

OCT 75



# Insight



Leavesden and  
Abbots Langley  
Hospitals  
Magazine

I N S I G H T

OCTOBER 1975

EDITOR	W. D. ROBINSON
CO-EDITOR	C. SPANSWICK
TYPED BY	MEDICAL RECORDS STAFF
DUPLICATED BY	B. DUNPHY
COLLATED BY	Mrs. Sutton, Staff and Residents of Sheltered Workshops

**DR. SHEPHERD**      Rev. Saul AMIAS commenced as Jewish Chaplain in August, replacing Mr. Cohen. Rev. Amias had a parish in Edgware for 14 years and has been active in the development of community life. He has been asked to visit Shenley, Napsbury and Harperbury Hospitals additionally to ourselves, but will none the less take an active interest in the welfare and religious needs of our sizeable Jewish community.

Value of INSIGHT and contributions to it

The quality of a house journal like ours is not only to be measured in terms of size and quality of paper or photographs. The value of this journal can be judged by the amount of information that is given to the staff of the hospital about present activities and future plans. I think it wrong, in a democratic society, that the "worker" should learn from local newspapers, etc., of plans and activities. I try, therefore, to inform staff as early as possible of developments and recently wrote to all heads of departments asking them to do the same.

Similarly I think Insight should contain a mention of staff who retire or die "in harness". A page of "comings and goings" would be unnecessary and uninteresting but a few words of appreciation for staff who have been here years as well as (or better still instead of) eulogies for transient workers also seems to me, to be desirable.

If you do not find the information of this type in Insight, you now know that it is not the editors fault - he cannot publish material if he fails to receive it! A final point is to suggest again that you, the reader, could also contribute more (preferably constructive items!).

Before the expense and pains of "Reorganisation" are over, we are now into a serious crisis in the country and its effect on the N.H.S. in general, and ourselves in particular cannot be avoided. We have to expect, like it or not, a virtual standstill in the N.H.S., but this means extra vigilance to ensure that the mentally retarded do not pay more than the rest of us. It would be easy to achieve a saving from our field to soften the blows elsewhere, despite the fact that every £1 saved or spent on the mentally retarded is, in proportion, probably five times as important to the individual patient. In these circumstances it is all the more incredible that Mrs. Castle, like a latter day Nero fiddling while Rome burns, should contemplate throwing away £30 - £40 millions! This ageing politician is, apparently, prepared to end her political life destroying what a

previous "Socialist" (whatever that is!) - i.e. Aneurin Bevan - helped to build.

The cost of her latest doctrinaire approach, separation of "private practice" from "N.H.S." is the equivalent 20 or more £2 million hospitals a year! - and to what value?

I write emotionally on this, despite my personal lack of involvement in private practice, because it seems so childishly, fanatically unnecessary and is quite pointless medically. It is also a tyrannical intrusion into the freedom of patients (as well as doctors) to choose how they wish to spend their money, etc., and worst of all, apart from the loss of revenue, it is divisive and will harm the N.H.S.

PEGGY JAY'S COMMITTEE

The members of the Committee of Inquiry into the nursing and care of the mentally handicapped under the Chairmanship of Mrs. Peggy Jay are:-

Mr. N. Bosanquet	Economic Consultant and Lecturer.
Mr. J.B. Cotrell	P.N.O. Hensol Castle Hospital.
Miss M. Faulds	Formerly Director of Social Work, Inverness.
Mr. A. Hunt	Director of Social Services, Hampshire County Council.
Dr. G. Kerr	Consultant Psychiatrist, Dovenby Hall Hospital.
Mr. N. Lee	Area N.O., Derbyshire A.H.A.
Mr. H. McCree	D.N.O., Hampshire.
Councillor W. Merritt	Vice-Chairman, Social Services Committee, Association of Metropolitan Authorities.
Mrs. B. Nicholas	Education Officer, G.N.C.
Mr. R. Olsen	Lecturer in Social Work, University of North Wales.
Dr. R. Ricks	Consultant Psychiatrist, Harperbury Hospital.
Dr. D. Thomas	Principal Psychologist, Northgate Hospital.
Mr. D. Williams	Chairman, Staff Side Whitley Council for Health Services.
Mrs. J.N. Williams	Staff Tutor, Social Studies, Birmingham University.
Mr. D. Williamson	Nurse Tutor, Lennox Castle Hospital, Scotland.
Miss P. Young	Director, Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY  
"ETHICAL"

J. Pini

while discussion.

I was interested to read Dr. Finn's article in the September issue of Insight regarding the Ethical Committee and tests on patients. I would like to raise some points that seem to me congenial in the hope of stimulating worthwhile discussion.

It must have always seemed odd to some people why our ethical problems are "unsettled" whilst the problems of science, for example, do indeed have solutions. We find ourselves wondering why we are unable to solve our ethical disputes and the ultimate absurdity is using a committee, whose members are presumably (?) more moral than the rest of us, to decide on the correctness of certain actions. My question then is "How are we to understand this protean word 'ethical'?"

