

NEWSLETTER

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OF THE

OPTOMETRIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

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Annual call for nominations:

The board member whose term will expire this year, December 31, 1981, is a long time favorite with many O.H.S. members. Nominations for her continuation or replacement for a five year term are hereby requested for placement on the ballot in October.

By all means do not hesitate to nominate yourself as a volunteer candidate. Keep in mind that self-nominated volunteers founded the O.H.S., and unpaid volunteers have kept it going. Even the list of those who failed to be elected after nomination is almost a Who's who in Optometry.

More Japanese ophthalmic history:

The previous issue of this Newsletter included the translation of part of a history book covering 30 years of the "Osaka Optical Retailers Association." A second book sent to me by Mr. Yoshihiro Fukuda, President of the Japan Optometric and Optical Association, has the translated title "20 YEARS OF JAPAN OPTICAL TECHNICIANS ASSOCIATION (JOA)", 125 pages handsomely bound, 18 X 26 cm, with numerous illustrations of places, persons, and things. It was published in May, 1976, in Japanese. The following is a partial translation submitted by Mr. Fukuda.

Awakening of the optical profession

In 1926 Dr. D. Desmond of the United States visited Japan and held educational lectures in Osaka. Through his lectures Japanese opticians realized that adjusting and fitting spectacles needed a high level of knowledge and skill. Though the main purpose of Dr. Desmond's visit to Japan was to develop marketing of the optical equipment of his company, his visit triggered the awakening of the Japanese opticians from their comfortable slumber. They started to consider the future of the profession in Japan and tried to absorb, at every possible opportunity, the advanced knowledge and skill of Western countries. They even began themselves to hold educational lecture series, though small in scale, in order to raise their own standards.

The Pharmaceutical Law and educational lectures

In 1961, the Pharmaceutical Law was revised and optical lenses were included in the items to be controlled by the law. This urged the necessity of education, and throughout the country educational lectures were held and attended by many ardent opticians. These educational lectures greatly raised the standards of the profession and through the education Japanese opticians became aware of their professional responsibilities.

Introduction of the examination system

The Osaka Optical Retailers' Association had long felt that academic knowledge and professional skill were closely connected with each other just like two wheels. In 1950 it planned to give examinations to its members in order to test whether or not the education and the training given in the educational courses were fully acquired. This was the first trial in our country and accordingly met with strong resistance. Nevertheless the plan was promoted. In the same year, the Osaka Eye Health Association was established with the cooperation of the Health Department of Osaka Prefecture, the ophthalmology classes of Osaka University, Osaka City University, Osaka Medical University and Kansai Medical University. The Osaka Optical Retailers' Association officially asked the newly established Eye Health Association to conduct examinations as their own activity, instead of giving them by themselves. Thus examinations conducted were rigid and free from any collusion.

Establishment of Japan Opticians Association

The examination system had been successful; every year the number of "Gankyoshi" (qualified opticians and the title given to those who passed the examinations) increased, which led to the level-up of the profession. Another problem left to be solved was that of continuing education. It was feared that without continuing education, even qualified opticians might fail to catch up with the rapid progress of the world and be left behind in world standards. It was felt that a certain guiding organization was necessary to keep every qualified optician up-to-date and to improve his proficiency. For this purpose, the Japan Opticians Association was established in 1956.

Establishment of Japan Optical Technicians' Association (JOA)
as a corporation recognized by the Ministry of Health & Welfare

For ten years the Japan Opticians Association exerted every effort to educate and guide its member opticians through educational courses, lectures and study meetings. Its activities spread to various fields, from development of optical equipments to social welfare work such as services for the aged people in homes, or for the poor. These inconspicuous, yet important activities were recognized by the Ministry of Health & Welfare and in April 1965 the Ministry authorized the Association as a nonprofit corporation, the first one among the professional organizations in our country. Since then we have been expected to assume full responsibility for a level-up of the standard of the standard of the profession as well as of individual opticians. Taking this opportunity, the Association was reorganized into the Japan Optical Technicians Association (JOA) and opened to any optician who was willing to study and raise the standard of the profession as well as his own. The Japan Optical Technicians Association made a new start as a research and educational organization representing the whole profession.

Bits about Spitler:

Writes Mrs. Pat Carlson, Librarian at Southern California College of Optometry:

We, too, have a copy of Squint, its Etiology, Diagnosis and Treatment, by Morgan C. Davies. On checking further I discovered the editor, H. Riley Spitler (born 1899), contributed a chapter (18 pages) in a book we have titled The Principles and Practice of Ocular Physical Therapy for Optometrists, by Jack J Kurtz, American Journal of Optometry, Minneapolis, Minn., 1930. The title of the chapter is "Galvanism for Optometrists."

