

# TRENT ASSOCIATES REPORT

Spring/Summer 2004

Vol. 12, No. 1

## Hans Horst Meyer Celebration

The Trent Associates and the Medical Center Library hosted a celebration on Thursday 25 March to honor J. Horst Meyer's gift of his grandfather Hans Horst Meyer's portrait and medical memorabilia. The occasion gave us an opportunity to celebrate the contributions of H.H. Meyer to science and to express the Library's appreciation for the generous gifts of Professor Meyer, DSc, Fritz London Professor of Physics, to our historical collections. The guests were welcomed by Patricia Thibodeau, Associate Dean for Library Services. Then, Dr. Mark Newman, The Merel H. Harmel Professor and Chairman of the Department of Anesthesiology, shared a few words about Meyer's significance as an anesthesia pioneer. Dr. Robert L. Lipnick, from the Office of Pollution Prevention & Toxics at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, gave the guest lecture, "Hans Horst Meyer and the Lipoid Theory of Narcosis." A reception followed in the lower lobby adjacent to the exhibition which had been mounted as part of the event.



(l. to r.) Mrs. Lipnick, Dr. Robert Lipnick, Prof. Horst Meyer, Mrs. Meyer

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**Hans Horst Meyer Celebration, continued from page 1**

**Dr. Robert Lipnick** in front of the portrait of Hans Horst Meyer by A. Rietti (March 1911). Prof. Meyer generously funded the restoration of the painting by conservator Perry Hurt of the North Carolina Museum of Art.

Hans Horst Meyer, DPhil, holds a prominent place at the historical intersection of pharmacology and anesthesia. His greatest achievement was in the formulation of the lipoid theory of narcosis which still stands today largely unchallenged. Published in 1899, Meyer's classic paper proposed that the ability of a substance to produce narcosis or anesthesia is governed by its partition coefficient.

He shares the honor as the cofounder of this theory with Charles Overton who independently arrived at the same conclusion at the same time although indirectly through a study of permeability of plant and animal cells to various substances. The Meyer-Overton theory stimulated decades of research to answer important questions of exactly how certain drugs can act to produce a state of anesthesia. Meyer's findings were significantly extended in the 1920s by his son Kurt H. Meyer, a professor of chemistry at the University of Geneva, who was the uncle and adoptive father of Professor Meyer.

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Michael Davidson, Assistant Editor  
Beverly Murphy, Assistant Editor/Photographer

**Hans Horst Meyer Celebration, continued from page 2**



**One of the many medals awarded to Hans Horst Meyer**



**Patricia Thibodeau prepares to welcome the guests**



**Guests, Dr. James H and Mrs. Mary DBT Semans**



**Medallion bust in honor of H.H. Meyer's 70th birthday**



**Dr. Lipnick and Prof. Meyer examine some of the Hans Horst Meyer memorabilia**



**Ann and Robert Lipnick enjoy Duke Gardens during their visit**

*All photos in this issue by Judy Woodburn, except the Lipnicks in Duke Gardens by Prof. Meyer*

### Books Purchased with Funds Donated by Trent Associates

- Account of the rise and progress of the asylum, proposed to be established near Philadelphia...  
Philadelphia: Kimber & Conrad, 1814.
- Beclere, Antoine. Les rayons de Rontgen et le diagnostic de la tuberculose. Paris: J.- B. Baillière, 1899.
- Billard, Charles M. A Treatise on the diseases of infants... New York: George Adlard, 1839.
- Burrows, George Man. An Inquiry into certain errors relative to insanity... London: Printed for  
Thomas and George Underwood, 1820.
- Clarke, M. A. Directions for the management of children... London: Printed for W. Griffin, 1773.
- Gall, F. J. & Spurzheim, J. Recherches sur le Systeme Nerveux... Paris: F. Schoell & H. Nicolle, 1809.
- Hamilton, Alexander. Outlines of the theory and practice of midwifery. new ed. Philadelphia:  
Thomas Dobson, 1790.
- MacCormac, Henry. Consumption and the breath rebreathed. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1872.
- Pearson, Emma M. & McLaughlin, Louisa E. Service in Servia under the Red Cross. London:  
Tinsley Bros., 1877.
- Rush, Benjamin. Beschreibung des gelben Fiebers welches im Jahr 1793 in Philadelphia herschte...  
Tobingen: J. G. Cottaischen Buchhandlung, 1796.
- Warren, John. View of the mercurial practice in febrile diseases. Boston: Printed by T. B.  
Wait & Co., 1813.