One of the prime sources of confusion, it seems to me, is the use of the scientific model in discussions concerning 'moral' disputes. By this I mean that we try to objectify our moral concepts as though 'good' has nothing to do with us but is the property of the world, somehow "out there", just waiting for us to find it. It is because of this popular view that just such a committee as proposed is possible. A committee to spot and identify "the good" or the ethical and direct other people's attention to it. And yet it is just because "good" is not a property of the world that ethical dispute is possible! That is to say I can hold that "X is good", and you can claim that "X is bad" in a way that is a meaningful dispute of two contrary views. Now if the dispute is about properties we start to say meaningless things. I say "pillarboxes are red" and you say no, they are green. If ethical disputes were about properties in the world they would be as meaningless as the latter example.

Clearly they are not as meaningless so we have to abandon this objective view of ethics and adopt a more radical but ultimately more coherent view.

We will have to say that "good" had a clearly emotive use meaning "I approve of this", with perhaps the added imperative "do so as well". Some people, noticeably religious people, find this view difficult to accept, preferring to distance themselves from the moral order, and yet an emotive theory seems the only way to solve our moral problems.

On an emotive reading "ethical behaviour" will simply be "behaviour of which the majority approves and not a special type of behaviour with unique characteristics. This works out in practice, say at ward level where, "Be a good boy" invariably means "Do as I say" or "Act in a way that I approve". Clearly my approval is a matter of my feelings, or emotions, and ethics now has a subject bias. This does not mean to say that if you feel something to be right then it follows that it is right since as said, a general consensus of approval is required.

The responsibility of the committee then is that any value the world has is the value that we give it and so I feel they must remember that what they find to be "ethically correct" will merely be the objectification of their feelings.

AQUARIA FOR THE WARDS

Charles Finn

It is very pleasing to note that various gifts to the hospital enable an increasing number of wards to keep tropical fish. The pleasure and interest these give to the patients and staff amply repays the relatively little effort to maintain an aquarium. I know there are wards who look forward to having an aquarium in the not too distant future and therefore offer a few hints.

Outlay

The simplest, even the cheapest, part of the purchase is the tank and the fish! (Unless you choose expensive and exotic fish that will perish in the tank of a beginner).

One must be prepared to spend on lighting, pumps, heating, and these should be the best available. Thirty to forty pounds weight of gravel (yes, not a misprint), an adequacy of plants and, very essential, a really good aquarium cover with a hinged section for ease and servicing.

There are many good introductory books, costing pence rather than pounds, and a good selection at the local Public Libraries. As long as one sticks to the smallest, cheapest and most simple books, this is the best way to begin.

The minimum size tank advised is 24" x 12" x 12". A smaller tank is more difficult, not less so. I think that a 36" tank is the best length for our wards.

Choice of fish

The most hardy and least demanding fish are certainly the guppies, the harlequin and the jewel like neon-tetra. The sword-tails, Mollies and platys are equally easy, but the occasional rogue will devour really small neighbours. Many of our patients have poor vision or awareness and some nurses, on these grounds, have felt they should opt for the somewhat larger fish. Here then the choice initially must be guppies and the sword-tail-mollie-platy group. These also have the additional attraction of live-bearing plentiful off-spring with no special attention needed. Even without a breeding trap enough of the offspring will survive in a large tank.

The experts have a longer list of "very easy" fish and I would agree that with luck zebras, tiger barbs even Angels can be added. However, what is easy for the expert can be a little trying for we humble amateurs and I can testify to Siamese fighters, Angels, glass catfish, even zebras, dying somewhat faster than one would expect.

Six or so fish of each of three or four species (to make say 24 fish), is much more interesting and beautiful than say two or three times eight species. Most tropicals will spend time joining their brethren for a while, in a "school", then splitting up again, and this provides the essential pattern of an interesting tank.

When you see a really large tank with the schooling of say thirty tetras and a dozen Angels, "break up" as twenty tiger-barbs get together, you see one of nature's most beautiful spectacles.

Lighting

It is tempting to display the fish for the whole day, but if the water is to be reasonably clear then seven or eight hours a day is maximum. Too much light will cause clouding by green microscopic Algae. This will not harm the fish but will hide them from view, and the Algae will also compete with the large plants for light and nourishment.

When asked about larger fish my mind went to the humble goldfish. For some reason our goldfish seem doomed to the piscatorial slum of living in an oversize electric light bulb! It seems inevitable that when one has made considerable outlay on a heated tropical tank one feels this would be "wasted" on goldfish - myself included. But were I to have space in my home for another tank I would certainly have goldfish.

Apart from the stately common goldfish there are varieties, the "Shubumkin" with beautiful blue and red markings, and varieties with impressive flowing veils of fin and tail. The more exotic goldfish prosper in, and deserve, the seventy degrees or so Fahrenheit of the heated tank. The goldfish are the hardiest, cheapest, easiest, and by far the longest lived.

Apart from the Angel, none of the tropicals survive more than 3 or 4 years, but the goldfish has often reached thirty!!

