

## NEWS AND NOTES

FROM TAIWAN DON PLETSCH REPORTS in the Second Quarterly Report for 1954, issued 1 July, that his area was visited by Doctors Francisco Dy and Archie Hess, who reviewed conditions in Central Taiwan. Dr. Pletsch states that the decentralization of the malaria control program, undertaken concurrently with a considerable expansion, has met with a very enthusiastic and helpful response from *hsien* and township officials in almost all instances. Training of 141 supervisors, 652 foremen and 2,608 operators was accomplished in the northern and eastern regions and arrangements made for the local hire and training of two additional helpers per team (1304 men). Additional training in the southern district during July was planned to cover 223 foremen and 36 supervisors. Dr. Pletsch concludes that residual spraying of houses has virtually eliminated populations of *Anopheles minimus* and has materially reduced populations of *A. hyrcanus sinensis* for at least a 12-month period. In Taiwan, *A. minimus* is normally a house inhabiting anopheline and apparently is somewhat more susceptible to DDT than is *A. sinensis*. As a result, malaria has been notably reduced in all sprayed areas. Don and his family have returned for temporary duty in Washington, and Don plans to return to Taiwan late in September.

HELEN LOUISE TREMBLEY BECAME HELEN LOUISE DURKEE on June 18 in All Saints' Episcopal Church, Chevy Chase, Maryland, in a double ring ceremony. Her husband, Mr. Kenneth M. Durkee, television engineer, is taking charge of a new transmitter on Mt. Diablo, California, for KOVR. Mr. Durkee had previously been the assistant Chief Engineer of WMAL-TV in Washington, D. C. The couple left immediately for the San Francisco Bay area, where they expect to buy a home in Walnut Creek, near Oakland. Dinnie Jensen, AMCA member, attended as maid of honor and Dr. Herman Ellingson, of Naval Ordinance, gave the bride in marriage. Over 300 guests attended, although the wedding had been set ahead on short notice because of Mr. Durkee's unexpected change of location, and Helen Louise's house overflowed afterward in an informal but beautifully decorated reception for her many happy friends. Mr. and Mrs. Durkee may be temporarily addressed at 189 Marshall Drive, Walnut Creek, and expect to welcome AMCA members in their new home soon.

HELEN LOUISE DURKEE'S WEDDING somewhat overshadowed the news that on June 9th she had been the recipient of the George Washington University Alumni Award for meritorious achieve-

ment, an honor which merits a very respectful mention. It was given in recognition of her fine work on mosquitoes, done while she was with the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland.

RUSSELL W. GIES, principal sanitary engineer for the Department of Health of Pennsylvania was the recipient also of an honor of another but no less distinguished sort. Dr. Luis Vargas, Entomology Director of the Mexican National Institute of Health, informs us that he has named a new species of *Psychoda* fly after Mr. Gies. The newly-named insect, *Syntomolaba giesi* Vargas, was discovered in Merida, Yucatan and has been found to be a transmitter of Onchocerciasis, a disease which may lead to blindness. *Psychoda* flies are not, of course, ordinarily transmitters of disease and the new species is relatively rare but its importance in a semi-tropical region is obvious. It was apparently found in the neighborhood of the creeks and shallow stream in the hilly coffee-growing regions of the state. Mr. Gies, in expressing his pleasure at the courtesy, adds that he had the pleasure of visiting Dr. Vargas' excellent laboratories in Mexico City last February.

A. S. WEST, WHO IS NOW ACTING CHIEF OF THE ENTOMOLOGY BRANCH OF A. S. Division of Camp Detrick, at Frederick, Maryland, may be addressed at that position for the next 15 months. Inasmuch as Camp Detrick is so highly classified it is highly unlikely that one will be able to see Dr. West, but it will be pleasant to have him once more in our midst, though invisible.

COMMANDER JOHN D. DECOURSEY, MSC, USN is being transferred from the Naval Medical Field Research Laboratory, Marine Barracks, Camp Lejeune, N. C., to Naval Medical Research Unit No. 3, c/o American Embassy, Cairo, Egypt where the Navy has long conducted some of its most interesting investigations.

COMMANDER KENNETH L. KNIGHT, MSC, USN is now in the Division of Preventive Medicine of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Washington 25, D. C. Dr. Knight replaces Dr. Holway as chief entomologist of that Division on a routine change of station.

COMMANDER RICHARD T. HOLWAY, MSC, USN reaping the reward of faithful and efficient duty in the Washington endurance test on which Dr. Knight now enters, is now stationed at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. His new address is the Preventive Medicine Unit No. 6, Navy No. 128, FPO % Postmaster, San Francisco, Calif.

