1978 Presidential Address: American Burn Association

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On this occasion, the Tenth Annual Meeting of the American Burn Association, I would like to review some historical events which culminated in the foundation of this Association, and also to note significant highlights during the first 10 years of our organization.

The following information has not only been gained from my personal experience, but also from some of those dedicated individuals who pioneered the early developments in burn care. These include Curtis P. Artz (5), Irving Feller, B. W. Haynes, and Bruce G. MacMillan.

Since the end of World War II, there has been a continuing and expanding interest in burns. This proba-

bly was initiated by the concern for an atomic catastrophe which would involve large numbers of burn casual-
ties. Support for research and improved development of burn care was spearheaded initially by the military services. During 1953 and 1954 the Medical Department of the U. S. Navy sponsored small seminars on burns at the Navy Radiologic Defense Laboratory, San Francisco. A special burn conference was held at the U. S. Army Surgical Research Unit, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, in October 1955.

In the years that followed, through the organizational efforts of Irving Feller, Edward Vogel, B. W. Haynes, and Bruce G. MacMillan, the National Burn Seminars were begun. The host for each seminar was responsible for organizing all aspects of the program, including tours of his burn care facilities.

The First National Burn Seminar was held at Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, 10–11 December 1959. The program included: 1) discussion of specific problems in management; 2) comparison of treatment techniques; 3) inspection of the facilities at Brooke Army Hospital; and 4) a clinic on individual patient management. For the latter, each participant brought two complete case records, one representing his most favorable result and the other the least satisfactory result during the previous year. Both cases were open to discussion after presentation. Attending this seminar were: Irving Feller, Edward Vogel, James Bennett, Marion S. DeWeese, Reed O. Dingman, Nicholas S. Gimbel, David Grant, Byron Green, Boyd W. Haynes, Bruce MacMillan, Robert McCormack, Lt. Col. William Tumbush, Ben J. Wilson, and members of the staff of the Surgical Research Unit, Brooke Army Medical Center. Thirteen surgeons representing nine medical centers attended. It was the consensus of the group that the seminar was a profitable experience, and the following suggestions were made: 1) to hold the meeting at intervals of 1 to 2 years; 2) to meet at a different medical center each time; 3) to keep the meetings informal and of limited size.

The Second National Burn Seminar was held 3–4 December 1961, at the Medical College of Virginia, Richmond, with B. W. Haynes as host. The idea of roundtable discussions was continued to allow free and easy exchange of ideas and concerns. Attending this conference were: Kenneth Pickrell, Nicholas Georgiade, Stanley Levenson, John Kinney, Joseph U. Schlegel, Col. Edwin J. Pulaski, Marion S. DeWeese, Robert M. McCormack, Nicholas S. Gimbel, Byron Green, Reed O. Dingman, Bruce MacMillan, Lt. Col. John A. Moncrief, Irving

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Feller, Charles Fox, Jr., Kehl Markley, Anne Phillips, B. W. Haynes, John Lynch, John Davis, Leslie Cramer, Davie Hume, Miles Henry, and Max Rittenbury. Twenty-eight physicians from 18 medical centers attended. The total cost of the conference was $306.30.

The Third National Burn Seminar was held at the University of Michigan Medical Center, Ann Arbor, 9–10 November 1962, with Irving Feller as host. Twenty-two physicians from 13 medical centers participated in the 1½-day meeting. The purpose of the meeting was again primarily to provide a setting for the easy exchange of ideas among physicians devoting considerable amounts of their time to the seriously burned patient. By keeping the group relatively small, it was possible to have the type of personal discussions that are precluded at national meetings, where more formal organization is necessary.

The Fourth National Burn Seminar was held 8–9 November 1963, at the University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston, and was hosted by Truman Blocker. Total attendance was 50, 15 from the host institution, and 35 physicians from 31 medical centers. This was the first seminar I attended, and I can attest to its informal character and easy open exchange of ideas and discussion.

The Fifth National Burn Seminar was held at the University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio, 13–14 November 1964, and was hosted by Bruce G. MacMillan. It was attended by 54 people, most of whom were from established burn units. This was the first program with a formal organization for 1½ days with 36 presentations, each 10 minutes in length. Tours of the clinical and research facilities of the Department of Surgery, University of Cincinnati, were made. This included a presentation of plans for the Cincinnati Shriners Burns Institute.

