

January 2, 1964

V.A.'s 1964 Newsletter

Presbyterian Hospital, Anesthetists and pre-1959 friends..

I'm simply astonished that over 100 of you from my "past life" remembered me at Christmas with music cards, documentary letters, kitty cards, stamps and photos. Thank you!! Even more astonishing was the announcement at the Anesthesia Alumni Party on December 13th, that You had subscribed for a thousand dollar plaque for Manny Papper and one for me in the new auditorium at P and S. I'm delighted to be preserved for posterity in this way. Probably the seat of the chair with my plaque on it will have pins in it, so the occupant won't go to sleep. It was a very good party..about 125 there. Lennie Brand was a splendid M.C. and Fred Hehre, the present President looked fine, and slimmed down to a sylph-like silhouette (ah me!). Dottie Ma was there with her daughter from HongKong, Frank Moya brought his new wife, and Elizabeth Dowdy came from farthest away, Mississippi, if my calculations are correct.

The address list is omitted this year, for most of you have settled down and are solid citizens who do not move much. If you really miss it, let me know, and I'll include one every few years. New or changed addresses will be added yearly.

Twenty-three trips away from New York City took me to Miami Beach, El Paso, Los Angeles, Portland, Seattle, Bar Harbor, Maine and points in between, plus St. Adèle, Quebec, Humacao, Porto Rico, The Hague, Naevsted, Denmark, Cambridge, England and St. Croix, Virgin Islands. Yes, I still love to travel and can hardly wait for the end of this month when I have two weeks' "work" to do in Hawaii on four islands. Whenever possible, I phone you from airports or hotels. Had a fine visit in El Paso with Al Sorensen, whose son is now in medical school. Lois and Charlie Stein took excellent care of me in Miami Beach last spring (I'll be back April 5th, L and C 😊). On the phone, I've visited with the Musicant brothers in L.A., Eva Kavan, Don and Claire Stein, Fred and Greta Brown and Bea Gilbert, who is going to take Frank Moya's extracorporeal course in Miami next spring.

Have you one and all seen Shih-Hsun's and Manny's three part article on Progress in Anesthesiology in the New England Journal of Medicine, Vol. 269, May 1963? It's excellent, as you would expect.

Here are some notes from your Christmas cards - Rita Jacobs:-Bill Howland has made me an associate attending at ye olde Memorial, so things are working well. Barbara Stimson and Achsa Bean:-we strongly approve of retirement and recommend it highly. Margaret Benjamin in Albany:-are you too disinterested in retirement? George Herbert in Walla Walla:-we have done much landscaping.. closed the end of the carport and put a sliding door here and there. (Their home made the architectural journals when it was first built). Greta Brown,

Fred's wife, has had a disc operation this year. Their charming daughter, Eva, is now at Mills College, hoping to transfer to the University of California at Berkeley. I am still trying to arrange a meeting of Eva with my nephew at the Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs...Lester and Muriel Mark have been traipsing around the world again..Les lectured in Japan, India and Israel. They got marooned in a houseboat in Kashmir, but got out to find Ann Southam in a hotel there, for Planned Parenthood. One never knows! (thanks for the Hammerskjold errors!) Mim Hubbard writes of a trip to San Mateo, California to visit Frank and Marie Alter (ENT), and of art and photography classes. Lila Gairns survived an auto accident, painting her own home, and a Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. Lelia Mullen, one of our most stalwart nurse anesthetists has deserted the West and is now in Florida.

Had a delicious dinner recently with Lt. Comm!! Jo Mellor of the operating room staff, in Oakland, California. She was in Formosa last year, not in Japan as I reported. Her apartment is full of Oriental treasures. Then visited Phyllis Harroun, one of the best anesthetists on the West Coast, to find her making absolutely beautiful tiny Christmas ornaments of bugle beads with a magnifying glass and dental equipment. But she just won't believe that when the flat worms, Planaria, are trained to follow a certain maze, and then are ground up and fed to confreres, that the fed ones learn the maze much faster than control Planaria. The explanation is supposed to reside in the special RNA (ribonucleic acid to you) which is developed. In Canada, geriatric patients are being fed special RNA and exhibiting dramatic improvement in memory. No, I am not taking orders for RNA, but I do think it is exciting.


