

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LEPROSY and Other Mycobacterial Diseases

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL LEPROSY ASSOCIATION

EDITORIAL OFFICE

National Hansen's Disease Programs

Louisiana State University

Post Office Box 25072

Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70894, U.S.A.

VOLUME 71, NUMBER 1

MARCH 2003

EDITORIAL

Editorial opinions expressed are those of the writers.

Dr. Robert Hastings Says Farewell to the Journal

A Farewell

In a few months I will be 65 years old, a customary time to retire in this country. I will try to spend the rest of my days in various activities including tending to my family and personal business interests, but I will no longer be engaged in active leprosy work and will no longer have the privilege of serving as your editor.

Having had the opportunity to work in the leprosy field for almost 40 years has been a privilege, a privilege all of us in this field share. In addition to the usual perks of a career that is interesting, challenging, and with sufficient financial reimbursement to support our families, we are privileged to have come to know each other. I have come to know a large number of very dedicated and very intelligent individuals, and, perhaps most importantly I have come to count them as friends from all over the world bound together by the common bond of leprosy work.

Many of my friends will be continuing to work in the field of leprosy. To you I wish every success in making further contribu-

tions to some of God's most needy people, leprosy patients.

Many of my friends have left the leprosy field to pursue other work in science and medicine. To you I wish every success in making contributions to your new fields of interest.

Many of my friends have left the leprosy field and are now retired, as I am about to be. To you I wish a long and peaceful retirement surrounded by loving family and friends. Thank you for your many years of dedicated service.

Lastly, I am of an age that many of my old friends in leprosy work are now deceased. To you I am grateful that I had the opportunity to know you in this life, and, with God's Grace, I hope that we can again see each others' faces in another life yet to come.

After 24 years as editor, I will naturally miss the activities you have allowed me to carry out all these years. I will miss the contacts, directly with my colleagues in the laboratory, and indirectly with the many contributors, referees, and fellow officers and members of our association. On the

other hand, I am satisfied that the journal will be in good hands with our new editor. He is eminently qualified to carry out these responsibilities. He is also the son-in-law of my predecessor as editor and my teacher, Olaf Skinsnes.

To all, may I end with a favorite saying of another teacher of mine.

GO GET 'EM TIGERS !

—RCH

Dr. Hastings' Service to the Journal is Greatly Appreciated

We are happy to report that with this issue of the JOURNAL the editorial transition is complete. As Dr. Hastings has noted in his comments above, the December 2002 issue marks the completion of his 24 years of editorial service. This long tenure is an exceptional accomplishment and an outstanding service to the ILA and the professional community concerned with research, care, and treatment of Hansen's Disease. This also poses daunting challenges to the incoming editor—both to follow in the footsteps of such an eminent authority on leprosy, and to guide the JOURNAL as we enter into a new era in our approach to this disease. Thanks to a very diligent and efficient JOURNAL staff, this has been a smooth transition in spite of delays related to the Congress Transactions. I can only hope to maintain the quality of the JOURNAL as well as Dr. Hastings has done, and I must ask the support of all members of the ILA to maintain the vitality of the JOURNAL itself.

Dr. Hastings has been a personal friend, mentor, and colleague to many in this field including, especially, the new editor. A single tribute to his service would not provide an appropriate appreciation of his incisive but genial intellect nor of his personable manner in dealing with so many individuals, both as the editor of the JOURNAL and of the text on leprosy. We have therefore asked several senior investigators in Hansen's Disease to provide us with brief glimpses into their experience with him during his extraordinary career. We offer him our deepest gratitude, and look forward to his advice and counsel as the Editor Emeritus for many years to come.

—David M. Scollard

Tuve la oportunidad de conocer estrechamente al Dr. Hastings durante mi período como Presidente de la ILA y del IJL Corporation, habiendo apreciado en él no solamente su indudable talento como investigador y su magnífica labor como Editor del IJL, sino también su gran calidad como persona. Fue para nosotros una magnífica oportunidad haber tenido un intercambio con una personalidad tan destacada en el campo de la ciencia.

