Colleagues visiting from outside the Geneva area would scarcely recognise WHO today. The place may be familiar, but not its face. Since their time, change abounds.

It won't be an easy stroll into WHO premises. A barrier at the main entrance impedes the right of the access that had been taken for granted for over half a century. Now entry is through a single lane controlled by a guard. ID badges are de rigueur; serving colleagues wear blue ones; other authorised visitors, white – including former staff. All other doors to the building are blocked. (The badges are conveniently available at main entrance.)

The roof is now off limits too. Affording a splendid view of the Jura, it also overlooks the U.S. Mission to the United Nations. After the “Nine Eleven” outrage last year, WHO had little choice but to go into high security mode (noblesse oblige), which leaves daring ILO, just nearby, as the only agency in town still unfettered.

The landscape outside has changed. Porte-cabines (prefabs) have sprung up in surprising spots. One, dubbed “porte-pool,” has been placed in the pool (yes, pool) around the Executive Board building. Another one, built in a parking lot, is two floors high and rests on stilts, to permit parking underneath. Serving colleagues call it “porte-park.”

The icing on the construction cake however is the “Winter Garden.” After a year’s work, it was inaugurated in December 2001, as the D-G and Eurest Director, Maxime Ballanfat, looked on. A concrete-and-glass, semi-circular structure that extends the restaurant, it seats 160, and is furnished in “elegant terrace-style.” In winter it is heated (sometimes overly); in summer, the cool outside is expected to waft inside when the 20 or so French windows slide open. The cost (not divulged to QN) is to be met by income from rent that Eurest pays for use of WHO facilities.

Earlier, in October, a coffee bar, the “Caffe Ritazza,” opened on the first sous-sol in premises previously occupied by the bank.

(cont’d p.2)
FEATU RE S

HELPFUL HINTS FROM THE BARD

In a recent book, Shakespeare on Management, Paul Corrigan, a distinguished management consultant, shows how the Bard demonstrated the qualities of a successful manager and the reasons for many failures. Here are some lessons that the leadership in the U.N. system could draw from him also.

Lesson 1: Understand the people you lead, the context, the framework:

Before inheriting the throne, Prince Hal prepared himself by understanding the people he was destined to rule – living, drinking and fooling around with them. Says the perceptive Earl of Warwick:

*The prince but studies his companions / like a strange tongue ... to gain the language.* (Henry IV)

Lesson 2: Listening is often more important than giving instructions:

Sometimes newly-elected executive heads fail to understand the organisation's culture or speak the language of the "natives." In enthusiastic haste to carry out "reforms" they don't take account of the existing situation or the reasons for them.

*Give thy thoughts no tongue / Nor any unproportioned thought his act,* advised Polonius. (Hamlet)

Lesson 3: Have someone who tells the truth:

King Lear had his Fool tell him that he was a fool for giving away his kingdom yet expecting to retain authority.

*Lear: Dost thou call me fool, boy? Fool: All thy other titles thou hast given away, that thou wast born with.* (King Lear)

Lesson 4: Ambition by itself is not enough and leads to disaster:

Richard III was driven by lust for Kingship.

*And I ... / Torment myself to catch the English crown; / And from that torment will free myself / Or how my way out with a bloody axe.* (Henry IV)

Lesson 5: Acquiring a title does not make a leader:

Macbeth too was driven by ambition; he wanted to be King because he wanted to be King – not because he would make a better King, or make his country happier, or expand its territories, or bring peace and content to his people.

*I have no spur / To prick the sides of my intent, but only / Vaunting ambition.* (Macbeth)

Lesson 6: If you scorn your people, you fail:

Poor Richard II thought that because he had the title of King, everyone would automatically respect and obey him.

*Not all the water in the rough rude sea / Can wash the balm from an anointed King; The breath of worldly men cannot depose / The deputy elected by the Lord.* (Richard II)

For "Lord" read any "Executive Board." Richard learnt, as we can, that a title alone – be it S-G, USG, ASG, D-G, DDG, ADG, Director, Chief, Head – does not in itself guarantee successful leadership. By contrast, Henry V, disguised as a common soldier, exclaims:

*The king is but a man. The violet smells to him as it doth to me.* (Henry V)

—Aamir Ali
(Hon. Chairman, AAFI-AFICS)

(Excerpted from its Bulletin, September 2001.)

Winter Garden
(from p.1)

Inside the house, administrative changes are a-plenty. The posts of DD-G and AD-Gs are gone, replaced by Executive Directors, Special Representatives and Senior Policy Advisers to the D-G. "Divisions" are out of favour; "clusters" are in, as for instance, those fulsomely described as "Sustainable Development and Healthy Environment," and "Evidence and Information for Policy." The Division of Information and Education for Health is gone, and in February its leftovers were "repartitioned." World Health, WHO's only photo magazine, is among the publications deceased. The WHO Constitution, however, still holds fast and true.

Once past the security check, visiting former colleagues will find fewer, if any, recognisable faces about – except perhaps in room 4141, the offices of AFSM.

(Hours: Mon. 9.30 – 11.00; Tues. 10 – 12.30; Wed. 9.30 – 12; 14 – 15.30; Thurs. 10 – 12; 14 – 15.30).

(PS. If they visit in the years ahead, it is likely that the V Annex – now UNAIDS – will no longer be there, and that the new home for the AIDS programme will be on land acquired in exchange, behind the "OMS" bus stop.)