I certainly hope at least that one of our wards will opt for a really good tank of goldfish and thus relieve me of the need to find a larger house!

#### THOUGHTS ON THE FUTURE

With apologies to "Oh! Mr. Porter".

P. Burgess

"Oh! Mr. Griffiths, what will you do?,  
When all the fields are built upon,  
And there's no more "beef" to moo!  
I know you're shocked by S.P.C.,  
But surely can't you try,  
To blend some in your cooking,  
With our "steak and kidney pie!"

#### GALA VARIETY SHOW

WATFORD PALACE THEATRE

SUNDAY OCTOBER 12th  
at 7.30

Posters are being displayed advertising the Variety Show being presented by the Friends of Leavesden. Proceeds go to the Patient's Clubhouse Fund and it is hoped the Show will be well supported and enjoyed by the staff.

Starring

BOBBY CRUSH

CARDEW (The Cad) ROBINSON

BOB HOLNESS

ALAN LLOYD & JOAN LAWRENCE

And Possible Surprise Guests.

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM - BOX OFFICE, WATFORD 25671 Price: £2; £1.50;  
£1.25 & 75p

## NEW FACE AT LEAVESDEN

Catherine Spanswick

Avril Brook, Assistant Catering Manager is a recent recruit to the staff of Leavesden Hospital. She is 23 and comes from St. Helens in Lancashire but has spent the last five years in Oxford, where she was first a student and later a member of staff at the Polytechnic.

Avril studied for the Higher National Diploma in Hotel Catering Administration and then worked as a technician in the Catering Department, assisting lecturers in practical teaching by preparing demonstration dishes for students.

Although she has had some experience of hotel catering while a student, the hospital world is quite new to her. So far, first impressions have been favourable despite being somewhat thrown in at the deep end through Mr. Griffith's early retirement and the added pressure to Mr. Willis and herself.

Apart from cooking, Avril's main interest is amateur operatics and at present she is looking for a suitable outlet for her talents! Any ideas?

## ELM WARD

Lilian McCallum

May I use the pages of Insight once again to say "thank you" to many people for a wonderful day. Elm Ward residents had an enjoyable day at Woburn Safari Park on the 13th August 1975.

It was a wonderful experience, especially as so many of our ladies had not been out for a long time. I know it was due to the generosity of the Friends of Leavesden that we were able to have this outing and I wish some of them could have seen the pleasure they got, not only from the Park but from the joys of the simple things that so many of us take for granted, i.e. the harvest ripening in the fields, the cattle under the trees and seeing the busy people of Berkhamsted going about their everyday chores of shopping!!

There are so many people who contributed to this day. The catering staff, who really gave us a packed lunch - "very four star", each of us having our own little lunch bag which was just right for us. Thank you to you all. Our thanks must also go to Mr. Jones and his staff, whose pleasant and happy manner made light work of getting our non-ambulant ladies in and out of the bus with such efficiency. Thank you gentleman for your reinforcement.

Last, but certainly not least, a very big thank you to Elm Ward's nursing staff - all part-timers - who so cheerfully gave up much of their own time so that this day could be a success. I would like you to know and to see in print my gratitude and thanks, and also that of all the residents who enjoyed this experience so much.



Avril Brook, recently appointed Assistant Catering Manager for Leavesden and Abbots Langley. Photo: W.D. Robinson.





Mrs B. Offredy, renown for disastrous holidays, - see opposite - is the Senior Nursing Officer, Personnel, for the South-West Herts District. She trained at Edgware but has worked at Watford General Hospital since 1965, in various appointments including Allocation Officer and Personnel Officer. Her responsibilities were enlarged to include the whole District in June this year: at Leavesden she will be working with Jim O'Connor, recently appointed Nursing Officer, Personnel. Photo: W.D. Robinson.

HOLIDAYS I HAVE ENDURED

B. Offredy

Long, long ago in the carefree days of my youth, holidays wre blissful affairs spent on my uncle's large farm in Surrey.

No problems about new clothes, money, booking up, travel sickness or even remembering to stop the milk, though presumably someone had to do this. It was just pure joy and excitement.

During my training too, I, like the rest of my colleagues, would probably not have considered doing anything else but 'going home'. What! throw away the chance of all that lovely food and outings, usually paid for by sympathetic parents or relatives - unthinkable!

Then I got married and with mortgage the size of an entire mill, let alone a millstone, round our necks, my husband and I could not afford a holiday. However, by the time we had two small children, I felt that we would be failing our duty as parents if we did not introduce them to, what I still, in my ignorance, looked upon as the delights of the seaside.

We decided that a holiday camp would be the answer. To be quite accurate, I decided. My husband very reluctantly but finally agreed. On one very hot day in early summer, not wishing to give him the chance to change his mind, I immediately took off for London, kids and all to settle the details.