—Jacinto Convit

I have worked with Bob for more than 20 years. In particular, I remember discussions with him as Editor in 1980, on my first paper in the JOURNAL, an editorial: "Immunological aspects of leprosy: Ten years' activity at the Armauer Hansen Research Institute and prospects for further work" [Int. J. Lepr. **48** (1980) 193–205]. At the time it was an important paper for us. Today it illustrates the early phase of immunology research in leprosy with its far-reaching consequences regarding our understanding and handling of the disease. In 1983–1984, it was in his classic textbook. He contributed to essential revision of Figure 4.3: "The course after infection with *Mycobacterium leprae*," and it became one of my better figures through the years. This illustrates Bob's deep understanding of leprosy underlying all his truly extensive work with the JOURNAL. Thanks indeed!

—Morten Harboe

I consider it a privilege to pay my tribute to Dr. Robert Hastings on the occasion of

his retirement as Editor of the *International Journal of Leprosy*. I have known Bob as a friend and as a colleague for many years. Dr. Hastings is a brilliant scientist and an able administrator. He is mainly responsible for establishing and expanding the Laboratory Research Branch of the National Hansen's Disease Programs in Baton Rouge, and for developing it as a research center of international repute. I am one among the many research scientists inspired by his leadership and helped by his scientific expertise. His performance as Editor of the JOURNAL, with a majority of its contributors from developing countries, is exceptional. Without compromising the quality of the publications, he helped many young and aspiring research workers to publish their findings in this prestigious journal. Dr. Hastings also edited a well-written and widely circulated textbook of leprosy. With all these qualities and outstanding contributions, he is an unassuming and humble person easily accessible and readily available to all who need his help. We, the leprosy workers from every discipline, will miss him.

—C. K. Job

Until his retirement in 1994 as Chief of the Laboratory Research Branch (LRB) at Carville, Bob maintained two separate offices; one for his role as head of the LRB and a second "journal office" where he retreated at the end of each day, put on a new hat and spent a few hours taking care of the JOURNAL's business. He took his responsibilities for this thankless job very seriously. I think Bob Hastings's stint as editor of the IJL should best be remembered for bringing peer review to the journal's pages as for the fair treatment that he afforded to the authors of submitted manuscripts. Bob especially encouraged manuscripts from workers in endemic countries and on more than a few occasions manuscripts were received hand written or comprised of crudely drawn graphics. Rather than reject them outright Bob would have the manuscripts typed and brought up to a submission standard. To avoid showing favoritism, a substitute editor always dealt with manuscripts from workers in his own LRB. Bob always paid special attention to the IJL's "Current Literature" for readers without access to large

medical libraries and, until recently when services like PubMed became readily available, he spent an enormous amount of time collecting this literature for the JOURNAL's readers. He was passionate in his defense of the JOURNAL as a scientific journal that is the official organ of the ILA and I think his retirement as editor coincides with his personal satisfaction that the future of IJL is assured.

—Jim Krahenbuhl

My involvement in leprosy in 1980 coincides with the editorship of Dr. Hastings with the *International Journal of Leprosy*. I believe this has been a very happy coincidence, as the JOURNAL is not only very informative in leprosy fieldwork, but also on developments in closely related fields. I am extremely grateful for the timely publication and meticulous revision of each article I have submitted. It was my honor to have been asked to take Dr. Hastings to do some sightseeing one sunny afternoon during his busy schedule in Beijing on one of his trips for the 15th ILC. His choice was the Greatwall, and said that only seeing the mountainous landscape from the Greatwall makes him feel that has really been in China.