The Sixth National Burn Seminar was held at the Drake Hotel, Chicago, 12–13 November 1965, and was hosted by John A. Boswick, Jr., Director, Burn Unit, Cook County Hospital, Chicago, Illinois. This 1½-day meeting consisted primarily of the following panel discussions: 1) Fluid Therapy, moderator Curtis P. Artz; 2) Wound Management, moderator John A. Moncrief; 3) Management of Sepsis, moderator Bruce G. MacMillan; 4) Special Burn Problems, moderator Irving Feller; 5) Metabolic Problems in Burn Patients, moderator B. W. Haynes, Jr.; and 6) What’s New in Burn Centers, moderator John A. Boswick, Jr. Total attendance at this meeting was 56. The papers presented were published subsequently in The Journal of Trauma as a symposium (20).

The Seventh National Burn Seminar was held at the Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Dallas, Texas, 9–10 December 1966, with Charles R. Baxter, Department of Surgery, University of Texas, Southwestern Medical School, as host. Total attendance was 82 for this 1½-day meeting. Again the format of the meeting was panel discussions of various problem areas in burn care.

At this seminar it was obvious many more people had become interested in burns, and the treatment of burn patients involved a team approach including various disciplines—physicians, nurses, and allied health personnel. Because of this expanded interest, the formation of a new organization was initiated to include in its membership the entire burn care team. Therefore, Baxter appointed a committee to develop plans and bylaws for a national burn organization. This committee included Curtis P. Artz, Chairman, John A. Boswick, Jr., John M. Kinney, John A. Moncrief, Bruce G. MacMillan, and Robert M. McCormack.

The Eighth National Burn Seminar was held in Birmingham, Alabama, 27–28 October 1967, with Alan R. Dimick, University of Alabama School of Medicine, as host. The format was again a 1½-day meeting with 60 presentations. The total attendance at the meeting was 207, the largest number ever to attend the seminars (16).

On the day preceding the seminar, the committee met to review the final draft of the bylaws for the American Burn Association. They were: Bruce G. MacMillan; Curtis P. Artz; B. W. Haynes; Irving Feller; and John A. Boswick, Jr. (Fig. 1). Since I was local host for the seminar, I was privileged to participate in this historic meeting.

At this seminar, bylaws for the American Burn Association were adopted, and the following officers were elected: President, Curtis P. Artz; President-Elect, Boyd W. Haynes; Vice President, John A. Moncrief; Secretary, John A. Boswick, Jr.; Treasurer, Irving Feller; Chairman of the Program Committee, Bruce G. MacMillan.

There are several unique features in the ABA bylaws (2). One is a distinguished service award named for Harvey Stuart Allen given to the American surgeon who in his lifetime has given outstanding service in the field of burns. Doctor Allen made significant contributions in many aspects of burn care. He promoted the use of petroleum gauze dressings during World War II, and

Fig. 1. Founding members of the American Burn Association: Bruce G. MacMillan, M.D.; Curtis P. Artz, M.D.; B. W. Haynes, M.D.; Irving Feller, M.D.; John A. Boswick, Jr., M.D. Taken at the Eighth National Burn Seminar, Birmingham, Alabama, 27–28 October 1967.
along with Sumner L. Koch developed a specialized treatment unit at Cook County Hospital for the management of burns.

The bylaws also established a memorial lectureship given by a distinguished scientist in the field of burns from outside the United States. The lectureship was named in honor of the dean of America's burn surgeons in the immediate postwar era, Everett Idris Evans, M.D., of Richmond, Virginia, who was Chairman of the National Research Council's Committee on Burns for many years. He developed the first body surface area formula for estimation of resuscitative fluids, and was director of the first civilian burn center in this country at the Medical College of Virginia.

The initial bylaws of the Association called for two types of members: Active Members (M.D.'s, Ph.D.'s, or D.V.M.'s); and Associate Members (nurses and allied health personnel working in the field of burns). Later, in 1975, the category of Special Membership was incorporated into the bylaws to encompass other individuals interested in the field of burns.

There is no limitation on membership. According to Article II, Section I, of the bylaws, "The purposes and objectives of the Association shall be to stimulate and sponsor the study and research in the treatment and prevention of burns; to provide a forum for presentation of such knowledge; to foster training opportunities for individuals interested in burns; to encourage publications pertaining to the foregoing activities; and to consider such other matters as may properly come within the sphere of the Association." Standing Committees include: Burn Prevention; Organization and Delivery of Burn Care; Education; Membership; Program; and Resolutions.

