

## In Memoriam

It was with much sadness that the Physiotherapy Department of the University of the Witwatersrand learnt of the death of Professor Jean Blair. Jean joined the staff of the sub-department of Physiotherapy as a junior lecturer in 1946 and rose to the post of Head of this department in 1969. Her appointment as Associate Professor in 1973 demonstrated the high regard in which the University held her and paid tribute to her long and meritorious service as a teacher and administrator.

One of the highlights of her career at the university was her twenty-fifth anniversary party held in March 1971. Many of her past students from all parts of the country were present while many more sent telegrams and letters of congratulations and good wishes. Hundreds of physiotherapists have passed through her hands and they remember Jean with fondness and respect. For those of us who worked with her for many years we will remember her for her fairness and loyalty to her staff and students. Her sense of humour helped us through many difficult times and her humanity, integrity and dedication to her profession is our inspiration.

JCB and CC.

Calling all physiotherapists who are interested in the care of the elderly or who are interested in planning for the future health management of our Senior Citizens...

## PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY

Jo Beenhakker, Chairman SASP

The WCPT has requested all member organizations to enhance the awareness amongst physiotherapists of the health needs of the increasing number of elderly people in their countries to ensure that their physiotherapy expertise is widely available and effectively used to meet these needs.

There is much work to be done in order to achieve the proposed aims of:

- Providing services for the well elderly with emphasis on health promotion and the prevention of impairment.
- Providing services for elderly people who have disability problems which limit their mobility and function and thus their independence.

We are hoping to establish a Special Interest Group of physiotherapists-clinicians and academics who would like to investigate the health needs of the elderly in this country, to plan educational programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate level and for auxiliary staff and to conduct research into the many areas related to this field. Much research is being done by other members of the health team, particularly by social workers, but very little is being undertaken by physiotherapists.

If you would like to take up this challenge and to contribute to the planning for the future care of the elderly, please drop me a line at Physiotherapy department, Medical School, York Road, Parktown 2193, or phone (011) 643-5934 (mornings) to leave your name and address. ♦

## Professor Jean Blair

It is with great sadness that we pay tribute to Jean Blair, who passed away suddenly in Nelspruit on March 23 1990.

Jean Blair trained at St Mary's Hospital in London and came to the Johannesburg Hospital Physiotherapy Department in 1946. She returned to London two years later to train as a Teacher in Physiotherapy and came back to Johannesburg to continue her work with the students. She proved herself to be a gifted teacher and remained as head of the Training School until her retirement, later becoming the first physiotherapist to be recognised as a Professor.

Jean, as Professor Blair was known to her friends and colleagues, devoted herself to raising the standard of physiotherapy in South Africa, and thus developing the training of students. Her wit and wisdom, her professional integrity, her foresight and her humanitarianism made hers an outstanding personality. Through her efforts the Image of Physiotherapy was firmly established.

Jean took over the Chairmanship of the South African Society of Physiotherapy in 1954 and remained in that position until 1969. At her retirement she was honoured by the Society by being made an Honorary Life Vice President of the Society.

Professor Blair not only worked for Physiotherapy in South Africa, but she also represented the South African Society of Physiotherapy on the World Confederation for Physical Therapy – on Executive Committee as Third Vice President. She held this position for four years and attended many Council and Executive Committee meetings in Great Britain, USA, Europe and Australia.

When the Professional Board for Physiotherapy was established in 1973, with the South African Medical and Dental Council, Professor Blair was the natural choice as the first chairman of the Board. She remained on the Board as Chairman for the first five year session (being followed by Mrs Molly Levy, who retired two years ago.)

Regretfully, through ill-health Jean was forced to take early retirement but her influence on Physiotherapy in the country has spread far and wide and she will be remembered by her contemporaries and those who followed for years to come.

When Jean left Johannesburg she retired to the Nelspruit district and there she and a great friend devoted their time and energy and knowledge to establishing a clinic for black mothers and babies and also played a big part in the running of a school for black children in the neighbourhood. Her caring manner and concern for these people made her beloved by all.

We offer our sincere sympathy and condolences to her family overseas and friends.

Jean will be sadly missed but never forgotten by us all.

Donations in her memory can be made to The Brondal Clinic, c/o Mrs G Vivian Smith, P O Box 2362, Nelspruit 1200.