In addition, the library has a copy of The Syntonic Principle: Its Relation to Health and Ocular Problems, authored by Harry Riley Spitler, published by the College of Syntonic Optometry, Eaton, Ohio, in 1941. A few pages from this book are xeroxed and included here (title page, conclusions, and "Syntonic Effectivity"). I looked for a possible Ph.D. among his credits and found it - along with a D.O.S., M.D., and M.S. (see title page).

Hoping this is of some interest.

Indeed! And so is the paragraph under his name on the title page, as follows:

Formerly Clinician Macfadden Sanatorium, Battle Creek, Mich.; Physician-in-charge Crab Orchard Sanatorium, Crab Orchard, Ky.; Past President State Board of Optometry, Ohio; Past First Vice-President American Optometric Association; Accredited teacher of Mechanotherapy and physical therapies since 1925 by Ohio State Medical Board; Past Dean Department of Mechanotherapy Metropolitan College; Dean Central States College of Physiatics; Fellow American Academy of Optometry; Fellow College of Syntonic Optometry.

There must undoubtedly be a clinical classification of persons who sport such credentials.

The conclusions, Chapter XVI of the book, total 19, 16 of which begin with the words "There exists a relationship..." mostly between "light frequency" and various vaguely specified bodily functions such as "responses" of the eye, "rate of growth", "physical development", "mass body potentials", "development of the biotype", "action currents", "functioning power of the pituitary gland", "the reproductive cycle", "secretion of hormones", "nerve cell irritability", "the perception of pain", et cetera.

The "Syntonic Effectivity" appendix is a statistical compilation of 13 categories of ocular anomalies, "3600 optometric departures from normal...found in 3076 individuals" of whom the "Percentage of patients responding to syntonization" was 90.7%. The "3076 individuals received 23,993 syntonizations, averaging 7.79 (my calculator gets 7.8 - HWH) per patient."

The most dangerous thought of the day is that this kind of malarkey occurred only in history.

History of history:

"Western historical societies tended to leap prematurely into the world in the 1820's and 1830's and then be rewarded for their impertinence by widespread neglect and indifference. For reasons not easily discerned, this did not quite happen to the Indiana Historical Society. It was, to be sure, neglected, and for the first fifty-six years of its history it usually seemed more dead than alive; but then every four or five years the society would rise from its deathbed, acquire a transfusion of new members, and make enthusiastic new plans before sinking back, a few months later, into its usual torpor. Though the society was no longer on the verge of death after 1886, it was small, modest, and virtually impoverished for many years to come".

This is from the opening paragraph of a beautifully bound 383 page volume entitled "A History of the Indiana Historical Society 1830-1980" by Laan Ruegamer, published by the society itself in Indianapolis in 1980.

In a couple of paragraphs later the author commented; "In its 150 year history, The Indiana Historical Society has been somewhat anomalous: it did not die when expected, nor did it flourish when other later societies flourished." and, "And yet, anomaly or not, the Indiana Historical Society has been an institution of real consequence to Indiana history during most of its one hundred and fifty years, and within the past fifty years it has made occasional noteworthy contribution to the national historical community".

Today the Society is an entirely independent organization after more than fifty years of partial dependence upon the state-supported Indiana Historical Bureau. It is now distinguished by the size of its endowment, among the largest of private historical societies, totaling approximately \$24 million, a large portion of which was a recent gift of the late Eli Lilly provided for in his will. Remarkably, therefore, the annual membership dues are very nominal, only recently increased to \$15. Out of this one receives a monthly magazine, a monthly newsletter, occasional bulletins of special interest, and a book or monograph or two almost every year. The books are often sheer models of such cultural beauty as to make one want to keep them for their prestigious appearance even if the subject matter is outside of his immediate area of interest.

Is this brief account of interest to you and me? I think yes. It illustrates so well the frail concern about history among the great majority of us. In the whole world there must be two hundred thousand persons who are serving the optometric needs of the population, but our society membership, world-wide, during our first eleven years has remained fairly constant at about 200. So we are only one in a thousand, and many of us 200 are merely curious or amused rather than concerned. But we are keeping our Society a bit more alive than dead, and each year of survival gives the society a higher expectancy of permanence. We know we are written into at least one will for \$1,000, by virtue of which that member needs to pay no dues.

Only a few months ago I learned that a well known retired optometrist contributed more than a hundred thousand dollars in securities to the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry, Inc., to be used for student loan purposes, a magnificent purpose. This reminds me that substantial gifts and legacies from optometrists themselves for their favorite optometric projects have begun to surface, and we should expect more in the future.

When this Society accumulates, say, a hundred thousand dollars in endowment, the resultant several thousand dollars annual income could indeed enable it to retain history scholars, researchers, writers, lecturers, etc. to undertake a few of the projects that could result in books, exhibits, and other educational programs. Membership in the Society would then take on new meaning for many more who merely need occasional pleasant and exciting reminders that our history is indeed one of their great concerns. (HWH).