The diversity of disciplines involved in burn care was emphasized in the development of the scientific program for the Annual Meeting. Initially there were two simultaneous programs: a Clinical Session and a Research Session. This soon expanded to include an Associate Program, and this year (1978) further expanded to include a program on Burn Prevention. Initially the program was a 1½-day meeting with the two sessions running simultaneously. Now we have a 2½-day meeting with all four sessions running simultaneously. There is no requirement for publication of a presentation. (Ed. note: many papers are, however, published in The Journal of Trauma.)

The annual meetings of the American Burn Association have been held at various places in the United States, usually at the decision of the President. Following is a brief description of each annual meeting.

The First Annual Meeting was held at the Regency Hyatt House, Atlanta, Georgia, 14–15 March 1969, with Curtis P. Arzt as President. His Presidential Address, Burns In My Lifetime (4), reviewed the history of the care of burns in the last 50 years. The Allen Distinguished Service Award was presented to Oliver Cope, Boston, Massachusetts, for his outstanding work in the Coconut Grove disaster, and the various physiologic advances made in burns thereafter. The Evans Memorial Lecture was given by Douglas Jackson, Birmingham Accident Hospital, Birmingham, England. He spoke on the topic, Second Thoughts On The Burn Wound (9), in which he outlined specific work related to tangential excision of the burn wound.

The Second Annual Meeting was held at the Sheraton Boston Hotel, Boston, Massachusetts, 10–11 April 1970, with Boyd W. Haynes as President. His address, Today's Challenge in Burn Therapy (8), stressed the need for increased emphasis on prevention of burns, and improved organization of and delivery of burn care. He appointed special committees of the Association to work on these problems. The Allen Award was given to Francis Moore of Boston for his outstanding work on the physiologic changes associated with burns. The Evans Lecture was delivered by Tord Skog of Uppsala, Sweden, who spoke on Electrical Injuries (18). He reported on 151 patients and emphasized that electrical injury was a special injury, not necessarily a burn.

The Third Annual Meeting was held at the Hilton Palacio del Rio, San Antonio, Texas, 16–17 April 1971, with John A. Moncrief as President. His address, The Development of Topical Therapy (14), described the ways that topical therapy had reduced the incidence of overwhelming sepsis in patients with major burns, and specifically the use of mefenide acetate cream (Sulfamylon®). The Allen Award was given to Truman and Virginia Blocker for their outstanding work in the development of a special burn unit at the University of Texas, and the training of a large number of plastic surgeons in the management of burns. The Evans Lecture, entitled, Burn Toxins in Mouse and Man (1), was given by Martin Allgor of Basel, Switzerland.

The Fourth Annual Meeting was held at the Fairmont Hotel, San Francisco, 7–8 April 1972. The President was Robert M. McCormack of Rochester, New York, whose presidential address, The Burn Person—More Than A Patient, stressed the management of the entire burned patient. The Allen Award was presented to Sumner L. Koch of Chicago for his outstanding work in the development of occlusive dressings in burns and the initiation of the burn unit at Cook County Hospital. The Evans Lecture entitled, Let Us Now Praise Famous Men, was given by Alastair Burns Wallace of Edinburgh, Scotland.

William W. Monaro, St. Louis, Missouri, assumed chairmanship of the Program Committee for this meeting. Also initiated was an Associate Member Advisor to the Program Committee, Florence Jacobi, R.N., Rochester, New York.

The Fifth Annual Meeting was held at the Fairmont Hotel, Dallas, Texas, 6–7 April 1973. The President was Charles R. Baxter of Dallas, who spoke on the Current Status of Burn Research (6). The Allen Award was presented to Sanford M. Rosenthal, National Institutes
of Health, Washington, for his work on the use of sodium in burns. The Evans Lecture, entitled, The Saint's Hand (7), was given by Giovanni Dogo, Head of Plastic Surgery at the University of Padova, Italy.

Janet A. Marvin, R.N., was elected the first Associate Member of the A.B.A. Board of Trustees, and served during 1974 and 1975. Howard Harrison, Ph.D., was appointed Chairman of the Education Committee, and began the task of organizing and cataloging available material, encouraging educational programs, and initiating development of teaching materials at all levels.

