



Dental

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Research News

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Stimulus & Challenge which will not break your heart

The voice of Dal Dental research

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A Story Close to the Heart.

Someone once wrote that if you take research seriously, it breaks your heart. (DRN, May 93). Don't you believe it. It is just not true. William Harvey, the father of cardiology, also wrote way back in 1628 that "Every passion of the mind which troubles men's spirits, either with grief, joy, hope or anxiety and gets access to the heart, there makes it to change from its natural constitution, by distemperment, pulsation and rest. .." I have performed the experiment and can confirm that stress from research is quite safe. On the other hand, others have shown conclusively that biomedical research definitely kills rats. George Bernard Shaw once had the unusual experience of reading his own obituary which had been placed in error in the London Times. In his own inimitable witty style he had great pleasure in writing a letter to the editor pointing out that the obituary had been somewhat premature. Having been on vacation in the Cardiac Unit of the VG for ten days I have some sympathy for GBS. While many friends and colleagues may not have been writing my obituary, they did believe that my workaholic life style had finally caught up with me. Most assumed that I had indeed a serious heart condition of some sort. Happily like George

Bernard Shaw, I can proclaim that such conjecture was a little premature. I am pleased to say that my cardiovascular system is 100% perfect. I would like to thank sincerely all of my friends and colleagues for their concern for my welfare, and for their kind words and best wishes.

Derek Jones.

Visiting Professor from India

The Division of Biomaterials are very pleased to announce that Dr. Anita Tandon of Delhi University, India, will be spending several months as a visiting Professor. Dr. Tandon who has a background in the chemistry of metallic alkoxides will be working on the research programme involving synthesis of improved glass and ceramic biomaterials. Dr. Tandon is accompanied to Dalhousie by her husband Dr. S. K. Tandon, head of the Department of Geology at the University of Delhi who has been awarded a one year Canadian Commonwealth Fellowship to allow him to visit the Department of Earth Sciences at Dalhousie.

An Everyday Thought

"The whole of science is nothing more than a refinement of everyday thinking."

Albert Einstein.

Research Funding Requests.

A memorandum was sent out to Dental Faculty members on the 23rd April urging them to apply for research discretionary funds, with a deadline of May 15th.

A total of five requests were received from faculty members, these had budgets which totaled over \$43,000, well in excess of the amount of funding available. The memorandum had clearly pointed out that the amount of discretionary seed funding available was unfortunately extremely limited. The intent was that this seed funding would provide support to allow some progress to be made in research projects which will enable them to have the possibility of greater success in applications for external research grant funds. It is encouraging to find an enthusiastic response for the submission of research projects, the only disappointment is that we could not provide the level of support requested to fully support the projects.

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Renewal

"A university must be perpetually alert to discard superseded methods and to detect the importance and significance of new studies and new ways of approach".

Sir Walter Raleigh

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Provincial Support for Health Research

A small group representing Medicine, Dentistry and the local hospital based research community met in March to discuss the lack of Provincial Government support for health related research. It was agreed that with the upcoming provincial election that a press conference would be called to put the issue before the political parties and get the media attention. The press conference was featured on two television networks (ATV and MITV) several radio stations (C-100, CHNS, SUN Radio, CJCH, CBC), three newspapers (Chronicle Herald, Daily News and Mail Star). In addition, a formal statement was received from two of the political leaders and the press conference was attended by a representative of the liberal party and NDP. We all need to ensure that we take every opportunity to emphasize that provincial support for health related research should be a priority for our new provincial government. Over the past several years Derek Jones has from time to time expressed strong sentiments both verbally and in writing to various ministers of the provincial and federal governments about the need for provincial support. These same sentiments were also expressed by Derek Jones to Janet Helliwell, Chair of the Council on Higher Education, at the time she attended the special Senate meeting. The lack of provincial support for research in Nova Scotia clearly places our local researchers at a disadvantage. Biomedical researchers from British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec have a very distinct advantage since provincial funding provides them with significant amounts of seed money which gives them a flying

start in the very competitive MRC, NHRDP and NSERC funding competitions. The Nova Scotia Provincial Government need to recognize that Dalhousie University has designated health related research as an area of special emphasis, and since health is one of the major expenses for all of the provinces, they should take a special interest in this.