A poke at tropical optics:

The 9th edition of that classic book entitled Optics by W.H.A. Fincham and M. H. Freeman has on page 1 the familiar statement "A poker, when cold, emits no radiation that we can detect", a perfectly vivid concept to those of us who have stirred the embers in a fireplace or stove. But my Puerto Rican student was puzzled enough to have to ask me, "What is a poker, and why would a poker be cold?"

The Puerto Rican combination of a tropical climate and totally prevalent use of electricity and gas do indeed make the poker an unfamiliar tool.

This single little incident, the type of which I encountered daily in this predominantly Spanish speaking community in which English is reciprocally limited, illustrates almost amusingly the problems of interpretation of lesser known figures of speech and homey illustrations. The historian can have the same difficulty interpreting the precise connotation of a paragraph written only a single generation earlier. The hundred year old paragraph usually takes on a quaintness, and the four hundred year old paragraph requires scholarly analysis, all in nominally the same language.

I am reminded that in my early attempts to read German I devoted the better part of an hour trying to resolve a statement which I finally interpreted to say, "But Helmholtz stood the egg on its end", a figure of speech which in my own day might have been expressed, "But Helmholtz hit the nail on its head".

More recently I heard a young student comment: "But Helmholtz really zeroed in on it"! (HWH)

Archival tidbits:

"From The Archives" by David Reynolds, immediate Past President of the South African Optometric Association, (The South African Optometrist/ Die Suid-Afrikaanse Oogkunde, December 1980) contains so many interesting historical short stories that reprinting the whole article would be necessary for indexing purposes. So, here it is (DKP).

Optometry round the world has had a rich and varied history. Take the case of Mr. Godfrey Taylor, who in 1939 received a strange order from South Africa requesting that he make several artificial eyes specially modelled with a hole behind each pupil. The 24-year old London 'glass-eye maker' duly provided the goods, little dreaming of what they were to be used for.

The Johannesburg Star of July 12, 1939 provided the answer. The artificial eyes were used for stealing diamonds from the mines, plain and simple. "No one ever thought of asking a person to remove a glass eye during the diamond search."

The individuals who wore the special appliances "made enough to retire" within a short period.

Godfrey Taylor's family had made artificial eyes for many years, including a special fitting for the Duke of Wellington. His mother was once visited by a solemn delegation from the East, who wished to obtain glass eyes for fitting to an idol in their far-off temple. His father made a glass eye for a lion at one stage. Details of this particular fitting were, unfortunately, not divulged.

Just prior to World War II Italian warlords drew up a special list of blind volunteers for active service. They had carried out experiments in their naval forces, and had discovered that "blind men possess greater sensitivity of hearing than men with normal eyesight" - and had trained the men to serve with their anti-aircraft units in the fleet.

The Dioptric News of 1939 had a few words to say about Hitler's glasses. According to the article, Hitler had stated in Mein Kampf that his vision had "probably been weakened" by his being gassed in 1918, and that he had been temporarily blinded. Hitler apparently did not find time to have his eyes or vision properly examined, but he did find that reading the voluminous reports which reached him daily taxed his eyesight considerably. This was remedied in an unconventional manner when he was relaxing for a period at Berchtesgaden. Three sample pairs of spectacles were sent to him for trial. He chose one and returned the others with a note of thanks.

Mr. Trygve Tune, an engineer in the tanker South Africa, had the misfortune to have his right eye pierced by a piece of flying steel in January 1939 when he was working in the engine room of the vessel which was some 2,000 kilometres south-west of Sumatra. He clamped a magnet to his eye and immediately contacted his radio officer. The officer in turn got hold of the company's headquarters in Oslo, who directed him to seek what aid there could be in the vicinity. Eventually the desperate calls for assistance were received by the P. and O. liner Strathaird, which steamed at full speed towards the tanker. Mr. Tune was taken off the tanker and the liner was diverted to Colombo, where an eye specialist removed the metal sliver. The vision in the eye was saved.

There was a time when it was felt that the wearing of ear rings improved eye comfort. The Daily Express of August 20, 1937 told the story of a Somerset-born individual who claimed that piercing of ears was a cure for all forms of malady, including poor vision. A.W. Hounslow of Middlesex claimed in 1937 that repeated bouts of pink-eye were remedied by having a glowing wire stuck through his ear lobe.

On each occasion the pink-eye was reduced and vanished. Eventually it was decided to fit this individual with gold ear rings, and he claimed that at no time after the fitting of the ear rings did he feel any visual discomfort. When he grew older he was assailed by his friends for wearing ear rings, and was forced to pull them out. He confessed to putting them back in private to keep his eyes and vision "right."