Educational breakfast seminars were developed for the 1973 meeting and have been held subsequently each year. These are small roundtable discussions on specific aspects of burn care. This year ended on a sour note, because of the deficit in financing of the annual meeting. However, the Board of Trustees took appropriate actions, and initiated financial procedures which have resulted in a continuing solid financial basis for the organization.

The Sixth Annual Meeting was held at the Netherland Hilton Hotel, Cincinnati, 5–6 April 1974, with Bruce G. MacMillan as President. His address entitled, No Man Ever Stands So Tall (12), reviewed the activities of the Shriners of North America in support of crippled children in their orthopedic hospitals and burn institutes. The Allen Distinguished Service Award was presented to Curtis P. Artz for his many activities in the field of burn care. The Evans Memorial Lecture was given by Zora Janžekovic of Yugoslavia, entitled, The Burn Wound from the Surgical Point of View (10), in which she outlined the results of her work in tangential excision of the burn wound.

A major innovation for this meeting was accomplished by President MacMillan. This was the formal organization of audiovisual support for the meeting so that visual aids could be better utilized, and there would be less confusion during the presentation of visual aids for the three simultaneous sessions. Previewing of slides before presentation in a viewing room, and the delivery of slides after projection back to the viewing room for collection made it possible for the projectionist to concentrate his primary attention on projecting the material, and not to be interrupted periodically by the subsequent essayist desiring to have slides prepared for projection. These innovations have since been included in all our annual meetings with excellent results.

The Seventh Annual Meeting was held at the Denver Hilton Hotel, Denver, Colorado, 20–22 March 1975, with John A. Boswick, Jr., as President. His Presidential address, Management of the Burned Hand, summarized in detail the concepts of management of the burned hand. The Allen Award was presented to John A. Moncrief for his many activities in burn care and research. The Evans Memorial Lecture, Prevention of Burns and Scalds in a Developed Country (19), was given by Bent Sørensen from the Burn Unit, University of Copenhagen. It demonstrated the usefulness of investigating the causes of burns in Denmark, and the excellent results obtained when this information was used in a public education program for prevention of serious burns.

The 1975 meeting initiated the 2½-day program, which was necessary because of the increased number of abstracts submitted for presentation. The theme of this annual meeting was Prevention, and a special plenary session was held to emphasize burn prevention activities.

Also initiated in 1975 by President Boswick were the regional burn seminars held throughout the nation to complement the annual meeting, because there were many who could not attend the annual meeting, but could attend a regional seminar closer to home. Elizabeth Sheehy, R.N., Boston, Massachusetts, was elected as Associate Member on the A.B.A. Board of Trustees, and served during 1976 and 1977.

The Eighth Annual Meeting was held once again at the Hilton Palacio del Rio, and the San Antonio Convention Center, San Antonio, Texas, 1–3 April 1976, with Basil A. Pruitt, Jr., as President. His address was entitled Multidisciplinary Care and Research for Burn Injury (15). The Evans Memorial Lecture was presented by Gosta Mats Arturson, of the Burn Center, Uppsala, Sweden, and was a review of burn hypermetabolism (Transport and Demand of Oxygen in Severe Burns [3]).

Many important activities occurred during this meeting. Those attending the meeting will never forget the Thursday evening informal social activities including the Texas-style barbecue, for which Hugh D. Peterson, Chairman of Local Arrangements, was principally responsible. The Allen Award was presented to Stanley M. Levenson, for his research activities in burns. The President's Continuing Education Grant was initiated during the 1976 meeting, and the first recipient was Patricia Alyn, R.N., Orange, California.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Burn Care Standards, later to become the Ad Hoc Committee on Optimum Criteria for the Care of Patients with Thermal Injury, was established in 1975. The criteria included categorization of patients in a recommended triage scheme, as well as categorizing hospital facilities based upon the expertise of the personnel and other resources available in the hospital. The criteria were presented at the 1976 Annual Meeting and adopted by the membership, and were published and distributed during the subsequent year. These criteria have recently been published in the Bulletin of the American College of Surgeons, and are being widely applied in planning burn care facilities. The efforts of this committee will probably have the most far-reaching effects of any ABA committee. Those of us who work with local Health Systems Agencies know the difficulties inherent in either modifying existing burn care facilities or planning new ones, and can appreciate the value of these criteria.

