris/UCL Masters in Brain and Mind Science were introduced in October 2006, and the new M.Sc. in Advanced Imaging will begin in October 2007.

QUEEN SQUARE ARCHIVES

A committee has been established to identify all NHNN/IoN memorabilia and their location, and to secure their secure custodianship, and to incorporate some of this on the NHNN and IoN websites. Alumni are invited to submit material. We plan to launch an appeal for donations to safeguard our heritage, and will be inviting Alumni to contribute to this.

DOWN SYNDROME BREAKTHROUGH

PROFESSOR ELIZABETH FISHER from the Institute of Neurology and Dr VICTOR TYBULEWICZ from the National Institute for Medical Research have achieved a medical breakthrough hailed as The

Guardian's top scientific 'high point of 2005'. Their work – which has taken over a decade- has now made it possible to create a 'mouse model' which carries the human chromosome 21, which is duplicated in people with Down Syndrome. They will now be able to study the 250 or more genes which are carried on chromosome 21 and investigate how carrying two copies of these genes can result in different symptoms

People with Down syndrome have particular susceptibilities for some diseases like leukaemia and autoimmune disorders.. Professor Fisher and her colleagues believe that the new technology will help in working out why this is and what to do about it. They also expect that their work will have implications for people who have some of these conditions but do not have Down Syndrome.

SPINAL REPAIR UNIT

PROFESSOR GEOFFREY RAISMAN at the Institute of Neurology has made a ground breaking discovery that the brain and central nervous system have an astonishing capacity to re-organize themselves after loss or trauma. This will result in pioneering surgery to repair spinal cord injuries at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery in the near future.

WALKING AGAIN

One of the leading Sunday Newspapers reported the case of a 20 year old girl with dystonia who underwent pallidal deep stimulator (DBS) insertion by PROFESSOR MARWAN HARIZ, the Edmond J. Safra Professor of Functional Neurosurgery at the Institute of Neurology. After seven years on a heavy drug regime and using a wheelchair, she now has a job as a volunteer classroom assistant and is 'walking, singing and dancing'. The technology is not new – it has been around for 10-15 years for Parkinson's but it has only been recently applied in patients with dystonia.

THE BRAIN HOSPITAL.

A BBC television crew was on-site for a year filming a series of three 1-hour programmes on NHNN transmitted on BBC2 in November/December 2006.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

The National Hospital is hosting the world's first controlled trial of neuro-protection in multiple sclerosis. Dr. RAJ KAPOOR and his colleagues are testing the drug lamotrigine to see whether it can prevent the axonal damage which causes most of the permanent disability in people with MS.

ALUMNUS NEWS

PROFESSOR E.S. KRISHNAMOORTHY SRINIVAS organised an excellent meeting in Madras in February 2005. PROFESSOR C.J.MATHIAS had the distinction of giving the THIRD KRISHNAMOORTHY LECTURE in his honour, entitled 'Recent Advances in Autonomic Nervous System Disorders'.

PROFESSOR I.A. MILONAS

The inauguration of PROFESSOR IOANNIS MILONAS of the Aristoteles University of Thessaloniki, Greece as President of the European Neurological Society took place during the Opening Ceremony of

the Fifteenth Meeting of the ENS in Vienna in June 2005. It is interesting to note that past Presidents of the ENS have included Ian McDonald and Alastair Compston.

In September 2006 the 21st Congress of ECTRIMS (European Committee for treatment and research) Congress along with the 10th Annual Meeting of ACTRIMS (Americas Committee for treatment and research in multiple sclerosis) was held in Thessaloniki under the chairmanship of Professor Milonas. This was the biggest congress on Multiple Sclerosis ever held, with 3580 participants.

We have also received news from PROFESSOR ADELOLA ADELOYE, Professor of Neurological Surgery, University College Hospital, Ibadan, Nigeria.

Professor Adeoye has had a very interesting career, working both in Nigeria and in the UK. He obtained his FRCS Eng. in 1966 and was a Registrar in Neurological Surgery at Queen Square, working for Professor Valentine Logue and Professor Lindsay Symon. From 1991-2001 he was Foundation Professor and Head of Surgery at the University of Malawi. He is Honorary President Pan African Association of Neurological Sciences and also Hon. President World Federation of Neurological Societies. This year, the Association of Surgeons of East Africa nominated him to the Rahima Dawood Travelling Fellowship jointly run by the Association of Surgeons of East Africa and the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. He will be in East and Central Africa from 19th November to 10th December giving lectures on neurosurgery.

He is a prolific writer and has kindly sent four small books he has written:

Trauma Care; The Pursuit of Excellence – The Nigerian Dilemma; A Village Genius; and Inside Occupied Kuwait, which are now in the Rockefeller Medical Library.

I am sorry this Newsletter has been somewhat late. I am hoping to get two Newsletters out next year, but it is sometimes difficult to get sufficient news, and I do rely heavily on Alumni providing me with information suitable for the Newsletters. Also this year I have had problems with my computer, and I do apologise if you have e-mailed me and received no reply. Hopefully things will be better in 2007. In the meantime I send you

all my very best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

e-mail: pharris@ion.ucl.ac.uk