

THE FRANK FORMAN MEDICAL FOUNDATION

DAVID MCKENZIE, *Red Cross War Memorial Hospital for Children, Cape Town*

In 1954 it was rumoured that Prof. Frank Forman, better known to generations of medical students as 'Frankie', was about to retire from the Professorship of Clinical Medicine at the University of Cape Town. As it turned out Professor Forman did not then relinquish his interests in the Medical School and its students but was prevailed upon to retain his Chair for almost 10 years more. He did, however, to a large extent relinquish certain administrative duties that had fallen to his lot over the years since 1938, when he had first assumed duty as Professor of Clinical Medicine.

During the uncertain period before Professor Forman once more officially took up his duties, many of his former students and associates of long standing, some of whom had been his residents, came together and after several lengthy discussions decided that the time was opportune for the creation of some tangible form of recognition for the services that Professor Forman had rendered the Medical School and the students and staff through over thirty years of clinical teaching. Out of these discussions the concept of a constructive honour

embodied in the Frank Forman Medical Foundation was born.

Those who took part in the discussions agreed that the recognition to be accorded Professor Forman should be given a form that would last in perpetuity, and that there could be no more fitting way of paying tribute to such a man than by an act aimed at advancing medical science in conformity with his ideals. It was felt that the best way of achieving this was to establish a Trust and through this to give all his past students and colleagues the opportunity of contributing to a Foundation that would be devoted to the furtherance of medical science in the widest sense. It was decided that the bulk of the interest accruing to the fund should be used to give young graduates in medicine or allied sciences the opportunity of working in the interest of medical science by assisting them in their post-graduate studies or in some form of research. It was felt too, that the undergraduate population, the students at the University of Cape Town Medical School, should also be catered for. In order that a man so whole-heartedly and unstintingly

devoted to medicine, of such great intellectual stature, and with personal qualities that had been an inspiration to so many past students, should continue to be a source of inspiration to future generations of students as well, it was decided to award an annual prize to an undergraduate student to be known as the Forman Undergraduate Prize.

These aims and objects were embodied in a Trust Deed, which was executed on 1 September 1954 and signed in the presence of the following witnesses:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Dr. Arthur Landau | Dr. Raymond Hoffenberg |
| Dr. Samuel Berman | Dr. Hendrik Johannes Walton |
| Dr. Marshall Horwitz | Dr. Colin Robertson Macpherson |
| Dr. Arthur Kipps | Dr. Ronald Louis Kleinman |
| Dr. David McKenzie | Dr. Martin Isadore Sacks |
| Dr. Louis Mirvish | Dr. Reuben Sougin-Mibashan |
| Dr. Hillel Abbe Shapiro | Dr. Dennis Michael Krikler |
| Dr. Isaac Grayce | Dr. Frances Rix Ames |
| Dr. William Peter Uprichard Jackson | |
| Dr. Christiaan Neethling Barnard | |

A circular letter outlining the objects and aims of the Frank Forman Medical Foundation was then sent to all past students of the Medical School of the University of Cape Town. This circular letter was sponsored by many of Professor Forman's colleagues and friends of many years' standing:

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Dr. Samuel Berman | Dr. Wolf Rabkin |
| Dr. Helen Brown | Mr. M. Cole Rous |
| Prof. Graham Bull | Mr. George Sacks |
| Dr. Thomas J. Dry | Dr. Hillel Shapiro |
| Prof. G. A. Elliott | Dr. A. W. Sichel |
| Dr. Michael Gelfand | Dr. Louis Smuts |
| Mr. L. B. Goldschmidt | Dr. R. E. Stevenson |
| Dr. Arthur Landau | Prof. F. D. du T. van Zyl |
| Dr. Louis Mirvish | Mr. H. Maisel, President, Medical Students Council, U.C.T., (1954). |
| Dr. A. Marais Moll | |
| Prof. S. F. Oosthuizen | |

Later the Fund was augmented by subscriptions obtained by personal contact and from many of Professor Forman's old patients who expressed the wish to contribute also to this worth-while project; and before the initial phase of the collection of contributions had been completed very many of the past students of the Medical School, many of his colleagues, and many of his patients, had made substantial contributions to the Foundation. The municipality of Paarl, where Frank Forman was born and spent his youth, also saw fit to honour one of its illustrious sons by making a substantial contribution to the Frank Forman Medical Foundation.