I don't know how many of you have attempted to travel by Underground with one two-year old and one one-year old on a hot summer day but, take my word, it has to be done to be believed. The escalator alone, when one is accompanied by two children and a push-chair is an unforgettable experience. By the time we arrived my dress was ripped all along the hem and dragging like a streamer in the dust. My son was insisting on being carried and I was manfully struggling to push a wheel-chair, one wheel of which had been bent en route. Somehow we got to what I had always assumed to be the booking office, whereupon my son, obviously overcome by the excitement of it all, disgraced himself all over the floor. To top everything, a somewhat frosty young lady informed me that I had to book direct with the camp in question. I finally arrived home that evening, heaven only knows how, a sad and sorry sight.

The holiday itself would have been better if my daughter had not got sunburn, heat-rash and gastro-enteritis - a malady shared by the rest of the family - not, as they say, an unqualified success.

In the years that followed we spent a memorable couple of weeks at Wittering-on-sea. The gales were among the worst anyone could recall. The beach was pebble. The children were determined. I am pleased to report that, given the right approach, it is possible to obtain a degree of comfort by digging a big hole in the pebbles, covering it with blanket and huddling inside. The walls of the dug-out also provided some protection from the smaller pebbles which are blown about by the gale force winds.

After this, a similar holiday was taken in similar weather conditions, at Ilfracombe. I can recommend the beach at this resort, being made up of crushed black slate rather than pebbles. When it is wet, as it was - very - for two whole weeks, at least it doesn't blow about. One good thing about beach picnics taken in the rain is that the beach tends to be deserted and you don't have trouble with sand getting into the food or with flies and wasps which I understand can be a nuisance if you are unfortunate enough to get hot sunny weather.

We tried going to Jersey and while the weather was wonderful, the sea crossings were not. We did four crossings in all, all at night and all spectacular for the fury of the wind and the sea. My husband, never the best of sailors, disappeared before we left harbour. The children turned green and I was just too busy to wonder if he had fallen overboard or not. At about this point I began to wonder seriously whether a holiday was really necessary.

We listened to our friends' accounts of their holidays - glorious trouble-free adventures where the sun always shone, the food was fabulous, the entertainment, the interesting places, the wonderful journeys. Surely, we thought we had been going the wrong way about it. Many of our friends extolled the virtues of camping, many the adventures of foreign travel. Some had done both. Wonderful - open air - no worries about too much foreign food upsetting the tums - we warmed to the idea. It sounded the answer.

We had long conversations, deep into the night. We listened to advice on equipment, supplies, mode of travel, camp sites etc., and infinitum. We accepted offers of the loan of various, so called, indispensable items from a cooking stove, "No, it has no legs, you will find it much more convenient", to "roll up and blow up type mattresses". "You won't need any pillows with these, old boy".

We were advised we would easily be able to pack our requirements into our average sized family saloon car and arranged to hire a large tent rather than buy one. As the day drew near, the pile of absolutely essential equipment grew to enormous proportions. We decided to see if it was possible to pack it into the car. It was - just - but not if we wanted to travel as well and we hadn't got the tent then! We rapidly set about borrowing a trailer with a soft waterproof top to it.

The tent was supposed to be available two days in advance so that we could practise putting it up. In the event, though, we had to pick it up on our way to the docks and dump it into the trailer somewhat unceremoniously.

If I had ever thought that our holidays had been somewhat below par before, they had nothing to compare with the one now before me. In the first place, due to my husband's eternal optimism about how much work he has to complete before leaving for his holiday, he was so late that instead of leaving mid-morning it was, in fact, late afternoon when we set out and tempers were a little frayed. We had missed the boat

ago. Also, though normally a rather quiet type, put him behind the wheel of a car and he becomes like a demon possessed. We raced towards Dover with the trailer bouncing along behind, its wheels frequently leaving the road altogether, much to the delight of the children, and arrived at the docks in record time. We were fortunately able to get a place on a ferry almost at once and were in Boulogne by about 8 p.m. It was raining steadily.

Another aspect of my husband's character now took over. It seemed that, not only did he want to drive faster than anyone else, he also refused to acknowledge that food, sleep or the other calls of nature were of any importance, and commenced to drive on until midnight, when he reluctantly agreed that we should start looking for a camp site for the night, which we finally did.

We dragged the tent bags out of the trailer and proceeded to look for instructions by the light of a torch. There did not appear to be any - apparently there never are. We succeeded in rousing the entire camp by shooting the tent poles out onto the ground and attempting to sort them out. Fortunately for us, the campers took pity on us, probably due to the sight of two very bleary eyed children standing forlornly in the rain waiting for somewhere to sleep. One, it seemed, had ever seen a tent quite like ours before but they set to with a will and helped us to erect the thing. There seemed to be an awful lot of canvas left over and loosely flopping and the inside of the tent, supposed to sleep five or six, was hardly large enough for four. However, we were not in any state to seek perfection and I was just contemplating the pleasant notion of some sleep when my beloved husband announced that he was hungry and "what was for supper". I vaguely remember stifling a desire to strangle him, which I was too weary to do anyway and managed to locate and distribute some sort of sustenance before we retired for a somewhat uncomfortable night.

