

Michael Sheldon delivered the second blow to our self-esteem in the afternoon. With the help of actors, he made us rethink the need to go on sitting at morning and evening surgery and warned of the dangers of micro-computers in general practice. 'Follow that', and Bill Dolman did with his 'Working with the media'. Very helpful advice and witty anecdotes—did you hear his definition of loving? (A loving doctor is one who stays up all night with a sick child or stays up all night with a fit adult.) It seems that over a third of the delegates had been involved in local radio or TV interviews. Robin McCron and Lindsay Knight did a triumphant double act to end using some most uncomfortable extracts from Channel 4's *Well Being* series. The self help group describing how they were able to examine each other's cervixes was another body blow to the medical establishment.

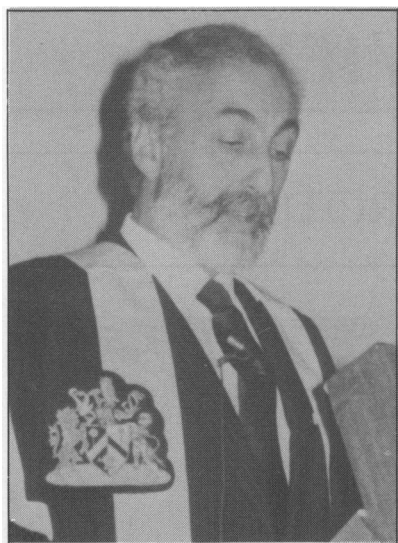
The Speakers' Corner section on Saturday afternoon allowed audience participation to a greater degree and was a success. Could this become a regular feature of Spring Meetings? Our recurrent nightmare that one or more of the speakers would fail to arrive was not realized and all the complex audiovisual effects worked on cue thanks to Mr Crisp and his team.

The social events were well supported and self financing, and the cabaret flew up in time to perform at the Faculty Banquet. The timing of 'Instant Sunshine', a mainly medical quartet, was exactly right providing a fitting

### Organizing committee

Dr Arthur Watts, *Provost*  
 Dr Michael Crowe, *Chairman*  
 Dr Elan Preston-Whyte, *Vice Chairman*  
 Dr David Parkes-Bowen, *Treasurer*  
 Dr Keith Evans, *Hon Secretary*  
 Prof. Robin Fraser, *Academic programme*  
 Dr Ken Brown, *Exhibitions and Sponsors*  
 Dr Tony Jarvis, *Exhibitions and Sponsors*  
 Dr Justin Allen, *Speakers Corner*  
 Dr Tom Hailstone, *Audio-Visual*  
 Dr Leslie Lewis, *Transport*  
 Dr Roy Aitken; Dr D. T. Hewat-Jaboor; Dr David Hurwood; Dr Richard Taylor; Dr Martin Vaughan; Dr Brian Whowell; Dr Judith Millac; Dr A. P. K. John; Dr Elisabeth Eaton.

Co-opted to Social Committee:  
 Dr Valerie Corbett; Mr Robin Preston-Whyte; Mrs Sheila Parkes-Bowen; Mrs Jeanette Lewis; Mrs Audrey Crowe.



Professor Jack Norell delivers the William Pickles Lecture.

climax to the Faculty programme.

After an impressive robed Spring General Meeting in the Queen's Hall

on Sunday morning, Dr Jack Norell, ex-Dean of Studies delivered a knock-out William Pickles Lecture with the recurring theme 'what every doctor knows'. The sacred cows of vocational training and the College exam were put under the magnifying glass and found wanting. The text will be printed in the *Journal* and should be obligatory reading. Much of what he said is what every doctor knows, but has not had the courage to say.

If the weekend was really the success we are told it was, then the credit must go equally to the forty or so local members and their spouses, and the many sponsors in particular the Wellcome Foundation and all the staff who catered for us at all the different functions. We hope to have made a small profit after paying our excellent speakers and so on and wish the Essex Faculty every success in their plans for next year at Cambridge.

M. CROWE

*Chairman of the organizing committee*

## Spring in Leicester—a personal view

It is impossible for one reviewer to adequately cover a College Spring Meeting—there is so much going on! Some five hundred doctors and their spouses attended the meeting at Leicester from 6 to 8 April. The academic programme was varied with difficult choices to be made between the different speakers and activities after mid-morning on Saturday.

THE Friday afternoon programme was for all delegates. A welcome from the Leicester Faculty Provost Dr Arthur Watts set the scene for a fascinating programme presented by the Leicester University Department of General Practice. Professor Robin Fraser presented his results of a feasibility study examining some facts and figures obtained on a voluntary basis from general practitioners in Leicestershire and Lincolnshire. A 76 per cent response rate was obtained, which was further broken down to 100 per cent response rate from training practices but only 63 per cent from ourselves, that is fellows and members of the College. 'Not only are we cunning but also lazy', said Professor Fraser; one of many pieces of dry Scottish humour which much enlivened his talk.

Dr Colin Tory gave a helpful talk on the choice of videorecording systems for use in the surgery and expertly demonstrated—with audiovisual aids of course—the importance of good sound quality and the elimination of background noise, so vital in general practice consultations when silence may be an important cue.

When we had seen how to use the technology Dr Brian McAvoy, Senior

Lecturer in General Practice, demonstrated its use in undergraduate teaching of skills needed in consultations.