—Peter Ozorio
(Editor)
Giving new meaning to the tried and true adage held so dearly by WHO that prevention is better than cure, the Staff Health Insurance is set to reimburse at 100 per cent of cost “certain types of preventive health care,” notably testing for cancers, following agreement with medical centres in the Geneva area.

Also among the procedures to be reimbursed fully, according to a circular letter dated 11 February, are annual check-ups for retired colleagues and their spouses, which includes blood and urine tests, as well as any ECG exam needed.

Thus far arrangements have been concluded for tests to detect prostate and breast cancer. Unilabs in Champel has agreed to give a 20 per cent reduction, provided accounts are settled within 30 days, for the yearly prostate test (PSA). In addition, two centres in Geneva, one in Lausanne and one in Ferney-Voltaire, have agreed to carry out mammographies under terms (price reductions and flat fees) that are advantageous. (See circular for details.)

When negotiations now underway are concluded, costs for tests to detect cancers of the cervix and colon will also be similarly reimbursed. Due to be covered are a Pap smear every three years, and a colonoscopy every ten (beginning from age 50, a provision for serving staff), or, if recommended by a doctor, more frequently. Also under negotiations are up to 10 visits to a dietician in cases of obesity, with a proviso that the approval of the Hq. Surveillance Committee is needed for further treatment.

On a related subject, the health insurance has signed an agreement with two pharmacies on Geneva’s left bank, Krieg and Rieu-Parc, to waive the CHF 7.35 “patient’s file” tax (though not the CHF 4.20 “pharmacist’s” tax), and as well to give a 10 per cent discount on any purchase. This is the second agreement reached with pharmacies. The first, in August 2001 with Sun Store, exempts colleagues from both taxes, which total CHF 11.55 but, unlike the recent agreement, discontinues the 10 per cent discount. A quid pro quo.

- In March 2002, a colleague filling a prescription at the Pharmacie Parc de Budé, with which there is no agreement, reported being charged for both taxes, paying a whopping CHF 11.60 on a CHF 21.55 purchase of a tube of dermatological cream.

Purchasing at the Pharmacie de la Combe in Nyon, another colleague shelled out 19.70 CHF, when the taxes were added, for an eye drop priced at 7.85 CHF; out only 4.50 CHF (3.08 euro) for the official equivalent at the Pharmacie Centrale in Divonne-les-Bains, France. Shopping at the recommended pharmacies, or in France, would thus be in the interest of the individual and the health insurance.

THE NEW BOY AT UBS

Who amongst us did not want to know more about Christopher Garey, newly appointed UBS representative, after seeing him for the first time at AFSTM’s General Meeting last year? For one so youthful in appearance, he handled questions with aplomb, stressing the bank’s role in advising clients, and welcoming suggestions (a second Multimat machine would be appreciated, says QN’s Wise Old Owl).

As though anticipating public curiosity, the bank released an interview with the man it selected to head three branches, at WHO, WTO and ILO, with a total staff of 16. He joined UBS at the tender age of 24, working first in branches at Cornavin and Versoix before making the “quantum leap in September 2001” to the international agencies.

Of an English father, which explains the Anglo spelling of his first name, and a French mother, he is naturally bilingual but also has acquired a “smattering” of German. “No, I don’t have any kids at the moment, and I’m not married,” he says of his private life, “but I’ve been living with my partner for several years.”

Indeed, he is young, and impressive now at only 32, the age of many of our own sons and daughters.
Living in France

The Puzzle of "Les Contributions"

Subsequent to two judgements handed down in February 2000 by the Court of Justice of the European Community in Luxembourg, which held that CSG and CRDS levies are not taxes but social assessments, the French government passed an Ordonnance in May 2001 (No. 2001-377) setting out the conditions under which they are to be applied.

(CSG stands for Contribution Sociale Généralisée and CRDS, Contribution pour le Remboursement de la Dette Sociale)

Essentially what the ordinance does is to modify France's Social Security Code (Art.L136-1) by defining the conditions under which the "social contribution on full-time and part-time earnings" (contribution sociale sur les revenus d'activité et des revenus de remplacement) are to be collected. A person subject to the assessments must meet two conditions: (a) be domiciled fiscally in France, and therefore pay income tax, and (b) be dependent, in any way whatsoever, on an obligatory French scheme of health insurance.

CSG was introduced in December 1990, under the government of Michel Rocard, to fill a "hole" in the country's social security system. CRDS followed in January 1996 (after adoption of Ordonnance No. 96-50,) and was intended to reimburse the social share of the public debt. Intended in theory to be time-limited, it was kept low at first to make the pill easier to swallow, but the CSG rate has been regularly hiked and now stands at 7.5 per cent. CRDS has stayed put at 0.5 per cent (but a new Prélèvement social now imposes a further 2 per cent contribution).

While CSG and CRDS are levied on all full-time and part-time earnings, they are not based on a sliding scale as income tax is. Frontaliers, legally resident in France but working across borders, who were reluctant to contribute to a social security scheme from which they derive no advantage, were first to challenge the assessments, initially in the French courts and then before the EC Court of Justice.

It was their vigorous action that led to the establishment of the two-point criteria for the assessments. However, quite frankly, even that success has not marked the end of the problem for the many former colleagues living in France who are not "dependent, in any way whatsoever, on an obligatory French system of health insurance." (See related story below.)

—J.M. Leclercq
(formerly TRA)
Divonne-les-Bains

Which to Pay?