The next day spirits began to rise a little, only to fall again when I went to the trailer to find food for breakfast. The canvas top had one corner inside the trailer which had allowed the rain to drain nicely into our stores. On closer examination we found that, due to the bumpy ride of the day before, any food other than that in tins had burst and we had an unusual mix of sugar, tea, gravy browning and similar ingredients, large quantities of which had been washed down onto our shoes carefully packed at the bottom. The tent also had suffered damage which we had not noticed in the dark. The tent poles had rubbed a hole into the canvas during transit. "Well, Mum" one of the kids said cheerfully, "We'll have to buy it now". I thought back to the lovely picnics in the rain of the previous years and looked ahead to nine hundred miles of driving at breakneck speed and the yards of wet canvas flopping about waiting to be packed and I sighed.

For the rest of the journey the rain persisted. We ate in the car, we pitched tent in the dark, we narrowly missed being flooded out but we finally arrived in Spain at the cap site of our dreams - right on the beach. There was only one empty place. Ou louck, I thought, has changed. We had become more expert at putting up the tent too and found that it seemed to grow every time we erected it. Apparently we had been pegging it wrongly in the first place which accounted for all the spare canvas we seemed to have had.

The sun came out as we joyfully pitched camp. Suddenly I realised that the sun was not the only thing that was coming out. The place was alive with ants, millions of them. No wonder that spot was empty - it was nothing but a huge ants nest. We searched frantically for alternatives but there were none. Should we pack up and leave? The children who had been so patient on the long journey, were near to tears at the thought of more travelling. We decided to risk it. We went to the camp shop and bought vast quantities of ant powder. By the amount we spread in, under and around our tent, I should think that the middle of the eastern coast of Spain would be quite free for the next ten years. It must have been powerful stuff, for we did not find a single ant in anything. Spiders and lizards, yes, but no ants.

That night I woke convinced that I could hear water rushing past my head. I got up and looked out. It was raining hard and we were pitched at the bottom of a slope. This is not a good idea as you not only have your own rain to worry about, but everyone elses too. They had all dug trenches to drain the water down the slope and by the time it reached us it was a torrent. The kind chap pitched next door had already got up and started to dig a diversion ditch for us and we joined him.

We spent the best part of the next day digging trenches until our tent resembled a mediaeval moated castle. The one piece of equipment which everyone had overlooked to mention was a decent entrenching tool.

The stove was also not very suitable. I can only assume that my friend must actually enjoy cooking a meal in temperatures of 90° + lying flat on her face. I do not. The lighting, also borrowed, was inadequate and one dare not wait until the slightly cooler evening time to cook a meal as it cast very dark shadows. We had to invest in a gaz lantern, pillows, camp-beds - (the ones we had borrowed were awful) entrenching tool, an umbrella for the beach, an ice box as well as replacing our damaged stores and scavenging for empty fruit boxes to stand the stove on. Most of the "indispensable" equipment which we had brought with us was never used and served only to make packing to go home even more difficult with all the additional equipment we had now obtained.

We all got sunburn and mosquito bites. My daughter got heat-rash but none of us got gastro enteritis. It rained almost every night but the days were very hot and sunny. The weather began to break up on the day we were leaving and finished with the worst thunderstorm I have ever witnessed. The camp shop was struck by lightning and we were left to pack a very wet tent - an inadvisable thing to do.

We had allowed time on the journey home, to spend a day in Paris to celebrate my son's birthday, at his request. By now we felt we had become rather more competent campers and had carefully planned the journey to avoid pitching late at night. As we were going back via a different route, however, we did not allow sufficient time for the additional traffic. As well as this, we had the misfortune while going through the mountains to break a spring on the trailer, one of those big crescent shaped springs made out of, I believe, tempered steel. Fortunately we were on the outskirts of a village at the time and the blacksmith had the necessary equipment and made us a new one. All this took time and consequently found us, yet again, pitching a tent at 2 a.m.

"For heavens sake" I whispered to my husband "Lets just put one peg in each corner or we will wake up everyone again". Needless to say the ground was solid rock and we managed, after much effort, to get four - six inch nails about half and inch into the ground. To add to my discomfort we were just about to get into bed when I distinctly saw a mouse run under mine. I leapt onto the bed which must have looked very silly as it was only two inches off the floor and refused to believe my better half who insisted that he had seen it run out again. Needless to say, I could not sleep after that which was perhaps as well, because at about 3 a.m. the wind began to blow and the tent was soon in imminent danger of taking off altogether.

My husband was beginning to become accustomed to being woken up in the early hours to deal with one disaster or another. On this occasion we decided to wheel the trailer inside the tent and last the tent to it, feeling that while we, ourselves, might wake up sleeping in the open-air, at least we wouldn't have to waste time looking for the tent.

In spite of the very early start we made next day, the density of the traffic slowed us down so that it was just after midnight when we drove into Paris and naturally it was teaming with rain. We couldn't find a camp site, so started to look for an hotel. The children were asleep, but Paris was certainly not. My husband drove slowly and I walked along nipping into every hotel we came to. By 3 a.m. I was soaked through, had been accosted several times, and was thoroughly fed up. I, determined to try one more hotel before giving in. This time I took the children with me. The night porter was very kind. He found us a room just for two night with - oh bliss - a shower.