WILLIAM E. BECKEL, WRITING FROM THE DEFENCE RESEARCH NORTHERN LABORATORY at Ft. Churchill, Manitoba, just slightly south of the Arctic Circle, sends in an interesting observation on the effects of aerial spraying. Although the data are not yet all collected, and Bill claims they are "not worth much," they seem to offer considerable food for thought and are summarized below. During the summers of 1952 and 1953, aerial spraying with DDT was carried out on a 10 square mile plot surrounding Ft. Churchill. Adult mosquitoes and blackflies were effectively controlled for 5 to 6 days, after which infestation occurred. However, unexpectedly, a considerable reduction was found in larval populations in the open pools of the tundra, and somewhat less so in forested areas.

After the second year of spraying, no larvae at all were recorded in the tundra pools inside the sprayed zone. During the past summer of 1954, a much more extensive area (25 square miles) has been sprayed and pools not previously treated have been included in the application. These were assessed for larval population prior to treatment and will be checked next summer for further confirmation of the effects of the spray.

SAM MINNICH, DIRECTOR OF THE EAST VOLUSIA (FLORIDA) MOSQUITO DISTRICT, is reported by the Daytona Beach *Morning Journal* of 29 May to have made an interesting observation of another sort. Dredging in Thompson Creek, as part of its mosquito control drainage operations, Sam came up with a large bone which he claimed was the left anterior femur of a cow, though it could have had to be a sea cow in the location here it was found, but local archaeologists claimed it was a marine dinosaur. Anyway Sam put a front page center picture and story and reminded his constituents, in case the lack of mosquitoes had made them forget it, that mosquito control is a continuing operation.

FOLLOWING HIS RETURN TO SAIGON, HARRY H. PAGE writes, "I have just returned from a month's study-visit to Japan with four Vietnamese colleagues. We travelled from Tokyo to Hiroshima and Nagasaki and saw many institutions and entomologists carrying on mosquito control and environmental sanitation. At Suigi, I visited the city officials who proudly showed me trophies won for their work against mosquitoes. In Kure a large port city near Hiroshima—Ed.], I was presented with a ceremonial tea in an old temple and informed that over 6,000 Japanese officials and experts had visited the area to see their efforts on environmental sanitation but that I was the first American [since the Occupation—Ed.], ever before have I seen such close cooperation between so many groups for the common purpose of destroying flies, mosquitoes, fleas, black-roses, rats and trash. When one of our party carelessly dropped a match to the ground, four heads bumped in an effort to retrieve it. The

climax, however, was to find a pig pen screened to prevent fly breeding!

"The guiding light of all this effort is a Mrs. Osu, who is 72 years old and chairman of a group of 10,000 women whose interest is largely insect control and sanitation. Most of the work is done by women volunteers with materials and equipment furnished by businessmen and civic societies. Each child has a fly swatter and the children play games while walking to school, vying with each other to kill the most flies. As for myself, I saw none.

"I met Professor Omori, a member of the American Mosquito Control Association, at Nagasaki University. Of all the many observations made during my 40 years' experience in the study of mosquitoes, Dr. Omori showed me the most interesting. It was the breeding habitat of *Aedes nobukonis*, probably the rarest mosquito in the world. It is known to occur only in a dry and deep bamboo-filled ravine several hundred feet long and a few dozen feet wide, which in feudal days served as a moat around the castle. Today the moat is dry except during the rainy season and *Ae. nobukonis* breeds only in the rain pools of this very restricted area. In the world of natural science this is surely one of the rarest phenomena."

FROM ILLINOIS, FRANKLIN C. WRAY sends in information on the defeat of a mosquito abatement detachment bill which would have established precedents of importance to mosquito control districts everywhere. He writes, "An effort was made during 1953 to pass a bill in the Illinois Legislature which would have permitted the owner or owners of one or more tracts of land lying within the corporate limits of an abatement district and located on the border of said district to have their land detached from the district.

"This bill, if passed, would have provided a means for opponents of mosquito control to withdraw from the district, thereby permitting owners of land thus placed newly on the district border to follow the same procedure. If such a chain reaction of withdrawals continued it could ultimately result in the dissolution of the district.

"Fortunately the bill died in the house in the closing days of the last session as a result of opposition from the State Department of Public Health. Although the attempt failed, this does not prevent another effort at the next session of the Illinois Legislature, or similar efforts may be made in other states."

WHILE MOSQUITO ABATEMENT IS UNDER FIRE IN SOME QUARTERS IT IS RECEIVING new impetus in other areas. On March 25th, 1954, Her Majesty Elizabeth II assented to the establishment of a Greater Winnipeg Mosquito Abatement District, which continues and expands the work which has been carried on for 27 years by the Greater Winnipeg Anti-Mosquito Campaign. Evi-

dence of the degree of local interest in the progress and success of this campaign showed in many news items and general interest stories appearing during the summer in the Winnipeg papers. On June 19, the *Winnipeg Tribune* carried a front page picture and story on the research into the possibility of polio transmission by mosquitoes, which is being carried on by the University of Manitoba, under Dr. J. A. McLeod and J. R. G. Sutherland. Another typical item was one which appeared on July 15 in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, which discussed the Abatement District's operations on the Red River, concluded that every mosquito downed was a "drop of blood saved for the Red Cross."