As a retiree from WHO for 11 years, resident in France, I have followed the chequered history of the Contribution Sociale Généralisée (CSG) over the years with bewilderment. Whatever is announced from Paris, Brussels, Strasbourg, Luxembourg or wherever seems to have no bearing on what actually happens "in the field."

Since November 1994 I have been sent an annual bill for CSG, starting at 504 FF. By October 1996 the Contribution pour le Remboursement de la Dette Sociale (CRDS) was added, and in December 1999, the so-called "Prélèvement Social" was tacked on, rocketing my total bill to 6,842 FF. All of this in addition to income tax. Deciding in December 1999 that enough was enough, I wrote to the tax authorities in Bellegarde, using the formula letter recommended by AAFI-AFICS to request reimbursement. This resulted in -- nothing: no acknowledgement, no reply, no repayment.

By 21 January 2002 the bill (actually for 2000) had reached 6,549 FF (998.39 euros), with a deadline for payment of 31 January ! I paid, but promptly wrote again to Bellegarde requesting reimbursement of this sum. According to "Ordonnance No. 2001-377 " of 2 May, my letter pointed out, those required to pay CSG and CRDS assessments benefit from France's health insurance, which I do not.

On 1 March, Bellegarde advised that I would be reimbursed 1,204 FF (184 euros) only for CRDS, which amounts to 81.8 per cent of the 1,471 FF (224 euros) paid. No part of the CSG (4,009 FF or 611 euros) nor of the Prélèvement Social (1,069 FF or 163 euros) is to be repaid, and no specific reason for this was given. The letter said, "satisfaction is granted to you as regards cancelling the CRDS on your pensions deriving from Switzerland (en provenance de la Suisse). However the revenues of the patrimony (les revenus du patrimoine) remain subject to this contribution." This reference to Switzerland is clearly wrong as I declare that my U.N. pension comes from New York.

I believe pensioners would welcome a clear statement from a knowledgeable person who can explain, in layman's language, whether those of us living in France should or should not be subject to these assessments. One colleague received reimbursement for CSG, but not CRDS, which I did, and another colleague was repaid both. Either the various statements about these levies that figure in QN or in the AAFI/AFICS Bulletin (see box page 5) are inexact or for some reason they do not apply to my case.

—John H. Bland
(formerly INF)
Mourex, France
René Mathieu, Vice President, AAFI/AFICS, informed its General Assembly in May 2001, that U.N. pensioners should not pay the CSG (social) tax, but should pay the CRDS (debt) tax.

(Our colleague, John Bland’s experience however is just the contrary: He did not have to pay CRDS, but had to pay for CSG — QN.)

Andre Heitz, FICSA, said a draft decree had been prepared which would exempt U.N. retirees from paying either of the two taxes.

(Excerpted from the AAFI/AFIC Bulletin, September 2001)

**GOING TO COURT OVER TAXES**

Denmark, a country with one of the highest taxation rates in Europe, exempts European Union pensions from income tax. Acutely aware that WHO retirees are not as fortunate as Eurocrats, serving colleagues in Copenhagen are going to court to win a measure of equality in the treatment of U.N. pensions, which are now subject, at the minimum, to a 50 per cent tax.

Petitioning the government has failed, in part “because of the absence of any clause on tax exemptions on pensions in HQ agreements” with Denmark, according to Anders Tholle, Chairman, AAFI/AFICS. Now before the Danish Tax Court, the legal challenge taken by the EURO Staff Association rests on appellants Monika Wesemann and Jill Conway-Fell. One was a former G- and the other P-graded staff member; one is Danish and the other non-Danish, each live in different municipalities in Copenhagen.

A call has been made to colleagues world-wide, to associations of serving and former staff, to FICSA, to AAFI/AFICS, among others, for contributions to a “Fighting Fund” to help finance costs of litigation. (Send contributions to WHO/EURO Staff Association, Scherfigsvej 8, DJ-2100, Copenhagen, Denmark.)

More to come

**HELLO, “RETIREES”**

Our 2002 telephone book is out, with a new design and a grey-coloured cover. Some colleagues have had listed only their addresses; others, more thoroughly, all of their contacts (telephone, fax and e-mail numbers). Among observations: A colleague had his phone/fax numbers listed twice although the number is the same; another had his telephone number excluded after requesting that his e-mail be included.

One asterisk (*) by a name means annual membership (20 CHF) and two (**) life membership (250 CHF)

While applauding all the work that has gone into the 80-page document, QN’s Wise Old Owl is a little distressed to see us referred to on the cover as “retirees,” instead of the politically correct “former” WHO staff.

But, oh well, everything can be corrected in the next number by filling out the form at the back of the book, so not to worry.

**LIFESTYLES**

**AN OPEN INVITATION TO COLLEAGUES**

This is a call to all those who, like me saw WHO’s birth and early years and have passed on, but not yet passed away. (Even you, dear reader, will follow in your turn!)

Former staff are the repository of WHO’s history. Over the years we laboured to put flesh on the skeletons provided by the World Health Assembly and the Executive Board. We are WHO’s institutional memory.

The publications the “First Ten Years” and the “Second Ten Years” of WHO do little more than list aims and achievements as though WHO owed its existence to meetings and resolutions. Did it all happen with so little human participation? Certainly not.

The Bodleian Library of Oxford University has an established U.N. records project which provides research material of historical interest. I propose that we establish a similar but informal project, “A Personal History of WHO,” to achieve a richer account of the past. Too many of us take our knowledge to our graves. Too many documents, letters and memorabilia which could illuminate many situations are lost forever.