I tried to explain that we were afraid to leave the trailer outside the hotel for fear of being robbed. He actually got one of the guests out of her bed to interpret for him as he thought we were accusing him of being a thief! She soon explained and he helped us unpack all our foul wet equipment into the rather smart hotel bar where it mouldered until we departed two days later.

We enjoyed our stay in Paris but even this was slightly spoiled by having all our English money and our Spanish souvenirs stolen from the car.

We finally left to catch the boat, late as usual, and took the wrong road. There was no turning back in the six-lane one-way traffic. We stopped in the middle of the road. A Gendarme bore down upon us. "Please" I said innocently, "Is this the road to Boulogne?" He explained in rapid french that it was not. I refused to comprehend and after a few minutes he gave up trying, held up six lanes of traffic and pointed to the turning we had missed. "Allez" he said. My husband turned the car and drove back the way we had come while what seemed like every car in Paris hooted their disapproval.

Editor - This is the fourth installment of Mrs. Sainer's American travelogue

One evening I was invited to dine with one of the Professors and his wife at the Faculty Club of the Columbia University. This

University was founded by George II in 1774 and has a very big campus between West 112th and 124th Street. There are many and varied buildings for the different faculties. In the centre there is a large open lawn intersected by a promenade and surrounded by red brick buildings in Georgian style. On one side in the centre is large domed library building with an impressive flight of steps leading to a columned portico. Here the graduation ceremony takes place every summer in the open air when the new graduates in their black gowns and mortar board hats receive their certificates. In one family home we visited photographs of the mother and her two daughters, each taken after graduation, were proudly displayed on the grand piano.

That evening it was bitterly cold and windy so we only walked around for a short while. I noticed several modern metal sculptures in the grounds and we saw lights in the Denominational Chapel, so we entered and found the Student Musical Society was rehearsing Christmas carols, and we stayed to listen for a little while.

The building was of red brick and the dome and walls were faced with a design composed entirely of red brick in varying patterns.

Finally we went into the latest addition to the Campus, the building of the Faculty of Business Studies. In the entrance hall we were faced by a fascinating huge screen forged from various metals and most intricately sculpted to depict, like a completed jigsaw puzzle, through different emblems and scenes, how business interrelates with every aspect of life. It took us quite some time to decipher it.

One Sunday I was invited to have lunch with my relations living in Great Neck on Long Island. To get there we drove East over the Harlem River and through the Bronx along an Express Way and across a Toll bridge to Long Island. Most Express way bridges leading from Manhattan had toll charges which varied between 50 cents and 1 dollar.

Great Neck is a small town and my Uncle and Aunt live in a charming estate which is like a garden city. Their small, cosy two storey house could be found anywhere in England, but quite a number of larger homes were built in 'Colonial' style with a columned portico, white washed and tall. Each house stood in its own plot of green with trees and shrubs but there were no dividing hedges or front walls as is common over here.

On another day I was invited to Tea Neck in New Jersey. On this occasion we drove west across the George Washington Bridge. In New Jersey I saw quite a number of white clapboard houses, though our cousins lived in a charming double-fronted red brick house with three dormer windows on the first floor. Again no hedges divided the front lawns from the street pavements and at the back a low metal fence separated the various properties. In these small towns there is very little public transport so a car is a necessity.

A third invitation took me to Freeport, also on Long Island, but in contrast to Great Neck situated on its Southern shore and not too far from the John F. Kennedy International Airport where I had arrived. To get there I met my cousin at Pennsylvania Station, West 33rd Street. It was the Eve of Thanksgiving Day and he told me to await him at the Information Kiosk. This was a six-sided glass booth where information was given from which platform the trains would run. I have never seen so many people in my life and everyone seemed to want to ask for information - so I took refuge against a nearby column and was very relieved to see my cousin appear amongst the multitude. He led me to a platform packed with people but miraculously we found seats, comfortably upholstered, in the new Long Island Railway Coach and travelled, chatting without having to shout for forty-five minutes to Freeport. What a contrast to the noisy rattling subway trains! My cousin leaves his car at the Station car park and commutes daily by train to Manhattan.

Here I ate for the first time "non-dairy" whipped cream which, mixed with pineapple pieces, made a refreshing dessert.

From the foregoing you can see I had a busy time and there were many places I could not include in our itinerary but I hope I have given you some idea of my impressions. Next time I shall tell you about Florida and later about California.



## FORTY YEARS LATER

Catherine Spanswick

May Douse retired at the end of September after a long career in the Hospital service. It began in 1933 when she started work as a ward orderly on Jasmine, then Ward 19 - the T.B. Unit. She stayed until 1939 when war broke out and she transferred to the Canadian Military Hospital, now of course, Abbots Langley Hospital, to be Dining-room Supervisor. Later she returned to Leavesden as Housekeeper to the Deputy Matrons - Miss Gunn and Miss Smith and afterwards to Miss Pegler, the Matron.