ANOTHER INSECT VECTOR AND PEST CONTROL TRAINING CONFERENCE was held by the Thirteenth Naval District during 16 to 18 August, in Seattle, Wash. More than 100 conferees were reported to have participated, including both civilian and military personnel of the District.

LT. COMMANDER JOHN M. HIRST, MSC, USN, is also responsible for sending us, in his informative newsletter from the Alameda Naval Air Station, the statement made by Forbes when Entomology was only a little over half its present 100 official years. Said Forbes, "We have never yet exterminated—we probably never shall exterminate—so much as a single species of insect." Dr. Hirst then appends a little jingle for the use of and amusement of mosquito exterminators:

BIOLOGISTS are people who  
Observe what ants and cutworms do,  
And how a cotton weevil looks,  
And put what they have seen in books.

But do they ever stop the ants  
That undermine the garden plants  
So that they drop their leaves and rot?  
No, gentle reader, they do not.

(To which the host of AMCA members might reply:

It may be all too sadly true  
That we can't help what some bugs do  
But may we note, we hope sedately,  
MOSQUITOES HAVE ABATED, LATELY?)

THE SKEETER, OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE VIRGINIA MOSQUITO CONTROL ASSOCIATION, among its many items of information and interest reports that the May-June issue of the National Agricultural Chemicals Association News contains a chart which shows that while high-powered insecticides, so often viewed with alarm, were responsible in 1949 for 15 deaths, aspirin and salicylates were responsible for 99. This makes aspirin a good deal more of a public menace than insect control agents, if the viewers with alarm want something to view with alarm. The same publication, *Skeeter*, notes from the Richmond *News-Leader* that while white men "learned only

in comparatively recent times that malaria is carried by mosquitoes, the Masai, a tribe in Central Africa have known it for so long that their word for malaria means literally, 'I have been bitten by a mosquito.'" In this connection, a medal dug up from pre-Christian Rome is inscribed to the honor of a man who is described as saving the city from illness by draining marshes, the reverse of the medal showing a man in a marsh with large, unmistakable mosquito. Which seems to indicate again that in our sophistication we have forgotten things which we once knew.

IN JULY, THE CALIFORNIA VECTOR VIEW made its initial appearance, under the aegis of the Bureau of Vector Control of the California State Department of Public Health and the editorship of Arthur C. Smith. This monthly bulletin contains articles of major importance in each issue together with shorter articles of general interest and notes on various phases of vector control. Material covers flies, mosquitoes, ticks, flea domestic and field rodents, insecticides, herbicide government regulations, refuse disposal, irrigation and water management problems, as well as host of related matters. Of especial interest to mosquito control workers is an article in the August issue on Chlorthion, one of the new materials which has lately received intensive testing by both State and Federal agencies. *Vector Views* concludes that, "while it is premature to make any definite recommendations on its use it is apparent that chlorthion at low dosages is effective against a wide spectrum of vectors and economic pests. Extremely encouraging results have been obtained in using this material as a residual spray for house flies resistant to hydrocarbon insecticides. Equally interesting have been the results obtained in applying chlorthion as a mosquito larvicide."

CALIFORNIA NOW HAS 41 ACTIVE MOSQUITO ABATEMENT DISTRICTS, according to the same August issue of *Vector Views*. These cover 23,933 square miles. "In addition," the *Views* goes on to say, "Mosquito control is conducted by eight local health departments in 790 square miles of area and by two pest abatement districts in 2 square miles. This gives a total coverage of 24,746 of California's 158,693 square miles. The major part of this total coverage occurs in the Central Valley."

ON 15 NOVEMBER, THE WESTERN PACIFIC AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA INTER-REGIONAL MALARIA CONFERENCE opens in Taiwan. Sponsored by WHO and meeting at the invitation of the government of China, the conference will spend 8 days in technical discussions of malaria control problems and field visits. The tentative schedule includes a trip to Southern Taiwan to visit a DDT manufacturing plant in Kao-Hsieng and the Taiwan Provincial Malaria Research Institute in Ch'ao-Chow.