Those among us who are of like mind, from D, P to G grades, who are willing to contribute individual experiences (successes, failures, euphorias and frustrations) would help ensure a rich pool of experience for those who come after us. Through this project of recollections we can bring alive colleagues who will otherwise be forgotten.

It will be a small gesture of esteem for their work.
for our WHO. Now:
- Do you believe this is a good and workable idea?
- Are you willing to contribute your recollections and any material in your possession?
- Are you willing to help in organising and collating material?

If there is sufficient interest, we shall organise a meeting to consider suggestions and to discuss the future steps. Please reply to:

Rosemary Villars: <r.villars@wanadoo.fr> or c/o WFPHA, CP 608, 1211 Geneva 13
Dev Ray: <dev.ray@wanadoo.fr> or 87 Crepillon, 01220 Grilly, France

—Anthony Brown, (aged 84)
(Identity Card No. 20, WHO Interim Commission)
Vaud, Switzerland

Anything but Retired

Working on Oil-for-Food

Some five years ago, after more than 27 years of service in the Legal Office in Geneva, I left WHO -- on account of the rules. Then, Senior Legal Officer, I had reached the mandatory age of retirement, 60. Now I am in Iraq on my third five-month tour of duty for EMRO, assigned to the U.N. Oil-for-Food Programme. I am in the field, at the WR Office in Baghdad, and therefore anything but retired.

The trip here is not easy. There are no direct flights because of U.N. sanctions against Iraq, so I was obliged:... 

- off the top for the U.N. Compensation Commission, which adjudicates claims for reparation from injured parties.

The first consignment of medical supplies arrived in May 1999. As lead agency for health, WHO watches over the flow and distribution of medicines and medical supplies. While there are 45 international and 253 national staff working for WHO, the entire U.N. complement in Iraq is around 2,000. Oil-for-Food has succeeded to a notable extent, but more needs to be done to alleviate the hardship of the people.

The atmosphere at the WR office is convivial — such a contrast, I find, to the office I knew well during my final years in Geneva, where it seemed that "mobbing" was the order of the day.

Above all, I feel gratified at being able to make my expertise available after service. With our institutional memory, our experience, and a faithfulness to WHO, former staff are a tremendous, though under-utilised, resource. I am one of the fortunate few.

—Sami Shubber
(formerly LEG)
WR Baghdad, Iraq

*Swinging through Geneva last November, Jack Ling, formerly INF. Though now in academia, as Professor, School of Public Health, Tulane University, his visit here was as representative of the International Council for the Control of Iodine Deficiency Diseases. He was seeking to enlist the help of the Geneva-based World Bureau of Boy Scouts in educating the public in the use of iodised salt to eliminate IDD, the principle cause of brain damage among children.

*Also visiting that month, Jack Woodall, formerly HST, bearing news of a grant equivalent to £100,000 for his pet project investigating emerging infectious diseases at the Federal University, Rio de Janeiro. It finances the testing of a “lab-in-a-suitcase" for rapid diagnosis of foot-and-mouth disease. A network he set up with the Federation of American Scientists in 1994 to give early warning of outbreaks of emerging diseases and bio-terrorist threats, “Promed” (www.promed.org), now has some 25,000 subscribers in 160 countries.

*Honoured in New Year ceremonies by his community, Gérard Dazin, formerly with the graphics unit, for rendering 30 years of faithful service during five terms as member of the Conseil municipal, Ornex, in neighbouring France.
Boohs "Criminal Leaders; Armies of Cruelty"

In his book "Judging Criminal Leaders: the Slow Erosion of Impunity," Yves Beigbeder, formerly Personnel Officer, has done a remarkable job of covering the vast horizon of horrors committed by criminal leaders and their armies of cruelty. What is so remarkable is the calm cool tone of such inflammatory material.

Moreover, his research unearths a variety of little known, or unknown, facts that throw light on our desperate situation today. He offers, however, some ray of hope since the legal impunity of those in power has become eroded and new institutions, with a worldwide scope, attempt to bring a measure of justice to those who have so long suffered in silence and neglect.

Following the Geneva and The Hague Conventions, a major landmark was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1966.

The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment entered into force in 1987. It requires that, wherever torture occurred and whatever the nationality of the torturer and victim, states must either prosecute the alleged torturers or extradite them to a country that will. This gives universal jurisdiction to national courts. But the way ahead is strewn with obstacles.

States resent having the protection of human rights questioned within their borders and consider this a violation of state sovereignty. Military authorities resent civilian judiciary control and frequently demand amnesty of criminals as the price to pay for a country's peaceful transition to democracy. But, as the author notes, laws evolve in response to the perceived or expressed needs of the people, and common folk often precede their leaders here.

He states at the outset that the book is not a legal treatise but an attempt by an independent observer and internationalist to describe and assess developments in international criminal law through the creation of international tribunals. He is fully aware of the political limits of the venture.

Yet he believes in the universality of human rights and that as democracy spreads worldwide it will support the creation of the International Criminal Court, which will be set up in July 2002.