She left the hospital service after the war when her husband returned from six years in North Africa and Burma: but her absence was only until 1953 when she came back to work for ten years as a Nursing Assistant before joining forces with Mrs. Sutton and founding the beginnings of the Sheltered Workshops in 1963.

They started work 12 years ago with 10 patients; today 220 patients attend the Sheltered Workshops and the Staff includes three fulltimers and seven part-time Nursing Assistants together with three or four learners and one cadet on attachment. From small beginnings, the Sheltered Workshops have grown not only to play an important part in the therapy and employment of residents but also to be a viable business enterprise with an annual profit of several thousands pounds. After ten years in the Workshops, Mrs. Douse returned to the wards in 1973 and since then has been S.E.N. on Cherry Ward.

Both residents and staff will miss May Douse, not just for her skill and experience as a nurse but also for the other ways in which she has contributed to the life of the hospital. The walls of Cherry for example, bear witness to her considerable talent as an artist, being decorated with characters from Disney which she has copied freehand from comic strips.

Best Wishes from Insight for your well-earned retirement!

## INTER HOSPITAL QUIZ

Sylvia Croxford

The new season Inter-Hospital Quiz begins during October (date to be announced). Would any members of staff who are interested in joining the team - acting as quiz officials or simply being part of the audience, please contact me in Abbots Langley Hospital, Ex.357.

We can offer a very enjoyable evening each week throughout the season to the knowledgeable and ignorant alike so why not give it a try?

I shall keep you posted about the dates.



May Douse, who first came to Leavesden in 1933, retired at the end of September. She has had a varied career in the Hospital Service, but is probably best known for the many years she spent in the Sheltered Workshops, which she helped found in 1963. Photo: W.D. Robinson.



Mrs A.E. Helyar, aged 109 years on the 19th September, has been a patient at Abbots Langley Hospital since 1972. Mrs Helyar still writes all her own letters, knits beautifully and reads two library books a week. Photo: W.D. Robinson.

109 YEARS OLD - MRS. HELYAR

By her daughter

Mrs. A.E. Helyar was born at Ewelme, Oxon in 1866. She moved to Marlow-on-Thames when she was four and stayed there until she married in 1891. Her father was a Miller (the Mill was in Ewelme), and her grandfather was a gentleman Farmer. She had four children - three boys born, 1893, 1895, 1898 and a girl in 1903. Two sons died - one in 1961 and the other in 1965. Her husband was a Manager of a catering firm, making all arrangements and costings for functions such as the Chelsea Flower Show, etc. Just before the first World War he was Manager of the Aerodrome Hotel at Hendon where the three boys also worked. The Hotel closed at the outbreak of war - the boys all went into the Services and her husband went back to London. After the war when the three boys all safely returned he bought a hotel at Brightlingsea, Essex, where all the family took part in the running of it. Unfortunately he was taken ill and died of cancer in 1922.

Mrs. Helyar sold the hotel and bought a large house in North London which she let out in flats. The boys all took on their separate jobs and one by one they married. After a while she sold the house and she and her daughter lived together in a flat in London. When the daughter married in 1931 she stayed with them on a six month's "trial" basis on the insistence of her son-in-law. This "trial" basis lengthened into 39 years and they were all very happy together. It was not until she had a very bad fall breaking her pelvis that she had to go into hospital as the daughter was unable to look after her, being an arthritis sufferer.

She has now been in hospital for five years - two years in Eastbourne and three years at Abbots Langley. She does not know why she has lived so long - she puts it down to being very slim all her life, working hard, and not being fond of sweet things. Also, all the years she lived with her married daughter she had no actual worries. She was always very agile - when she was 80 she went to one of her sons to help nurse one of the children with diptheria. She also walked a great deal - during the Second World War, she walked every Sunday morning from St. Albans to Sandridge to Church with her grand-daughter - two miles each way. When she was 90 she paid a visit to all her sons, staying for a while in each house.

TO THE LATE FRED SNOOK

L. O'Sullivan

How does one put down on paper one's feelings on hearing of the untimely death of a good friend and colleague? Fred - "Happy-go-lucky" Fred to me was included in that band of nurses who started here at Leavesden about 20 years ago. A group of nurses of which there are very few left.

With such an ever-increasing turnover of staff, very few would have known Fred for very long. Indeed, to most of the young staff in Leavesden today he was no more than "the Charge of Osprey" or as I've heard him referred to "the bloke who was always laughing". Yet Fred had given nearly a quarter of a century of service to Leavesden, apart from a short period in Northern Ireland. A quiet un-assuming, capable nurse who is a sad loss to the hospital. During recent times we have lost more than our fair share of hospital colleagues. Have we perhaps become too conditioned to death that the attendance at his funeral wasn't what it might have been? I hope not. No doubt the shortage of staff on the wards affected the attendance. It will not, however, take too much time or effort on our part to remember Fred and of course all our friends in our prayers.

## TRIBUTE TO FRED SNOOK

Ken Pugsley

It was with deep regret that I learned of the sudden death of our colleague Fred Snook. It hit me suddenly because I was speaking to him only two days beforehand.