—Li Huan-Ying

On this occasion of the retirement of Dr. Hastings as the brilliant editor of the *International Journal of Leprosy*, I would express my sincere gratitude on behalf of all the members of the Japanese Leprosy Association. As its general manager I extend, our sincere gratitude for his enormous efforts helping us, especially in looking over articles and abstracts including those for the U.S.-Japan Cooperative Medical Science Program. By infusing his spirits, our efforts became very much alive. I also personally express my heartfelt appreciation especially in support of our experience on the effects of Vitamin C to suppress the growth of *M. leprae* in human and experimental animals. His original experiments and publication of the article, "Activity of Ascorbic Acid in Inhibiting the Multiplication of *M. leprae* in the Mouse Foot Pads," during the time when I used to work for the previous editor

in chief of the IJL, the late Dr. Olaf K. Skinsnes in Hawaii, the father-in-law of the new editor, Dr. David M. Scollard, was also greatly appreciated. Dr. Goro Asano, the current editor in chief of our association, and his staff join me to express their gratitude to you again.

—Eiichi Matsuo

I am glad for this opportunity to express my appreciation and admiration for Bob's contributions to the advancement of the scientific understanding of leprosy with the resulting improvement of the well being of those with leprosy, and for his role in unifying the global efforts of scientists and caregivers working in the fight against the disease. In his soft-spoken friendly way, Bob was often able to accomplish the near impossible for the betterment of all in this fight. Our own personal interactions were the closest during the preparation for and management of the 14th ILA Congress in Orlando in 1993. Bob and his staff contributed greatly to the success of the Congress, especially in coordinating the scientific program and providing much valued counsel. As Editor of the IJL, it was Bob's conviction that the ILA must preserve the objective of the ILA charter, i.e., "to publish a scientific journal of leprosy." Congratulations, Bob, for your splendid success in achieving this goal even, often, in an atmosphere of considerable controversy. With my warmest best wishes for you and your beloved family,

—Wayne Meyers

I have been associated with Dr. Hastings for many years, particularly as part of TDR/THELEP and IMMLEP activities and have greatly admired his extraordinary insight into certain aspects of the problem of leprosy. I found his interactions at TDR meetings particularly stimulating. Ever forthright in expressing his opinions, Dr. Hastings was still able to strike a balance where necessary, whether in editing his textbook on leprosy or the JOURNAL. I wish him the best of retirement.

—S. K. Noordeen

Dr. Hastings is known by his knowledge and expertise on leprosy and his sympathy. He honored me with an invitation to write the forward to one of the best books about leprosy. On several occasions he invited me to serve as a referee for some of IJL's papers and helped me with his advice for the editorship of the *Hansenologia Internationalis* for which I am the Editor. Above all, I am grateful for the privilege of knowing him and for having had his friendship.

—Diltor Opromolla

It was shortly after Dr. Hastings had begun employment at Carville, while I was a senior staff officer there that, while on-call, I entered an order on one of Dr. Bob's patients that did not agree with his treatment plan. I was impressed to note that he had the intellectual integrity and courage to confront me with his disagreement, and the reasons for it. These qualities served him well throughout his years of service to leprosy patients, in research, and as Editor of the JOURNAL.

—Roy E. Phaltzgraff

When Dr. Hastings asked two of us clinicians living on two different continents used to observing leprosy in different ethnic populations to contribute to the section of clinical aspects of the book, I wondered what the result would be. However, the mass of contributions by Roy E. Phaltzgraff and me resulted in a uniform blend without any dissent. This speaks volumes of the editorial expertise of Dr. Hastings who only once wrote to me to include a write up on the evolution of the infection and the spectrum of immune response. On the whole, the book on leprosy edited by Dr. Hastings is useful for all those interested in leprology.

—G. Ramu

I first met Dr. Robert Hastings in the early 1970's, when, as a neophyte to leprology, I attended a course at Carville to increase my knowledge of this protean disease. The course was worth while, but more importantly, Bob's interest in and support of my initial investigative activities which

we discussed at the lunch table, provided welcome encouragement to become further involved with leprosy. Bob's nurturing support of my work, as well as his support for that of others, continued over the years as the range of his activities expanded to include the U.S.-Japan Leprosy Panel, text book editor and of course, his 24 productive years as Editor of the *IJL*. Thank you, Bob, for your many and varied contributions.