—Ned Willard
(formerly INF)
Geneva

THE ‘WRITINGEST’ RETIREE

If ever there is to be a prize for the most “writingest” retiree, then it surely must go to Yves Beigbeder, formerly personnel officer at Brazzaville, Copenhagen and Geneva. Since his retirement in 1984, he has written either in English or in French 13 books, or as he puts it about “one chapter a month, one book a year” on the work of the U.N. family. His last book, still under print but reviewed here, is a remarkably dispassionate account of an emotional subject -- man’s inhumanity to man (to be published by Kluwer Law International, P.O. Box 85889, 2508 CN, The Hague, Netherlands).


At 85, Translated German Verse about Penguins

Aubrey Woolman, formerly with WHO’s technical publications unit, took early retirement in 1975. Almost a quarter of a century later, he received a letter from a U.S. publisher asking him to translate a book of light-hearted German verse into English. The letter, dated 2 November 1999, requested that it be done as soon as possible. Our colleague, “now only 85” as he put it, obliged. It was finished in ten days — written entirely in rhymed couplets and described as “miraculously translated from German.”

Delightfully illustrated also, the book tells the story of the arrival at the South Pole of the liner “Opera Ship” from Old Vienna, with the Three Tenors on board. “As everyone should know, penguins, who are the only inhabitants of the Antarctic, are crazy about opera, which is why they are always in evening dress,” our colleague explains to QN, while versifying thusly:

“All Penguins, as I said, wear tails! (Or evening dress) not just the males! You're puzzled by this craze for fashion/ And ask the reason for their passion; Why do they love to be such smarties? Is it because they like posh parties?"

They do indeed, giving a rapturous reception to a performance of Verdi's La Traviata, with Jose Carreras as Alfredo, Placido Domingo as the disapproving father, and Luciano Pavarotti (who else?) as Violetta. Though saddened when the show ends, the sociable birds are certain the liner will return, rhyming:

(cont’d p.8)
"The Opera Ship is coming back! Of that they're sure as black is black.

The interest of our colleague in the language of Goethe goes back to the sixth form, he says. It was nurtured by a course in "scientific German," a requirement by the Royal College of Science, London, where he received a Ph.D. in chemistry. He was stationed in Germany for two years before going to work, in 1947, for a pharmaceutical company in Basle, where he acquired a "smattering of Schwyzerdütsch."

Ten years later he joined WHO, living in Chambéry with his wife, who taught for a time at La Châtaignerie, and their three children.

At home now in Eastbourne, England, he plays the violin in three local orchestras. He also attends the Université du Troisième Age, founded in Toulouse in 1972. At German classes, he learnt of the book that he has now translated, entitled "Some Folks Think the South Pole's Hot - The Three Tenors Play the Antarctic." A bent for writing poetry makes his translation irresistibly sparkling.

The book's author is Elke Heidenreich; illustrated by Quint Buchholz, and published by David R. Godine Inc., P.O.Box 450, Jaffrey, New Hampshire 033452, USA. Price: $17.95. A good buy

In Memoriam

(Final for "In Memoriam" must include, at least, the following: the date and place of death, when the deceased joined and retired from WHO, the last position held, a personal assessment of the deceased, and when possible the names of survivors. Also, a photo. The contributor's former office should also be given. Because of space requirements, please limit tributes to no more than 300 words. —QN)

Fernanda Alvez-Diniz. An outstanding lady in every way, she joined WHO's nursing office in 1951, retiring in 1973. Among assignments of her career were service in Costa Rica as project leader, in Copenhagen as Regional Nursing Advisor, and finally, for seven years in Geneva HQ.

She is perhaps best remembered for her part in establishing the Ecole Internationale d'Enseignement Infirmier Supérieur in Lyons, France, which trained hundreds of nurses worldwide. In humility, she refused a Portuguese Presidential award, stating it was WHO, and not she, that deserved it.

She was a beacon of help and support to nurses, both professionally and personally. Her hospitality and generosity knew no bounds; her lovely chalet was always "open house" to her friends, where they enjoyed memorable moments and the scenic beauty of the Champéry area.

Among the many tributes from her colleagues are these three: from Ingrid Nyman, "She had sunshine in her heart which spread to others;" from Ivanka Markovic, "Truly knowledgeable with incredible energy and enthusiasm for life;" and from Elizabeth Stussi, "A leader of her time."

She had no immediate family, but nurtured her god-children as her own, who returned her devotion by taking care of her during those few final years. Her death has saddened us, her colleagues and friends, who will remember her with affection, respect and gratitude. Born in 1913 in Portugal, she passed away there on 14 October 2001, aged 88.

—Amelia Mangay-Maglacas
(formerly Chief Nursing Officer)
Cologny, Switzerland
Cyril Dumbleton: My colleague, friend and mentor, consummate linguist and polymath, retired on 31 August 1980 as head of WHO’s Translation Unit and died on 11 November 2000. Born in 1920 and educated at the King Henry VIII School, Coventry, England, he won a scholarship to St. John's College, Oxford. During the 1939-45 war he served as a naval officer. After resuming his interrupted university career and obtaining, in 1948, a Master's degree in modern languages, he taught for a while in Prague, where he learned Czech.

In 1958, after translating for various agencies, notably the Red Cross, in Geneva, he took up a newly established post at WHO, where increasing involvement of the "Eastern bloc" in the Organisation's work had created an acute need for expertise in Slavonic languages.

Courteous, even-tempered, never profane and seemingly stress-proof, as adept at rapidly producing elegant and accurate translations from a dozen languages, on any subject from Aedes aegypti to zymogenesis, as at organising the work of the Unit to meet insensate deadlines, he liked and needed human contacts. In today’s world he would not have enjoyed communing endlessly with a luminous screen. Long after the rest of us had adopted the new-fangled cassette recorder, he continued dictating “live” until, alas, shorthand became an obsolete skill.