Dr Janet Gale, Lecturer in Educational Technology at the Open University, concluded the afternoon by looking at the use of technology in postgraduate education. She has previously written in *News and Views* about 'Topics in Drug Therapy' (April *Journal*, p. 243) but it was interesting to hear of advances in telecommunications such as 'Conference 2,000' used at the Welsh National School of Medicine for teaching obstetrics to undergraduates at different peripheral hospitals. Cable television and computers would produce exciting possibilities in the near future.

A welcome by the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Professor Robert Kilpatrick, on Saturday morning included a brief history of the development of the new Medical School over the past ten years and the important and exciting exposure to general practice given to students throughout their undergraduate course.

The 'Keynote Address' by Dr Alexander Macara looked at the influence of 'Big Brother' at many levels, international and national, within the media

and pressure groups and finally—in the medical profession itself. Dr John Loraine from the Department of Community Medicine at Edinburgh continued the theme of 'Big Brother is Watching You' with an address on 'World Aspects of Population Control'. He underlined the importance of doctors' concern on world issues.

The importance of Amnesty International was highlighted by the presence of the next speaker, Dr Alfredo Jadresic, previously Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Santiago, Chile, before his imprisonment. He was later deported and came to this country. Movingly he spoke of dealing with medical problems in a totalitarian state. We hope that his paper will be published in full in a later issue of *News and Views*.

The morning session ended with a talk on a more domestic theme from the great Dr John Ball who looked at the 'Changes in the Delivery of Health Care in the UK'.

For those wanting a less medically orientated diet, a separate lecture theatre afforded the opportunity to hear Professor Jack Spence, Professor of Politics, discuss George Orwell—his mental health and political predictions, followed by a talk taking an appropriate title from the Leicester logo 'Wider Still and Wider, Daniel Lambert and his World', by Mr Allen Chinnery, Deputy Director of Leicestershire Museums, Art Gallery and Record Service.

The final afternoon again produced a difficult choice. A chance to listen in and answer back was afforded by 'Speakers' Corner'. A lively series of short presentations included Dr H. Patterson ('Hypertension'), Dr C. Phillips ('Private medical certification'), Dr B. Qureshi ('Trans-cultural encounters of the consulting kind'), Dr J. Millac ('A view of continuing medical education'), Dr A. W. Allen ('Doctors' cooperatives'), Dr O. Samuel ('Balint groups

for trainees') and Dr R. W. Smith ('Bulk thought control and the drug industry').

For those of us remaining in the main lecture theatre, Dr Michael Sheldon's psychodrama entitled 'A Surgery of the Future?' effortlessly provoked the audience—a look into the future helped by two splendid actors, Dr Soft and Mr Ware presumably, miming their parts. We were certainly going to change or be changed by 2009 and several popular myths held by doctors would be shattered along the way.

Dr Bill Dolman, 'Radio Doctor' on the *Jimmy Young Show* was light and amusing with appropriate illustrations from the BBC sound archives. In the discussion that followed it was a surprise to this writer that so many doctors, counted on a show of hands, had been involved with broadcasting.

In the latter part of the afternoon Robin McCron (Centre for Mass Communications Research, University of Leicester) and Lindsay Knight, Producer of the Channel 4 series *Well Being*, looked at the effect of the media on patients and doctors, with some personal choices of 'clips' from the present series.

The programme had been varied and stimulating. Actors, slides, sound recording and audiovisual effects had all been used without a hitch—surely an achievement even in 1984.

It was my first Spring Meeting I admit with some shame, having been a member since 1976. It will, however, be the first of many. The occasion was refreshing and gave a chance to meet many new members and firm friends. There is indeed a strong sense of fellowship to be found in our College which comes much to the fore on an occasion such as this. The organizing committee (see panel) are to be warmly thanked for their thought and care and congratulated on the success of this 1984 Spring Meeting.

R.M.J.P.

## Leicester revisited

The College Spring Meeting held at Leicester University this year had a special and personal significance for me as it is forty years since I left Leicester to study medicine. The buildings of my old school, the Wyggeston, then an Independent Grammar School and now translated to a Sixth Form College are on the same site as the present well established University.

Inevitably to visit the scenes of one's youth provokes some disappointment at changes wrought by the pressures of commerce, of the motor car and of modern planning. The stern concrete tower of our hotel had replaced a boot and shoe factory which I remembered before it was burned down during the blitz. The hotel looked down on the diminutive Victorian weighbridge where my grandfather had his office over half a century ago.

During a coffee break I slipped away to find again places which held for me personal and private memories of schooldays past and friends now scattered. The Mayor's reception in a room I remembered brought back other memories especially when we found we had acquaintances in common.

On Saturday we left the city with its towerblocks and motor underpasses strangely at variance with the town I remembered with affection. Perhaps it was right to go then for nostalgia is only therapeutic in small doses, but the message of this year's Spring Meeting will remain, with its personal memories and the well stated challenge for the future—to recognize the privilege of being allowed to practice medicine, and in a free country. To apply for our patients' benefit the products of new technology without neglect of compassion and to develop a medical service unimpeded by 'Big Brother' in whatever guise he may present.

G. W. THORPE



Photo: Dan Crowley

The newly elected Fellows with Dr Irvine at the end of the meeting. (See panel. p. 344.)