A very worthwhile accomplishment by the Education Committee was a syllabus published in October 1975 entitled, Educational Programs and Materials in Burn
Care and Research, which is available through the ABA Secretary's Office. It provides an inventory of educational programs and materials which can be purchased or loaned.

The Ninth Annual Meeting was held at the Disneyland Hotel, Anaheim, California, 31 March–2 April 1977, with William W. Monaco as President. His address was entitled, Past is Prologue—Two Theo's and a Friend (13). The Evans Lecture was delivered by Edward J. L. Lowbury, Birmingham Accident Hospital, Burn Unit, Birmingham, England, and was entitled, Wits versus Genes: The Continuing Battle Against Infection (11), in which he described his experiences in research concerning bacteria.

The Allen Award was presented to Charles L. Fox, Jr., Department of Surgery, Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, for his many activities in the field of burns, among which were investigative studies in fluid resuscitation and infection control. The Associate Distinguished Service Award was initiated at this meeting and the first recipient was Janet A. Marvin, R.N., Department of Surgery, University of Washington, Seattle. This award was designed to be equal in status to the Allen Award and to recognize an Associate Member for outstanding contributions in the field of burns.

The 1977 President's Continuing Education Award was presented to Maude H. Malick, O.T.R., Pittsburgh, for her many noteworthy accomplishments in the rehabilitation of burn patients. On Thursday evening during the 1977 meeting the seafood buffet and harbor cruise were memorable.

Important committee appointments included the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Epidemiology and Morbidity of Burns with Neal Koss and Martin Robson as Co-Chairmen. Patricia Mieszala, R.N., was elected as the Associate Member of the A.B.A. Board of Trustees to serve during 1978 and 1979.

The Tenth Annual Meeting is being held here at the Birmingham Hyatt House and Birmingham/Jefferson Civic Center, 30 March–1 April 1978. This address reviews the activities in the early years before the establishment of the American Burn Association, as well as highlights of the first 10 years of ABA activities. It is particularly pertinent that the American Burn Association is returning to Birmingham this year, since the A.B.A. was founded here in 1967 at the Eighth National Burn Seminar.

The Evans Memorial Lecture will be given by Simon Sevitt, Consultant Pathologist, Birmingham Accident Hospital, Birmingham, England, and will be entitled, A Review of the Complications of Burns, Their Origin and Importance for Illness and Death (17). The Allen Distinguished Service Award will be presented to William A. Altemeier, M.D., Professor of Surgery, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio, for his many achievements, among which are his investigations concerning surgical infections.

The recipient of the 1978 Associate Distinguished Service Award will be Claudella A. Jones, R.N., Ann Arbor, Michigan. Her accomplishments in the burn field are numerous, and have been primarily in the field of nursing education and organization of burn care. She has served on many A.B.A. committees, and we have all benefited from her exuberant personality and progressive thoughts.

The President's Continuing Education Award was initiated in 1976, and is presented to someone other than a physician who has made a significant contribution in the advancement of care to burn patients. This year it will be presented to Thomas S. Hargest, Ph.D., Department of Surgery, Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, South Carolina. Mr. Hargest is nationally and internationally known for his many activities in the biomedical and bioengineering field, with probably his most notable accomplishment being the development of the air flotation bed for burn patients.

The most recent development in the burn field during the past year has been the National Burn Demonstration Program, mandated in 1976 by the U.S. Congress and initiated in 1977 by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. This program was developed with the assistance of the A.B.A., and has stimulated additional interest in burn care. It will sample 28 million of the U.S. population to determine the incidence, morbidity, and mortality of burns, and the financial aspects of burn care, over 3 years. Participating in this data collection process are six regions: the six New England states; the regions around Syracuse and Rochester, New York; the States of Virginia and Alabama; Dallas with West and North Texas; and the two counties around San Diego, California. These data should allow Congress to determine if federal money should be invested in the establishment of burn care facilities and in training programs for those involved in burn care. This information may also have some effect on proposals for catastrophic national health insurance currently being considered.

In summary, the A.B.A. is now 10 years old. It is a unique organization which includes the entire team of personnel interested in the problems of burns. Its membership has grown from 243 in 1968 in its first year to 1,829 currently in its tenth year. Over the years we have grown at the average rate of 225 new members per year. Registrations at our annual meeting have increased from 336 in 1968 to 899 in 1977. With such increased interest and concern in burn care, the American Burn Association must continue to respond to meet these challenges.

REFERENCES