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FIFTY YEARS AGO - NOVEMBER 1959

Captain George Calvy, MC, NSN, Commanding Officer, the Naval Medical Field Research Lab, Camp Lejeune, presented the following talk at the Interim Meeting of the Rhode Island Medical Society, September 1959: "Staphylococcal Pulmonary Infections." He reflected on his personal experience in a large hospital, seeing more than 40 cases of antibiotic-resistant staphylococcal pneumonia, "principally due to a hospital acquired strain, diagnosed and treated over 20 years." Seven members of his staff were infected. He found that adding ristocetin to the medications was effective.

Joseph S. Kars, MD, Kenneth B. Nanian, MD, Lester L. Vargard, MD, and Frank Merlino, MD, all from Rhode Island Hospital, discussed six cases in "Combined Left Ventricular and Suprasternal Percutaneous Puncture in Assessment of Mitral and Aortic Valve Disease."

Seebert J. Goldowsky, MD, in "The Hospital at Portsmouth Grove," recounted the history of this Civil War Hospital (called Lovell General) at Portsmouth Grove Avenue on Aquidneck Island. In July 1862 two reporters noted: "The stern realities of war are now brought to our own doors." Ships brought 1724 sick and wounded patients, casualties from the Army of the Potomac, who had been evacuated from the hospital at Yorktown, PA. A reporter noted that 1800 citizens, including physicians, greeted the patients. At the time the Medical Director at Yorktown was Dr. Francis L. Wheaton, son of Dr. Levi Wheaton (Brown Medical School 1826).

An Editorial, "Quackery on Television," railed against the "outpouring of tawdry and misleading advertising by the patent medicine industry...There are products for 'tired blood,' to quench burning fires in the stomach and to still the hammers that pound and the lightning that flashes inside the cranium. Diagrams show drugs that go 'round and round and come out here..." The Editorial contrasted the surge of misleading advertising with the industry's efforts to stop rigged quiz shows.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO - NOVEMBER 1984

Sarah C. Aronson, Kemi Nakabashi, Michael Siegel, William Q. Sturmer, MD, and Stanley M. Aronson, MD, in "Traffic Fatalities in Rhode Island: Part IV. The Pedestrian Victim," recounted results from a statistical analysis of the 173 pedestrian deaths recorded by the Medical Examiner's Office 1977-1982 (22.6% of the registered 766 traffic fatalities). Pedestrian fatalities occurred more frequently on weekends, especially Saturdays. Victims had blood alcohol levels at $\geq .06$ gm per cent in one-third of the cases. Most fatalities happened after dark.

A.A. Savastano, MD, Chair, Rhode Island Board of Medical Review (established 1976 by the General Assembly) described the make-up: 9 members appointed by the Governor "for not more than 2 consecutive 3-year terms." The nine comprised 5 physicians, 1 hospital administrator, 2 public sector members, and the Department of Health Director *ex officio*. As of 1982, the board had heard 73 allegations (24 related to insurance company repeals, 16 to JUA malpractice cases, 15 to allegations of unprofessional conduct).

John DiOrio, MD, in "Short-Course Antibiotic Prophylaxis in First-Trimester Abortion," noted: "Complications were acceptably low and consistent with previous studies." The study followed 478 patients at a local outpatient ambulatory facility from October 1982 to January 1983. A study group received 500 mg tetracycline at the time of the procedure, 500 mg 6 hours later. A standard group received 250 mg at the onset, then 250 mg every 6 hours for 4 days.



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