### Looking Ahead

On Saturday, 9 October during Medical Alumni weekend, the Georgia Medical Society in celebration of its 200th anniversary will dedicate a plaque commemorating the 1931 gift of their library to the Duke Hospital Library. Dean Wilburt C. Davison orchestrated the gift of 8,000 books and journals, which along with the later Trent bequest provided the foundation stones for the current historical collections.

An open house and reception are scheduled from 10:00 am - noon. The unveiling of the plaque will take place at 11:00 am in the History of Medicine Reading Room. Everyone is cordially invited to attend.

## TRENT ASSOCIATES\*

**Sustaining Members**

Dr. David L. Epstein  
 Dr. Edward C. Halperin  
 The Honorable James Parker Jones &  
 Mrs. Mary Trent Jones  
 Dr. Gordon K. Klintworth  
 Mr. Josiah Charles Trent Lucas  
 Dr. Andrew T. Nadell  
 Dr. Francis A. Neelon  
 Dr. A. T. Pagter, Jr.  
 Dr. Robert A. Sorrentino  
 Dr. Robert E. Stone

**Contributing Members**

Dr. Eben Alexander, Jr.  
 Dr. David A. Barnes  
 Dr. Howard M. Dubose  
 Dr. Debara L. Tucci &  
 Dr. Kevan E. VanLandingham  
 Drs. George D. & Evelyn R. Wilbanks

\* Donors since last newsletter

**Members**

Mrs. Ruth M. Blum  
 in honor of Prof. Horst Meyer  
 Dr. Howard G. Clark, III  
 Dr. E. H. Ellinwood, Jr.  
 Dr. John A. Feagin, Jr.  
 Dr. Rufus R. Hambright  
 Dr. William W. McLendon  
 Dr. Enrique Montero  
 Dr. Lisle Wayne, II

**Gifts in Kind**

Dr. & Mrs. David Allen  
 Mr. William R. Burk  
 Estate of Dr. Ewald W. Busse  
 Dr. Nicholas W. Gillham  
 Ms. Patricia Webb Levering  
 Dr. Deborah Pope  
 Dr. Dale C. Smith

## Before the Colors Fade

**Before the Colors Fade**, an oral history series originated and hosted by Edward Halperin, M.D., features conversations with prominent emeritus or current members of the medical school faculty crucial in the growth and development of the School of Medicine and Duke University Health System. To date eight speakers have participated with more anticipated in the fall.

Charles B. Hammond, MD  
 Joseph C. Greenfield, Jr., MD  
 William G. Anlyan, MD  
 Eugene A. Stead, Jr., MD

Merel H. Harmel, MD  
 Charles Johnson, MD  
 Andrew G. Wallace, MD  
 Samuel L. Katz, MD

Copies of the video recordings have been donated to the historical collections in the Medical Center Library and can be checked out for your viewing convenience. Search in the online catalog under the title, **Before the Colors Fade**, to confirm the call numbers and availability.

# Trent Associates

Become a member of the  
**Trent Associates for 2005**  
at one of the levels indicated:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Member \$25.00
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contributing Member \$50.00
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sustaining Member \$100.00

Gifts in kind are also appreciated and count toward membership.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

# History of Medicine

*Make checks payable to **Duke University** and send to:  
Trent Associates for the History of Medicine  
Duke University Medical Center Library  
Box 3702  
Durham, NC 27710*