

Meeting Report 1989

The eighteenth meeting of the European Histamine Research Society (EHRS) was held in Breda, The Netherlands in May 1989, at the kind invitation of Dr. J. J. Keyzer. It was attended by over 160 members and guests. Seventeen countries of Europe were represented. The weather (as at the meeting last year) was superb and every day had blue skies and unbroken sunshine. After a speech of welcome, the first of four Conference Lectures was given and it meant the Meeting started with a bang. The lecturer was W. Lorenz (Marburg) and his title was "Histamine, State of the Art." A stirring account of the history of histamine in disease wakened up even the sleepy member, and of course he did not forget to mention the analysis of blood levels of histamine throughout the ages. Our faith in histamine was strengthened although everyone discussed for some time afterwards the title of the lecturer's final slide "Treatment of the Diseased Histamine". A morning of short papers followed. After lunch, the whole meeting moved off for the official excursion to Bruges. We had guides to take us around and what an interesting time we all had! Bruges has a long history and we learnt all about it! At 6.30 p.m., we departed to the seaside town of Cadzand for a fish dinner at de Blanke Top Hotel. This was superb and even included Krenkels (winkles). Later, when we returned to Breda, there were strangers in the camp for one of the British group had lost his bed when he retired to sleep. Where had it gone? He slept that night in the hotel lounge, only to find his bed had been wheeled into the next room earlier that evening during cleaning procedures and had not been returned. Another senior member of the group had a false phone call at 2.30a.m.!

On the Friday, J.C. Schwartz (Paris) discussed the role of "Histamine as a Neurotransmitter in the Brain." It was provocative, well presented, and enjoyed by all. Later that morning, the audience was asked "How old is a young rat?". The answer was it could be 5 hours or 50 days! A new term of English also arose, co-incubation or the co-existence of males and females. In the afternoon, after another fine lecture, this time by S.T. Holgate (from Southampton) on "Histamine in Asthma", nothing exciting happened except that one member fell off the stage while presenting his work. He was stepping back to admire his wonderful slide and now he wants a prize for his efforts! After dinner at the Het Turfschip, we had a social at which one of our prominent female members pulled an ankle muscle whilst dancing energetically with one of the younger generation! The Ladies had had a day's excursion to Delft to see a porcelain factory. They were accompanied by you know who?

On the Saturday, N. Chakravarty (Odense) reviewed "Mechanisms of Histamine Secretion", dwelling some time on results of his own studies. This was followed by other communications on histamine release. One German lady member was heard to say "Here are three dogs after certain time intervals" meaning their recordings of blood pressure, heart rate and gut movement. Even the chairman of one session joined in the fun by announcing "We continue the morning by staying in the gut". One member from Erlangen apologised for a slide broken in transit though he insisted the results were still reliable. In the afternoon, we heard about experiments to be carried out next week! One other member said "You can see in this slide -oh no, you cannot as it is not shown". Do not forget we also had Red peritoneal mast cells from rats of high activity as well as some real take-home questions. The Banquet at Restaurant Merula was superb. After soup, we had beef and the trimmings, followed by lavish sweet dishes. Wine flowed all the time, served by very professional waiters. The

converted private house was an admirable setting for our final function of the meeting. Prizes for Posters, decided by the Jury after much difficulty, were won by Hirschfield et al. (West Berlin), Clementsen et al. (Copenhagen), Norrby et al. (Goteborg) and Ezeamuzie & Assem (London), with the top prize going to Suonio & Tuomisto (Kuopio). We sang several verses of "Tulips in Amsterdam", there was much dancing, and the evening finished with the singing of the International Anthem of the EHRS. Our sincere thanks go to Jules Keyzer and his wife for arranging such a fine Meeting. The next meeting will be held in Kuopio, Finland in May, 1990.

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