

INA International Neurotoxicology Association

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12th Newsletter

Dear colleague:

December 11th, 1988

3 years after the foundation of INA, it may seem appropriate to say a few words about the development of our club. Talking statistics, INA is doing very well: starting out with 36 founding members, INA has been steadily growing into a nice flock currently comprising 180 members (full members and candidates taken together). But mere size is not what counts! What did we do scientifically? In 1985, INA co-organised a workshop on "Neuro-behavioral Methods in Safety Assessment". In 1987, we had our "1st Meeting of the International Neurotoxicology Association". In 1988, INA members helped organising a workshop on "Interdisciplinary Aspects of Neurotoxicology". So far, so good. But how about the other goals we proposed ourselves at the beginning? Well, we do have an INA register of members and their fields of scientific interest, our members offer their advice to novices, and some do collaborate with their colleagues in other countries. We also had, - at least to my knowledge -, informal reunions of club members participating at scientific conferences. However, we do not have a list of national and international bodies relevant to the work of neurotoxicologists, we do not seem to exchange hard-to-find articles, and we do work too hard on the standardisation of testing equipment. While the 2 first issues may be unimportant, I have proposed myself to do something about rivalry of diverse computer-assisted neurobehavioral test batteries at the Sitges meeting.

Updating the INA Professional Interest Directory

As promised, updates of the diverse INA directories are being mailed to you enclosed with this letter. Please check the entries and feel free to ask for corrections if I made a mistake. You should bear in mind, however, that some of your entries into the application/update form may have been changed to already existing keywords to avoid synonyms. As a good database is always a compromise between specificity and generality, highly specific terms such as "AEP" were replaced by "evoked potentials, auditory-", and commonplace terms such as "neurotoxicology" as a field of interest were also avoided. Would you expect somebody who is not at all interested in neurotoxicology to join INA?

The forthcoming 2nd INA meeting at Sitges (Spain)

I gather that by now, everybody has his/her 1st announcement. Regarding this 1st announcement, I would like to make 2 announcements:

(1) If you are planning to attend, pay as early as you can; there are a lot of bills to be paid long before the meeting starts.

(2) Apply for a reduction if you are unable to pay the full amount. INA has reserved money to support students or other persons whose incomes do not allow them to pay the full conference fee.

Given the fact that INA does not ask for membership fees, organising meetings is the main source of funds for INA. Reductions are only possible inasmuch as sponsors help us to pay our bills. For the time being I cannot say more except that we are trying our best to get support.

The late neurotox meeting in Dusseldorf

As already mentioned in earlier newsletters, the Medical Institute of Environmental Hygiene held its third neurotox minisymposium last September. The focus was on multidisciplinary approaches₁ because the organisers felt that groups looking at neurotoxicology from various angles should be encouraged. Unexpectedly, I could not attend at the full meeting. My possibly superficial observations were that the trend away from the animal and into the test tube is still continuing, that the patch-clamp technique is less common in Germany than it is in other countries, and that it is hard to achieve a convention about which neurobehavioral test should be put on a computer, and how this should be done. One thing of particular interest was a new morphometric method for counting brain neurons and measuring their mean volume at a higher degree of precision than hitherto.

Forthcoming meetings in 1989:

March 24-25: 8th Annual Conference of the Indian Academy of Sciences.

Place: Chandigarh, India. Fee: 50\$

Secretariat: Dr. K.D. Gill, Dept. of Biochemistry,
PGIMER, Chandigarh - 160 012, India

Deadline: January 15th

July 28-30: Pharmacological Interventions on Central Cholinergic Mechanisms in Senile Dementia (Alzheimer's Disease).

Place: West Berlin, FRG. Secretariat: Prof. H. Kewitz,
Institute of Clinical Pharmacology, Klinikum Steglitz,
Hindenburgdamm 30, 0-1000 Berlin 45

Sept. 12-15: 7th Int. Conference on Heavy Metals in the Environment.

Place: Geneva, Switzerland. Fee: 380 Swiss Francs
Secretariat: CEP Consultants Ltd, 26-28 Albany Street
Edinburgh Hi 3QH, U.K.

And here is a warm welcome to a handful of new members and candidates:

- Norbert DEUTSCHLANDER, Hoechst AG, Frankfurt (FRG)
- Arne MhLLER, University Hospital Hvidovre, Hvidovre (Denmark)
- John ORR, Southwest Research Institute, San Antonio, TX (USA)
- Kenneth REUHL, Rutgers University, Piscataway, N.J. (USA)
- Mark STANTON, USEPA, Heath Effects Res. Lob., Res. Triangle Park
- Paul STRANGE, University Hospital Hvidovre, Hvidovre (Denmark)

If you want to find out about what they are doing, just take a look at the INA Professional Interest Directory which comes to you attached to this newsletter.

In Memoriam

I have the sad duty of informing you about the loss of our member Dr.S.W. Holmes who died from a heart attack.

New book on neurotoxicology:

INA member Hugh Tilson and Sheldon B. Sparber have edited a book entitled "Neurotoxicants and Neurobiological Function: Effects of Organohalogen Metals" (John Wiley & Sons, N.Y. 1987, 368 pp.). Unfortunately, I have not yet seen it with my own eyes, but concluding from a review by L. Mogos from the MRC Carshalton, it is worth reading. The most interesting chapters appear to be those on the metabolism of organic mercury, lead, and tin, on behavioral toxicology of organometals, and on selective and non-selective effects.

I wish you all a happy and successful new year. Best regards,

Michael