Research funding is an important component in the economy of the region. The acquisition of research funds by researchers at Dalhousie University, represents a unique and special form of transfer payments into the province. The importance of research grants to the Halifax/Dartmouth region can be judged by the fact that some 400 full and part time research personnel at Dalhousie University are supported by grant and contract funding. The significant point is that these funds have been brought into the province from outside agencies and industrial sources. The average annual salaries of individuals supported on external funding is about \$26,000 for a total payroll of over \$10 million. These individuals will spend a large proportion of this money in the Halifax/Dartmouth region. The Faculty of Dentistry alone has brought into the province almost \$2 million in health related research funding in just over 18 months from outside agencies. Clearly, Dalhousie researchers are collectively a major factor in the economy of the region. All too often the universities are regarded as a burden on the tax payer, however, the provincial government and the general public need to clearly understand and appreciate that research at Dalhousie University contributes not only to the intellectual and social needs of the region, but also makes a significant contribution to the economy. The recognition of Dalhousie as a

major international research university clearly provides a strong argument for appropriate funding from the provincial government to support health related research. As we look at the gloom surrounding the current budget cuts we should make sure that the quality of our international scholarship and research does not suffer. However, although the dollars which are brought into the region are important, the major contribution of Dalhousie University researchers in all subject areas is that they significantly enrich the quality of life not only in Nova Scotia but in Canada and the world. It is vital for the economy of the region as well as Dalhousie University that we maintain our critical mass of top class international researchers. The recognition by Dalhousie of health related research as a top priority, combined with the major health care costs which have to be met by the province, clearly provides a very strong argument for appropriate research funding from our new provincial government.

Human Saliva a Diagnostic Fluid

Dental researchers have been interested in saliva for some time, but now other scientists are beginning to see saliva's potential. Samples of saliva can be obtained more easily than blood, and scientists say the fluid can be used to check for the presence of toxic chemicals, drugs, hormones and disease. This is clearly an opportunity for clinical faculty members to collaborate on joint projects with colleagues in other disciplines.

"Every day should pass as if it were our last"... Maxim 633.
Publius Syrus.

Canadian Science Writers Association Conference.

Derek Jones gave an invited poster presentation at the Canadian Science Writers Association Conference held at Dalhousie University June 2nd-4th. Some 70 members of the media from across Canada were present at the meeting. A stimulating keynote Address dealing with Science and the future of Canada was given at the luncheon by Dr. Kelvin Ogilvie.

Research Hall of Fame Revisited.

In the May edition of the Dental Research News we published a list of the students who had been fortunate to receive MRC Summer Research Scholarships from 1977 up to this year's awards for 1993. As pointed out at the time, the purpose of the MRC Farquharson Summer Undergraduate Research Scholarships, is to provide a sound research educational experience for the students and encourage our undergraduates as future clinicians to consider careers in medical or dental research. The long list of 48 graduates and students who have participated successfully in our dental research programmes over the period of 17 years from 1977 to 1993 was reproduced in the last edition. This month's Dental Research News honours the important original members of our research hall of fame, a further twenty one individuals who have been recipients of MRC or NRC summer student scholarship awards during the period 1961 to 1975. It should be noted that some of these awards pre-date the existence of the MRC. Prior to the creation of MRC the funding was provided by NRC from 1961 to 1967. See how many of these names you recognize.

21 Original Members of the Research Hall of Fame

NRC Summer Research Assistants 1961-1967

Bissett, R.

Logue.

MacIntosh, Daniel

Paul.

Rondeau, Brock

Wong, Maurice K.

Note the initials and first names of Logue and Paul from the 1960's are not known, any information on this would be appreciated.

MRC Summer Research Assistants 1969-75.

Baird, G.

Disney, T. V.

Easton, E. G.

Ferguson, G. S.

Joshi, A.

Larder, T. C.

Legatto, B. D.

Macneil, M. A. J.

Nette, Andy L.

Penwell, D.

Rose, D. E.

Roxborough, James C.

Smith, W. R.

Smith, Winsome E.

Walker, Brenda

Distinguished Visiting Professor

A Research Development Presentation was given on Monday, May 10th to members of the dental faculty, staff and students, by Dr. Harold Stanley. Professor Stanley from the College of Dentistry, Gainesville, University of Florida, is a renowned top international authority on the biocompatibility of biomaterials. Professor Stanley gave a seminar entitled: Biocompatibility & Iatrogenic Dentistry. Those who were fortunate to attend said that it was one of the most outstanding and interesting presentations they had ever heard. There was a strong plea that Professor Stanley a delightful and charming gentleman should be invited back for a return visit in the future. Harold Stanley is regarded as the father of the science of biocompatibility for dental biomaterials. Like a good scientist, with his wealth of experience he is able to simplify a complex subject and make it interesting and understandable to non-specialists.

From the Known to the Unknown

"I have imposed upon myself, as a law, never to advance but from what is known to what is unknown; never to form any conclusion which is not an immediate consequence necessarily flowing from observations and experiment; and always to arrange the facts, and the conclusions which are drawn from them, in such an order as shall render it most easy for beginners in the study of chemistry thoroughly to understand them."

Lavoisier