The original Trustees were the late Dr. Sam Berman, the late Dr. Louis Mirvish, and Drs. Arthur Landau, Mark Horwitz, Arthur Kipps, Hillel Shapiro, Isaac Grayce, W. P. U. Jackson, and D. McKenzie. On the death of Dr. Louis Mirvish, Dr. Helen Brown consented to serve on the Board of Trustees and the vacancy on the Board created by the death of Dr. Sam Berman has still to be filled. Dr. Berman's brothers, acting in an honorary capacity, were most helpful in drawing up the Trust deed under which the Foundation operates and also, since its inception, in auditing the books of the Foundation, which the firm of Michael Berman and Company still does to this day.

Several years after the Foundation was initiated, when the first flood of donations began to subside, the capital of the Trust was placed in the hands of a Trust Company for investment and administration. However, from time to time sums are still donated to the Frank Forman Foundation and help to augment the capital sum invested.

Disbursements from the trust are made entirely from accrued interest, and to date this has been sufficient for an Annual Undergraduate Prize of R20 and for a Postgraduate Award of R1.400 every second year.

Shortly after the inauguration of the Foundation, Mrs. Doreen East-Anziska offered to make a bust of Professor Forman to be handed to the Trustees of the Foundation. In fact she made two busts, one of which she presented to Professor Forman as a personal gift, and the other to the Board of Trustees with the hope that it would one day be presented to the University of Cape Town in honour of Professor For-

man. When it was realized towards the end of 1954 that Professor Forman was not immediately to sever his connection with the Medical School, it was decided that the time was not opportune to make the presentation of the bust. It was, so to say, kept in 'cold storage' until the end of 1963, when Professor Forman did in fact relinquish the Chair of Clinical Medicine at the University. At that time the University authorities were approached and were pleased to accept the bust on behalf of the University, and in a very pleasant and unpretentious ceremony it was presented to the University by the Board of Trustees and accepted on behalf of the University by the Principal, Dr. J. P. Duminy. How appropriate that this bust of Professor Forman should be housed in the Medical Library where he had spent so many hours collating his vast knowledge of clinical medicine in order to impart it to his students both postgraduate and undergraduate at his weekly ward-rounds, which had become so much a part of the life of the Medical School!

In initiating the Frank Forman Medical Foundation the sponsors and trustees had sought not only to do honour to Professor Forman but also in some way to enable him to derive pleasure from this Foundation during the rest of his lifetime. This latter objective was achieved by the happy thought of asking Professor Forman to serve on the Awards Committee of the Foundation, which he has done over the past ten years and which we hope he will continue to do for as long as he is able. Together with Professor Forman, the Awards Committee consists of the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Cape Town, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and the Secretary/Treasurer of the Foundation.

To date there have been nine recipients of the Frank Forman undergraduate prize and five recipients of the Frank Forman postgraduate award. In 1960 the award was made to two postgraduates simultaneously and the amount was divided equally between the two.

| <i>Forman Prize</i> | | <i>Forman Award</i> | |
|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1955 | J. King | 1962 | W. F. Lubbe |
| 1956 | John S. Chadwick | 1963 | H. Flax |
| 1957 | D. G. C. Davidson | 1958 | H. Gordon |
| 1958 | G. D. Sweeney | 1960 | Neville Woolf |
| 1959 | G. D. Burns | | Marcus Jacobsen |
| 1960 | Wieland Gevers | 1962 | M. Simenhoff |
| 1961 | M. H. Melmed | 1964 | J. A. H. Campbell |

The postgraduate award is advertised every second year and the Committee chooses from the applicants the candidate who to them seems most suitable and in their opinion is most likely to benefit from the further study that he indicates he is about to embark on. The undergraduate prize is not advertised and the recipient is selected as much for his general character, his participation in the affairs of the medical students and the University, and his extracurricular interests, as for any academic prowess that he may have evinced. The prize, therefore, always comes as a very unexpected and pleasant surprise to the recipient.

It is very gratifying, in this *Festschrift* to Professor Forman, to have the opportunity of outlining the aims, objects and achievements of the Foundation that ten years ago was created to perpetuate his principles and ideals in the practice of medicine. The achievements of those who have been fortunate enough to receive either a Forman prize or a Forman award have amply justified their selection, and there is no reason to doubt that those who are fortunate enough in the ensuing years to receive one of these honours will equally justify the faith imposed in them by the Awards Committee.

Perhaps in conclusion it would not be unfitting to quote from Ryle in *The Natural History of Disease*, a book which surely is in the possession of and treasured by every one of Professor Forman's erstwhile house physicians. The quotation is one of Bacon's remarks from that part of his discourse on the advancement of learning which concerns the work of the physician, very pertinent to the aims and objects of the Frank Forman Foundation. It reads, 'Only there is one thing still remaining, which is of more consequences than all the rest: namely, a true and active Natural Philosophy for the Science of Medicine to be built upon.'