—Thomas Rea

Generous in his assessment of others and rarely critical, Bob Hastings is one of the most self-effacing people I know. "Just a country boy from the mountains of Tennessee" is how I once heard him describe himself. Given the scale, depth, and significance of his contributions to the science and practice of leprology, we can only hope that more "country boy(s)" will follow in his steps.

—Felton Ross

Having been a close associate with Dr. Robert Hastings at Carville for three decades, it is difficult to relate just one notable specific incident involving our interaction—there were so many! He was not only a co-worker, but a good friend. But one incident I shall always remember occurred at a meeting of the United States National Hansen's Disease Programs in 1986. Bob was lecturing on the mechanism of action of Thalidomide on ENL. During his discussion, a high ranking Public Health Service official from Washington leaned over and whispered: "How is it possible for any one human being to know so much?" Bob was—and is—a true genius and a kind and considerate person. Thank you Bob for all you have done. On behalf of millions of people throughout the world—Best Wishes and Good Luck!

—John R. Trautman, M.D.

The New Editor

Dr. David M. Scollard, Chief of Research Pathology, Gillis W. Long Hansen's Disease Center at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana becomes editor of this *JOURNAL* with the first issue of Volume 71 for 2003.

A native of North Dakota, he attended St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, participated in an exchange program with Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand, and completed his premedical studies at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine in Grand Forks, North Dakota, with bachelors degrees in chemistry, English and medicine. He then attended the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine, graduating with M.D. and Ph.D. (Pathology) degrees. He is a diplomate of the American Board of Pathology.

Dr. Scollard served as a medical resident in the University of Hawaii, was a Lecturer in the Department of Pathology, University of Hong Kong, and served as a Visiting As-

sistant Professor in the Department of Pathology, University of Chicago. He then was Assistant Professor in the Departments of Preventive Medicine and Pathology of the Abraham Lincoln School of Medicine at the University of Illinois and simultaneously served as Field Director, Chiang Mai/Illinois Leprosy Research Project in Chiang Mai, Thailand. He next served as Assistant and then Associate Professor in the John A. Burns School of Medicine in the Departments of Pathology, Tropical Medicine, and Medical Microbiology in Honolulu, Hawaii, before joining the Hansen's Disease Center at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge in 1993. He is also an Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of Pathology, Louisiana State University Medical Center in New Orleans, Louisiana.

His primary research interests are the early events in the pathogenesis of leprosy, the mechanisms of reactions, and the mech-



Dr. David M. Scollard

anisms of nerve injury. He has interests in medical ethics and has served as chairman of the Institutional Review Boards of both the John A. Burns School of Medicine in Hawaii and the Woman's Hospital in Baton Rouge.

David Scollard is a career leprologist. His credentials and background are impeccable. We are extremely fortunate to have him as the new editor for our Journal. I wish him every success and hope that the international leprosy community will provide him with their full support.

On a personal level I would like to add that in 1979 when I became editor I was introduced by the editor at that time, Dr. Olaf K. Skinsnes. It is a privilege to have the opportunity in 2003 to introduce his son-in-law, David Scollard, as your new editor.

—Robert C. Hastings

The International Journal of Leprosy Goes On-Line

With this issue the *International Journal of Leprosy* is available on-line, beginning a new phase in its long and distinguished career. At such a juncture it is worthwhile to reflect briefly on the origins of the *International Leprosy Association* and this JOURNAL, to consider where we have come from as a guide to where we are going.

At the JOURNAL's birth in 1933, its founding editor, Dr. Wade, was working in what today would be considered near isolation, in the large leprosarium at Coulion in the Philippines, where more than a thousand patients lived. The JOURNAL was edited there for many years—without air conditioning, computers, telephone communication, or the internet. Leprosy was an incurable disease greatly feared even in medical circles, and the men and women who worked with patients and struggled to understand this disease were a dedicated lot indeed. Such isolation also meant a scarcity of information about recent developments in medicine, which had to wait long months while books and journals trav-

eled by sea, then overland (often part of the way on pack animals) to reach the isolated hospitals. When Dr. Wade started the JOURNAL, its explicit mission was to alleviate this dearth of current information.