Throughout his 20 years, he gave good and loyal service to Leavesden and his patients. He was a kindly and gentle man and he will be missed by all of us.

To his widow and other members of his family I wish to express our deepest sympathy at his untimely death.

## HARRY ARCHER

John Robbins

Many of you will remember Harry Archer, not only as a parent of a mentally handicapped son in Leavesden, but in more recent years as a stalwart voluntary worker in my office. His sudden death on 12th September came as a great shock to his many friends both outside and inside Leavesden Hospital. The service that Harry gave to Leavesden through the voluntary service department over a period of several years since the death of his wife, cannot go unrecorded.

He was a somewhat shy man, but many staff will remember him quietly working in the office, always busily occupied in clerical work connected with the "Friends", with fund raising, East Lane or some other essential correspondence on voluntary work. A member of the Chorleywood Horticultural Society, he was particularly happy when arranging the flowers in the hospital Chapel and, in fact, spent a great deal of his time in practical caring for the Chapel.

Although suffering from a heart condition for several years, he was an ardent and enthusiastic supporter of any event concerned with the hospital. It is now that he has left the scene we are made fully aware of the enormous amount of work he did by the meticulous records and correspondence left behind. The discipline of a commercial background showed itself in his regular appearance at the office at 9.30 a.m. every morning and his courteous manner exemplified the typical old-school English gentleman which, indeed he was.

Although Harry gave so much of his time to Leavesden, he was also considerably involved with other voluntary bodies and of more recent months had devoted one afternoon each week to cleaning his local church. All this from a sick man calls forth our gratitude and admiration. This was a life of service to others and Leavesden in particular has lost much by the passing of this good man.

MR. ROBERT W. SHARP

Bill Williams

Mr. R.W. Sharp died recently in Abbots Langley Hospital. There are not many left on the staff who will remember him, yet his association with Leavesden Hospital spans over 60 years. He was a regular serving soldier in a Guards Regiment before joining the staff in 1914. He had a commanding personality and was a strict disciplinarian and became one of the first Psychiatric Nurses to pass the RMPA examination with distinction.

About 1935 he was promoted to Chief Male Nurse - a post he held with great credit until 1949. He was an extremely good organiser and was responsible for evacuating the Annexe Ward then equipping these and Abbots Langley Hospital for occupation by the University College Hospital at the beginning of the war. Both he and Mrs. Sharp were war victims for they were injured when a bomb damaged their house in Watford.

On retirement he continued to serve the interests of the mentally disordered as a member of the Leavesden and Shenley Hospital Management Committees where his vast experience must have been an enormous asset.

Here was a man completely dedicated to his work. One would have thought after giving so many years of his life to the care of the mentally disordered this would have merited some award - sadly it never came.

We shall never see his like in Leavesden again.

MRS. AUDREY RICHARDSON

Monica Diplock

It was with great regret that we learned of the death of Mrs. Audrey Richardson on the 7th September 1975 after a painful illness borne with typical courage. I first met Audrey when we were students together twenty-six years ago. After qualification in 1952 she came to Leavesden. I have worked with her since 1962 and a more loyal colleague would be difficult to find.

Always quiet and retiring, she nevertheless had a wide general knowledge and would provide a sound, considered opinion on many subjects. She was a willing listener and her advice has been sought and given on many occasions.

In the Occupational Therapy Department her main concern was for the patients and they had a great respect and affection for her - as had all the staff with whom she came in contact. Her sympathy and understanding were an example which many would do well to follow.

Leavesden has lost a fine character and will be the poorer without her.

## HOW TO PRUNE CLEMATIS

Bill Robinson

The most deservedly popular group of flowering twining plants cultivated in the British Isles is the clematis. A surprising amount of confusion exists about the pruning of these wonderful climbers. Each group requires a different method, and the rule to keep in mind is not to prune all your clematis the same way.

The Jackmannii type are the most popular group flowering midsummer to October. All of these produce their flowers on young shoots of the current year's growth and established plants are best pruned by cutting back the shoots of the flowered growth drastically each spring to within one foot of the ground. Another type which is dealt with in a similar way is the Viticella group which is a late summer heavy-flowering type. The hybrids Abundance, Lady Betty Balfour, Mde. Grange and Ville de Lyon form part of this group.

The Lanuginosa type can be treated in the same way. Among the many hybrids in this group are Nellie Moser, W.E. Gladstone, Crimson King and Beauty of Worcester.

The Patens group of clematis are types that flower in early spring and summer. The flowers are carried on the old wood, which means that they are pruned immediately after flowering by shortening the branches and thinning if overcrowded.

Such hybrids as Lady Londesborough, Lasursten, The President and The Queen are all in this group.

Clematis species such as Clematis alpina, C. Montana, C. Tangutica, C. Macropetala, and C. Vidrariensis rosea, all of which flower on last year's or old wood, only require the new growth to be trained and fastened in and any old, dead wood removed.

When in doubt the basic plan to bear in mind with established plants is that early flowering types need light pruning, while late flowerers need hard pruning.