

Membership

News From Senior Physiologists

Letters to Helen Tepperman

Nancy M. Buckley writes that "while I am now Emeritus Professor of Physiology and Biophysics, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, I am not involved in academic affairs and only occasionally discuss cardiovascular research with former colleagues. However, I have continued to read selectively but more broadly. I have also become active in the newly formed Lyceum Club for retiree members of the New York Academy of Sciences. My creative efforts are once again in focus on music composition (art songs, to be exact), and I continue to participate in seminar programs and meeting

of the United Nations Association and other international affairs organizations. This is a rewarding but quiet life."

Julian L. Ambrus writes "I just passed my 70th birthday and I have retired from the Roswell Park Memorial Cancer Institute and from the Chairmanship of the Pathophysiology Department of the Roswell Park Division of the State University of New York at Buffalo Graduate School. I moved across the street to Buffalo General Hospital where I continue as Professor of Internal Medicine."

"I continue to be Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Medicine*, a journal which publishes both clinical and basic science material. I was recently elected

to membership of the National Academy of Science of Hungary and I am currently preparing to give my inaugural address at the Spring, 1995, meeting of the Academy. I try to spend some time at my farm in Boston, NY, where we breed horses and recently set up an experimental breeding program for falcons."

"I am not sure I have any important wisdom to impart, except that probably it is healthiest to stay busy and to continue in research, teaching, and service as long as it is possible. My wife (Clara M. Ambrus, MD, PhD, FACP, Professor of Pediatrics, Obstetrics/Gynecology, Pharmacology) told me not long ago that she plans to take "early" retirement at the young age of 100!"

Helen F. Cserr, 1937-1994



On November 12, 1994, a memorial service was held at Brown University to honor Helen Fitzgerald Cserr, Esther Elizabeth Brintzenhoff Professor of Physiology. The following tribute by John Pappenheimer is one of several tributes presented at the service by her students and colleagues who came from

as far away as London to attend the ceremony.

Helen Fitzgerald graduated from Middlebury College in 1960 with an honors degree in Chemistry and a Phi Beta Kappa key. She began her graduate studies in the Division of Medical Sciences at Harvard, absolutely determined to embark on an academic career in physiology and biophysics. Not many young women took that road in 1960, and she was in the vanguard of the talented women scientists who are only now beginning to take on senior positions in academia and make their fair share of contributions to science.

Thirty-five years ago physiologists had to construct most of their own equipment for research, including complicated vacuum tube amplifiers, transducers, and recording equipment. Radioactive tracers were still novel in medical research. Our graduate students were advised to take courses in electrical engineering, nuclear physics, and physical chemistry, and Helen was no

exception. She competed successfully for honor grades with students in the Departments of Applied Physics and of Chemistry, and she became adept with a soldering iron to wire up amplifiers for physiological research. Her experiments often lasted until far into the night, and then, after clearing up, she had to walk back to her apartment on Mission Hill in Roxbury, which even then was crime ridden and one of the most dangerous areas in Boston. When Helen was growing up in Alaska, one of her hobbies was racing dog teams, and she often brought to the laboratory a well-trained but nevertheless formidable Siberian husky that lay at the foot of her operating table until she was ready to go home late at night. However, she also had some noncanine guardians in the form of medical students who kept coming in and out of the laboratory in a furtive sort of way. That was none of my business, but I was not at all surprised when she announced her engagement to Bob Cserr in 1962. He was a