One monumental by-product of his industry and thirst for knowledge was a large collection, acquired at his own expense but available to anyone, of manuals and glossaries, many of which are now in the translators' reference room. Another was a meticulously researched and awesomely voluminous multilingual card index of biomedical terms, now (at last!) being computerised. What, with more time for editing, he might have achieved as a lexicographer is evidenced by his 500-page Russian-English Biological Dictionary, published in 1964.

His wife Jane, their children Neil and Katherine and two grandchildren survive him.

—John Fraser
(formerly TRA)
Versoix, Switzerland

Barbara Amaru: Joining WHO in 1960, she became a member of the Division of Education and Training in 1966, working in the fellowship programme. I first met her a year later when we shared an office. She enjoyed her work very much, always willing to give a helping hand to her colleagues. She was an avid reader and never missed the annual book sale. She devoured books on British heritage, and was an ardent member of the U.K. National Trust.

She took early retirement in 1990 to be able to enjoy the lovely house that she and her husband had built in Crusilles in neighbouring France. Our friendship lasted 35 years, our families spending many happy weekends together. Since her retirement, we lunched in Geneva every week, often with her husband – how I miss those meetings. Honest, discreet and sincere, she always listened to other people's problems, but never burdened them with hers. Although reserved, she enjoyed a good laugh. She fought her illness with dauntless courage, never disclosing her suffering to friends.

She passed away peacefully in Geneva on 10 January 2002. She is sorely missed. Our heartfelt condolences go to her grief-stricken husband, Mario, and her lovely daughter, Meggie.

—Sandra Dumont
(Serving Staff, Health Services Delivery) Geneva

Josef Vysohild served in Brazzaville, AFRO, from 1964 to 1973, first as Regional Adviser for Education and then from 1968, as Deputy Director, Health Services. Prior to joining WHO he was Deputy Minister, Ministry of Public Health, formerly Czechoslovakia.

Following his return home in June 1973, he directed postgraduate education at the Prague Institute for Postgraduate Studies, working with the World Federation for Medical Education, the Association for
Medical Education in Europe and others. He was awarded the State Decoration in 1964 and the J.E. Purkyné medal in 1979. He counts among his publications 49 works in Czechoslovakia, 10 abroad, and 23 papers!

Born in Nymbuk, a small town near Prague, in 1914, he obtained his medical degree from Charles University, Prague, in March 1939, a few days before the German invasion of his country. During World War II he worked as house physician in the Hradek Královec hospital and then for eight years as otorhinolaryngologist, head physician and director of the Trutnov country hospital.

He passed away on 15 December 2001, succumbing to ischaemic stroke at age 87. In the memory of his friends and colleagues, he remains a dedicated, charismatic educator, full of optimism, with a friendly approach to all.

—Zdenek Fejfar
(formerly Chief, CVD, 1959-1973)
Prague, Czech Republic

Patricia Palmer: I first met Pat at headquarters in the 1950s. She worked in the Division of Public Information, headed by Joe Handler, a competent and exacting chief. She was always scouting for the story that would satisfy his scrutiny and her own high standards of journalism.

She was transferred to EMRO in Alexandria and then to SEARO in New Delhi, working under the Regional Directors, and finally back to Geneva. Her career extended from July 1951 until she retired in June 1972.

After her return to Switzerland, she purchased a large property in Luins, Canton de Vaud, the site of an abandoned mill, which, with great taste and skill, she transformed into a beautiful dwelling and garden. Here, as a caring hostess, she presided over legions of visiting friends. She used to say, when the question arose: “The purpose of life is to live”.

I would like to mention her devoted friend, Penelope (Lope) Zaliki and her housekeeper Paula Lorielo who, before and throughout her illness, faithfully tended her dogs and estate.

Pat died in a hospice in Morges on 13 January 2002, survived by three nieces, a nephew in Canada and a step-daughter in Paris. She was a staunch friend, warm, humorous, open and direct. She leaves an indelible memory with all who knew her.

—Martin & Lena Kaplan
(Martin Kaplan, formerly Director Research, and now Director, Pugwash Office, Geneva)

Jean Dulac directed the U.N. Joint Medical Service from 1962 until his retirement in January 1982. He studied military medicine from 1936 to 1943, eventually becoming Associate Professor at Val-de-Grâce, the prestigious military hospital in Paris.

During World War II, he was a member of the maquis resistance fighters of Clermont-Ferrand. In December 1943 he was arrested and sent to the infamous Buchenwald concentration camp in Germany. In 1945, he escaped while in a column of prisoners and succeeded in reaching the American lines. He weighed just 42 kilograms then.

Concealing a great sensitivity behind a calculated cold demeanour, he showed remarkable qualities as an organiser. His administrative and scientific rigour was the hallmark of everything he did, yet he always took into account the human element. As director he made great demands of his co-workers, but he made even more demands on himself.

He passed away on 11 Nov 2001, aged 83, following a long and onerous illness. His friends, former co-workers and colleagues offer their most profound and sincere sympathies to his family.