Here are a few vital statistics, which are probably inaccurate. Only two births to be reported from Fl, not F2. Jo De Francesco Trujillo reports the birth of Hernandito in April, and Eleanor Denson, one of my long-suffering secretaries, of a son. Somehow, for some reason, the number of births seems to be diminishing. 😊 One marriage, of Mary Jane Gray, of Sloane Hospital, to Dr. Tom Bassett, a historian, at the University of Vermont. Tom is a good friend of my brother's. Mary Jane now has four children, about teen-age. Their mother died a few years ago. Mary Sargent, of the Blood Bank, and her husband Walter Clark, now retired as vice president of the Bank of New York, have built themselves a new house in Essex, Connecticut. One day, Stan James and Yope Bartels invaded their yacht club and had a fine time. Two deaths...U.J. to most of us, or Una Justus, in Escondido, California in November, and Mary Ward, in Sharon, Connecticut, in April. We all extend to Tone Dahl Kvittingen of Trondheim, Norway, our sympathy for the sudden death of her mother recently.

It's a real treat to have my brother Lawrence and his wife, Margaret, living in New York this year while he is getting his degree in Dr. of Sacred Music at Union Theological Seminary. One nephew is teaching the new style physics at Williamstown, Mass. High School and has a four-year-old fire-ball son; the middle nephew is a radiobiologist at Flint, Michigan and has a slightly more subdued son; and the youngest nephew has a year to go at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs...and once I thought all three were going to be morons!

My work still defies definition, but believe it or not, I find it much more challenging than anesthesia. We have put on several excellent meetings this year..Kingsley Bishop was one of 1400 who attended our Second International Conference on Congenital Malformations in New York City. Kingsley is fast becoming a crack cytogeneticist, growing human chromosomes as well as taking care of anesthesia at the Sunland Hospital, with almost 6000 patients, in Orlando. Also, just preceding the New York City meeting, we put on a course for the fourth year in medical genetics at Bar Harbor with faculty from Johns Hopkins and the Jackson Labs supplemented by at least ten foreign shining lights; then a mammalian cytogenetics conference in Vergennes, Vermont, with one afternoon free to let me fire away with that gorgeous set of golf clubs which you gave me when I left P.H. No, I won't tell you my score, but I expect to win the Old Ladies' Veteran's Cup sometime. We have helped edit a couple of books, bottle-fed some of Stan James's asphyxiated monkey newborns in Porto Rico, attended several meetings in molecular biology in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, Academy of Pediatrics, Pan American Health Organization in Washington, Committee on Drug Safety for the AMA, etc., etc., also visited over fifty research applicants personally.

Mother had her 90th Birthday Party in May. Thank you for your notes. Harold Wang writes from Formosa that he will come to the USA on a travelling fellowship next Fall. Claire and Don Stein hope to come East in the Spring. Raquel Santos, of Chile, expects to be in Los Angeles in November. Olive Jones, of the Radcliffe Infirmary at Oxford, hopes to visit in July. Any courtesies you can extend to these people will be to me, personally. Thank you in advance.

The cello I am making should be finished by the next Newsletter...

I trust that 1964 will treat you kindly and stimulate you to take part in more community activities, especially the March of Dimes... 

With love,

Virginia

New addresses:

Clark, Walter and Mary (Sargent).-Grandview Avenue, Essex, Conn.
DeFrancesco, Josephine (Mrs. Hernando Trujillo)-Wallingford Arms, Apt. E4,
Wallingford, Penn.
Densen, Eleanor (Mrs. Michael Densen)-8 Hemlock Hill Road, Saddle River, N.J.
Mellor, Josephine E. (Lt. Commander)-2791 Alvingroom Court, Apt. IA,
Oakland, Cal. 94605.
Moya, Frank - 281 Shore Drive E., Miami 33, Fla.
Mullen, Lelia I.-634 Piedmont Drive, S.E., Winter Haven, Florida.
Santos, Raquel-AVDA LYON 2125, Santiago, Chile.
Stimson, Barbara-Star Route 22-282, Owl's Head, Maine.
Swafford, Lida-632 West 171 Street, Apt. 5B, New York 10032.

Splendid to see you again

Ronan