Then, as now, those who worked on leprosy would not be motivated by the more conventional desires for fame, fortune, or power, since leprosy work is a pursuit most unlikely to lead to any of these. Rather, the many persons who have dedicated major portions of their careers to work on this disease and its victims, and whose names can be found within the pages of this JOURNAL over the last seven decades, have been motivated by mixtures of altruism, burning curiosity, religious zeal, and just plain stubbornness in pursuit of this disease. (As those who have attended the International Congresses will attest, the ILA contains a collection of very colorful characters.)

These factors matter, because the attributes of altruism, curiosity, etc. are likely to be characteristic of those who carry this

work forward in the 21st century, as well, even with improved treatment and better understanding of this disease.

During the middle decades of the 20th century the JOURNAL played an important part in disseminating important medical and scientific information about leprosy to those in the field as well as to scientists in research laboratories around the world.

- Dapsone was discovered to cure this disease, giving health and hope to thousands upon thousands of patients around the world.
- Terminology became more standardized, with the concept of an immunopathologic spectrum of host response at its epicenter, enabling effective communication between physicians and scientists everywhere.
- An increasing number of scientists in endemic countries were trained, who were then able to take basic research to the bedside.
- Surgical and rehabilitation techniques were developed that enabled patients to live more productive lives.
- *M. leprae* were discovered to proliferate in the footpads of mice, leading to major advances in the testing of potential new therapeutic agents.

Scientific tools became more sophisticated:

- Experimental infections of armadillos, and the resulting mass production of bacilli in armadillo colonies, enabled laboratories far removed from leprosy clinics to study, for example, the morphology, biochemistry, immunology, physiology, and ultimately the genetics of *M. leprae*, and to examine immune responses to its antigens with animal models and cloned cells.
- Monoclonal antibodies and recombinant cytokines were applied to studies of human lesions as well as animal models.
- Application of molecular technology has made the identification of *M. leprae* DNA in clinical specimens a feasible, reliable adjunct to diagnosis in difficult cases, and a further tool for epidemiologic research.

All experienced readers of this Journal will add many examples to this list and many other contributions to each category. Some of these developments have been reported directly as original papers in this

Journal, and the others have been abstracted in its Current Literature section. Today, advanced research in leprosy is the subject of reports in the most prestigious medical and scientific journals in the world, employing technology and terminology beyond the wildest imaginings of Dr. Wade and his colleagues in the 1930's. Leprosy work has come a long, long way from its days of only supportive treatment and dogged research in isolated, under-equipped hospitals.

Leprosy is certainly not conquered, however, and a great deal of work remains to be done. This was emphasized in the ILA Technical Forum published in the JOURNAL one year ago, in the Resolution of the 16th International Leprosy Congress published in the last issue, and in the forums and seminars of the Congress that will be reported in more detail in this and subsequent issues, as well as in the discussions of the WHO Expert Committee that met in Geneva recently.

Those who undertake leprosy work today also face substantial information challenges, however, albeit of a very different kind. Medical and scientific information is now abundant, instantaneous, and overwhelming. Sorting it out, understanding the sophisticated techniques being used to dissect the pathogenesis of leprosy at the molecular and genetic levels, and learning how to apply this knowledge to the patient in the clinic are formidable challenges. A goal of the JOURNAL in the years ahead is to assist in these tasks. We will continue to do this through the familiar features of the JOURNAL—its Original Articles, Current Literature, and Correspondence—and we hope to add features to further assist readers in the compilation and comprehension of the surfeit of medical and scientific knowledge that bear on our work. The availability of the JOURNAL on-line, in a format that facilitates immediate access to cited papers in other journals, will continue to make it a prime resource for reliable, authoritative information about all aspects of leprosy.

As this is written the new web-site for the ILA is being completed. Please visit our site at <http://www.leprosy-ILA.org>. This provides the most convenient access to the JOURNAL on-line. You can also renew your membership, or join if you are not already a member of the ILA.