—Samy Kosovsky
(formerly U.N.Joint Medical Service)
Geneva
Yvonne Weeks: It was indeed sad to hear of her death, for somehow she seemed as imperishable as she was irreplaceable. Totally dedicated to WHO, she manifested what she thought a first-class administrative assistant should be: efficient, knowledgeable, vigilant and indefatigable, with an infallible memory and accuracy that put us, her colleagues, to shame. Not only did her professionalism and grasp of WHO's mission serve as a criterion for others but her allegiance to the United Nations as a whole made her exceptional.

How often, in her quiet but resolute manner, did she steer her Division of Coordination (COR) clear of shoals and hazards? Produce in a second a brief off that hard disk which never ceased to spin in her remarkable head? How many newcomers were, and possibly still are, indebted to her for guidance? Who was more familiar than she with the arcane mass of acronyms out there beyond the – to her – sacrosanct walls of WHO? She would cite a decision of some UNDP Governing Council, leave alone an EB, as if she had drafted the original.

(Yvonne Weeks joined WHO in 1957 as secretary in ADM, then worked in different offices. In 1967, she was selected as administrative assistant to the Director, COR, a post she held till 1982. She was born in 1926; she passed away on 9 November 2001. QN)

Once in New York when the substance of some point escaped us, the director of a global programme suggested: “Call your Miss Weeks. She’s bound to remember.” Such was her reputation. Throughout her career, her sense of probity, integrity and responsibility always prevailed. Although she would have dismissed such a notion out of hand, she was the personification of a tradition from which the WHO and U.N. secretariats have harvested so much.

Of course, wherever she is now coordinating things and sees this attempt to commemorate her abilities, she will tear it up and write her own, thus: “I merely did what I could with that erstwhile COR in WHO. And cor in Latin means heart. Part of our heart we left there. Cherish it.”

—Paul Lawton
(formerly Director, Division of Coordination)
Geneva

RIP (These colleagues have passed away since the last announcement)

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Compiled by Rosemary Bell from AAfi/AFICS Bulletin and other sources.

( *= date not communicated)

In the House

WHO in Afghanistan

WHO, UNICEF and NGOs have issued an appeal to rebuild the health sector in Afghanistan this year as part of the Immediate and Transitional Assistance Programme (ITAP) for Afghans.

WHO is seeking some $60 million exclusively for the Ministry of Health after decades of neglect, and for refugees and local populations in neighbouring countries. According to estimates, six million Afghans have no access to medical care. Women are particularly vulnerable, with more than 16,000 dying each year from pregnancy-related causes. One-fourth of children die before their fifth birthdays, often from preventable diseases such as measles.

(cont’d on p.18)
Another objective is to establish services for emergency obstetric and trauma care. Currently, 50 of the country’s 220 districts have no medical facility available. About half of 44 hospitals performing surgery have no means of testing blood for infectious diseases such as hepatitis or HIV.

The total funding for health being sought is equivalent to just over $5 per person, while, on average, $34 per person per year is required to provide basic health services. Afghanistan is unable to absorb such funds now.

In March, nearly a hundred Afghan provincial health officials participated in a WHO-sponsored training workshop on health management, followed by a nationwide workshop of Afghan health officials, representatives of national and international NGOs, donors and U.N. agencies.

(Excerpted from WHO Press Release (WHO/14, 4 March 2002)

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**Letters**

(Readers like letters. Keep them coming and short and, identify yourself through your last WHO office. QN)

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**LIKES QN**

(Re: QN45, Autumn 2001)

I just wanted to say how interesting and readable I find QN. With kind regards,

—Sev Fluss
(formerly Chief, Health Legislation)
Geneva

(Every kind word appreciated. — Editor)

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**QN Readership Survey**

I am sending the completed QN Readership Survey form and trust it is not too late. Let me say that I read the QN in its entirety even though it takes me forever, even with the aid of my glasses and a strong magnifier. There are not many printed words on which I spend so much effort. Keep up the good work.

—Sheila M. Prause
Mijas Costa, Spain

(No, not too late for the survey. Thus far 69 replies have been received, a rather low return considering total membership. Virtually all were positive, but you must be QN’s No. 1 fan. — Editor)

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**MAGIC WAND**

My pension failed to arrive by the second week of November, so my bank stopped smiling on me. In anguish I cried on the shoulders of the AFSM; it waved its magic wand, and by the third week my pension came in. My bank smiled again, and I was able to buy a bottle of geriatric medicine.

We must count ourselves fortunate in having the generous back-up provided by our old comrades-in-arms and be thankful for the facilities provided by WHO for the functioning of our Association.

—Kenneth Sinclair-Loutit
(formerly EURO)
Rabat, Morocco

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**2nd Edition Coming**

(Re: “Contract Renewed,” QN45, Summer 2001)

I was very pleased to read that the Editor will undertake responsibilities for QN for another year. My wife and I are avid readers of the newsletter, while I feel obligated to contribute when I can. Let me mention that I have recently completed eight new chapters of the second edition of my book, “The World Seen Through a Microscope or 40 Years of Chasing Malaria but Never Catching It.”

As the reception of the first edition had been positively benign, I decided to be more daring now and concentrate on real characters rather than events. I attach a photocopy of the chapter on the late Dr. Robert Kouznetsov, formerly of Malaria at Headquarters, but who served also in the field, to use as you may choose.

—David Payne
(formerly CTD/TDR)
Penarth, Wales

(Keep your eyes on the next issue. — Editor)
NOT 1 BUT 9
(Re: “AMRO, The Rest & Us,” QN45, Summer 2001)

This article states that the annual report of the Staff Health Insurance presents figures related to retired staff as one group. In fact, in the reports for the years 1999 and 2000, we have shown income and expenditure by region where the retired staff reside. So, the breakdown was by nine locations — and not one, as stated.