IN A LETTER CONCERNING THE SPRAYING OF MONROVIA, LIBERIA, GEORGE BURTON writes the

The first operation was completed in March and spraying was then transferred to the bush areas until the rains flooded the roads. Dr. Arton says that there seem to be many factors involved in the persistence of dieldrin and that there were indications that the spray began to be effective after about nine months in some cases. He remarks that one of the complications is the habit of the people of beating the house walls when they get up in the morning. Although the mosquitoes probably go up into the roof instead of out the windows, the habit may cause the dissemination of dust particles carrying dieldrin, which may be the cause of difficulties in keeping check rearings alive. George also notes that it is seldom possible to find parasites in a food smear when the slide has been taken after a patient has had a severe chill, whereas after a fever the parasites are numerous. He says one

of the hard things to adjust one's mind to is reading slides positive for malaria when one has taken them from "a bunch of gay, happy, exuberant children" whose appearance is anything but malaria-ridden. In another letter he writes: "We haven't had a single case of illness due to this insecticide [dieldrin]. In some cases exposures have been greater, due to a shortage of gloves and respirators, but still no ill effects among the men spraying. They have not used the goggles we have issued them, as they claim their eyes have not bothered them and the spray does not irritate their eyes in any way. We have used 0.3, 0.5 and 0.626 percent dieldrin suspension and emulsion. We are not relaxing our requirements, however, and insist that those who have protective clothing, respirators and gloves use them."

ACCORDING TO THE CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S BULLETIN, "California's Health," the encephalitis surveillance program was continued energetically in 1954. While the number of hospital admissions has been low, and none of the blood specimens has been confirmed as either St. Louis or Western equine encephalitis, all cases showing central nervous system symptoms with fever have been viewed and sampled. In the mosquito collection studies, 56 virus isolations have been made from 83 pools of *Culex tarsalis*.

IN MASSACHUSETTS, during the current season, the second Greenhead-fly Control District, initiated to reduce the salt marsh tabanid population, went into operation along the north shore of Massachusetts Bay. The first and original district was organized along the south shore of Massachusetts Bay immediately upon completion of the greenhead-fly experimental control investigation of 1948. This new district was sponsored by a local federation of betterment associations known as the North Shore Associates. Approximately one-third of the cost of operation was borne by the State, and the remaining two-thirds by the

municipalities forming the district. An additional contribution was received from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to meet the expense incurred by the district in treating certain salt marsh areas included in the Parker River Refuge, a portion of which falls within the boundaries of the new district.—B. I. Gerry.

THE MOSQUITO *Culiseta inornata* WILLISTON previously unrecorded from Churchill, Manitoba, has been found in this region in large numbers in the larval stage. On August 7, 1953, approximately 900, second, third, and fourth instar *C. inornata* larvae were removed from a pool, previously described (Beckel and Barlow, 1953), in which *Aedes communis* (De Geer) larvae are found. The organisms were reared according to the method used for *Aedes communis* (Beckel and Copps, 1953) (Beckel, 1953). Initially, the females were offered blood in gauze bags soaked in a solution of blood and sugar (McLintock, 1952); this they fed on readily. After the first complete generation, blood was offered by suspending guinea pigs with shaved backs from the ceiling of the cage; blood was taken avidly. The colony was maintained for eight generations with little difficulty.

#### Literature Cited

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MCCLINTOCK, J. 1952. Continuous Laboratory Rearing of *Culiseta inornata* (Will.) (Diptera: Culicidae). Mosquito News 12:195-201. T. P. Copps, Defence Research Northern Laboratory, Fort Churchill, Manitoba, Canada. (This information was obtained while working on DRNL Project No. D45-68-01-02 under the direction of Mr. W. E. Beckel.)

The following letter is self-explanatory. It was forwarded to the editor by Secretary Ted Raley. It is printed herewith to bring it to the attention of persons who might qualify, and who might be interested. No mention was made of a deadline for the applications. The "brief description of duties" to which reference is made is on file in

the office of the Editor of Mosquito News and is available on request.—D. L. C.

4 July 1954

American Mosquito Control Association  
1941 Front Street  
Selma, California  
Gentlemen:

The overseas command in Japan has forwarded to this office a personnel request for an Entomologist (Medical), GS-11, \$5940 per annum. The minimum tour of duty in Japan is twenty-four (24) months.

Inclosed herewith is a brief description of the duties and responsibilities and a statement of requirements for the position.

If there is anyone you would care to recommend, please have such individuals write direct to the following address:

The Surgeon General  
Department of the Army  
Washington 25, D. C.  
ATTENTION: MEDCM-CP

Sincerely yours,  
(Sgd) E. W. LaCross  
Personnel Division

### APPLICATIONS FOR MANAGER WANTED

The Board of Trustees of the Alameda County Mosquito Abatement District announces the prospective retirement of its present Engineer-Manager between December 31, 1954 and March 31, 1955. The Board will receive applications for appointment as Manager of the District during the period October 1-30, 1954. Previous experience in the management of extensive mosquito control operations will be given primary consideration. Salary Schedule No. 40 (\$611-645-681-719-760 per month) in five steps.

For an application form interested persons should write to the

Board of Trustees of the Alameda County Mosquito Abatement District  
1-A Court House  
Oakland 7, California

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