—Ann Van Hulle-Colbert
(Coordinator, WHO Staff Financial Services)

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
(Re: “In Memoriam, Jacques Leroy,” QN 46, Autumn 2001)

I am sorry to submit a complaint (even a mild one) since I appreciate the QN and the effort that goes into the newsletter. It is normal for my obituary to have been shortened, having indicated myself that it would be legitimate to shrink it in the wash. But is it acceptable to change the phraseology? Especially when the text was signed.

While it is true that I no longer have the manuscript, I cannot see myself saying, as reported in the last paragraph “that he was a perfect international servant” (“L’homme qui vient de nous quitter était un fonctionnaire international parfait”). Though less grievous, I cannot recognise my style in what followed. As for the “perfect international servant,” have you ever met one? This statement bothers me because it doesn’t correspond at all to our deceased colleague’s own views on the subject.

However, let’s stick to the principle — one that our WIPO colleagues would surely support — that one’s signature is patented intellectual property. I imagine I am not alone to draw your attention to the simple principal of respect for a signature (even if that of a professional journalist). That being said, thanks for taking the trouble to consider what I said.

—Jean-Paul Darmsteter
(formerly INF)
Geneva

“MODEST PROPOSAL” (MORE)
(Re: QN 46, Autumn 2001)

Re: “Paying for 27 years.” My situation is similar to that of Kenneth Sinclair-Loutit, with the slight difference that I joined WHO in 1950 and retired in 1974, therefore served for 24 years. Having received a reduced pension for so many years (as a result of taking a lump sum), one does indeed wonder what the U.N. Staff Pension Fund is doing with the money it is still collecting — not only from me, but from other pensioners like myself.

Re: Letter from Alfred and June Hargreaves-Beer: I too share their interest in the “modest proposal” made by our UNICEF colleague in India (M.S. Sharma, New Delhi, who proposed that all retirees get a full pension at age 70, even those who took the lump sum.) One can hope it will receive serious consideration. If full pensions can only be attained by delaying the age to 80, I would have even greater interest as I am not far away from entering the nonagenarian decade.

—Margaret Petitjean-Moore
Versoix, Switzerland

INDIA’S EXAMPLE: PENSIONS
(Re: “Modest Proposal,” QN46, Autumn 2001)

When the cost-of-living increases, of course so do pensions. However, in India at times when adjustments are made to the base salary scale of posts formerly held by pensioners, the retirees’ pensions are increased correspondingly. This unique provision has been in effect since 1996 and, like the “Modest Proposal” on full pensions for all, should be supported and examined by all international civil servants. The example of one Member State is enlightened and worth following.

—Rajindar Pal
(AFSM Representative)
(HQ Staff Pension Committee)

BRITISH U.N. ASSOCIATION
(Re: “Help! Who Needs It?” QN46, Autumn, 2001)

I was very interested in this AFSM activity, and, as I am “National Welfare Coordinator” for the British Association of Former U.N. Civil Servants (BAFUNCS), I would like to know what response you receive to your offer of help. For your information, in
each of our regions in the U.K. we have Welfare Officers who provide members with the following assistance:

1. Finances, covering our Benevolent Fund, and advice on allowances and benefits;
2. Support and Solidarity, offering companionship to members who feel lonely but do not need specific help, just simply someone to talk to; and
3. Contacts, leading newcomers to activities of

our Association.

I would be pleased to know if you have comments or ideas that we could benefit from.

—Alfred G. Beer
Rowlands Castle, England

(P.S. Rosemary Bell, Amelia Maglacas, Ned Willard, I wonder if you remember me?)

—Christophe Minder
(Excerpted from the Tribune de Genève, 12 March 2002)

—Sexy Seniors

Older men are great in bed. We are talking about folk in their sixties, and we have a scientist’s word for it, with figures to support the claim made. Dr. Lorraine Ball -- yes, that’s her real name -- of the University of Sheffield surveyed 185 husbands aged 30 to 60. Below the age 46, 22 per cent experienced erectile dysfunction. But among those older, this rate droops to 16 per cent.

And that isn’t all. Males of a riper age enjoy longer-lasting tumescence. “They take longer to reach orgasm, to the greater satisfaction of their wives,” explains Miss Ball. “Sexual activity certainly diminishes with age, but the quality improves.” As for the male menopause, that is “just a myth put about by pharmaceutical manufacturers to boost a lucrative market.”

Ladies -- take a retiree to bed, double-quick!

(Excerpted from the Tribune de Genève, 21 March 2002)

—3 Swiss Cities Among Top 10

Three cities in Switzerland dominated the top 10 list as the most desirable places to live, according to a survey of 215 cities published in London.

Zurich was rated No. 1, putting Vancouver, which had the top rating last year in a second-place tie with Vienna; Geneva tied with Sydney at No. 4, and Bern was listed No. 10, according to the survey, conducted by the human resources consultancy William M. Mercer. Others in the top 10 were Frankfurt, Helsinki, Auckland and Copenhagen.

New York, used as the baseline for comparison, was ranked No. 41, equal with London, Washington, Boston, Chicago and Madrid. Among 39 criteria used to judge the cities’ desirability were the political, economic, natural and sociocultural environments, health care, education, housing, transportation, shopping and recreation.

(Excerpted from Reuters, 12 March 2002)