It is probably not widely known that the famed (and lost) aviatrix, Amelia Earhart, carried with her a considerable number of optical appliances on her famed round-the-world flight. Included in her kit were a new Bubble Sextant, an experimental pair of lightweight binoculars, and nine pairs of absorptive lenses supplied by Bausch and Lomb. Miss Earhart, on an earlier flight, had observed that "due to the great variation in the intensity of sky illumination an absorptive lens which may have the correct density and absorption qualities for one set of conditions will not answer in another set." She carried a lightmeter to measure sky illumination in foot candles and attempted experimentally to determine the density and type of glass which could be worn comfortably with the intensities of light registered on the meter. She had intended to tabulate the results of her experiments in an effort to provide data for determining the best types of filtered lenses for each set of differing flying conditions.

The Bubble Sextant was revolutionary for the period in that it provided a self-contained artificial horizon in the form of a liquid bubble. The gadget was already in use by the United States Navy but was being experimented with due to the fact that flyers found themselves seriously inconvenienced "during the long period between evening and morning twilight when stars are visible but the horizon is not."

The binoculars she carried were described as possessing "exceptional light gathering power", were guaranteed waterproof, and were supposed to relieve the strain on the wrist which proved a painful and perplexing problem when conventional binoculars of the period were used for long unbroken periods.

The island of Tristan da Cunha may have set up a record of sorts in the 1930s for a unique arrangement of providing care for the visually handicapped. When Mr. E.F.D. Owen visited the island in 1936 he made a special point of finding out how many islanders wore spectacles. His investigations revealed that there were only three pairs of glasses on the island, and these were rotated according to need. They belonged to everyone, and were distributed rent-free to the individual who had a particular temporary need for them.

The Tristan example was followed, unwittingly, by a group known as The Young People's Fellowship, of Livingston, New Jersey. When it was found that many pupils in the public grade schools were suffering from defective eyesight, the parents were approached to provide this care and the necessary appliances. They could not afford to do so, with the result that a "Rotating Eye-glass Fund" was established. Each parent made a small contribution, the school nurse prioritized the list of needy children, and when the funds were sufficient, glasses were provided for the child at the top of the list.

No such problem in the Punjab. A wealthy local chief, whose funds were so unlimited that he lavished extraordinary amounts of money on trivial projects, ordered a pair of solid gold spectacles with diamond studded rims. Rubies formed the keystones for each half circle and an emerald was used as a catch for closing. Money was never a problem for the Dionne quintuplets either. During the filming of "The Country Doctor" a special blue filter was used on the movie lights, giving "a softening quality and eliminating the irritating ultraviolet rays." Shirley Temple enjoyed the same obsequious attention to her vision. Whenever she was photographed a specially developed gauze was employed to cover the bulb, to shield the eyes from glare and to protect against a possible bulb explosion.

Almost the same amount of attention to detail went into the first cataract operation performed on an orangoutang in a Philadelphia hospital in 1935. "All the facilities normally accorded to a human being" were provided for the captive, "as an operation of this kind has never been performed on a member of the monkey family before."

"A new and unusual device" was tried out on New York taxi drivers in the late thirties. Anti-dazzle lenses were designed to slip under the eyelids of the drivers who claimed to be tormented by the direct sunlight when driving eastwards in the early morning. Cynics remarked that the device had no chance, and that "the best of all protections against a really blinding light is to shut the eyes slightly." The lenses proved excruciatingly uncomfortable and the cabbies went back to tinted sunshields. Strangely, the coming of the overhead railway solved many of their problems for good. The problem now in New York is to see the sun at all.

Michaelangelo is known to have suffered extensively for his famous painting efforts. On All Saints' Day, 1512, his masterpiece was complete. But he had been lying on his back for four years painting the ceiling of the

Sistine Chapel, and when the work was complete, he was 37 and unable to use his eyes for reading unless the material was placed above him. The Outline of Arts indicates that he was old and worn by that stage, and that the painting position he was forced to take influenced his posture for the rest of his life.

Philip Morris, a Nairobi ophthalmologist, had a problem directly in reverse. He was frequently seen bending over the aggravatingly frail electrical system of his Land-Rover, which he used on his frequent bush safaries. In one day he performed ten cataract operations under a thorn tree near the shores of Lake Rudolph, screened over three hundred locals for pathology, removed a huge fishbone from the foot of the chief's daughter, and spent the greater part of the evening huddled with an accompanying optometrist repairing a faulty generator on his trusted steed. Payment for his services he insisted on. He was prepared to exchange an operation for a couple of repulsive and inedible fish hastily dug out of the lake, and would load the 'payments' into a small cart (which he hauled behind the Land-Rover) with all the solemnity of a small-businessman adding up the day's takings. When he felt that he had travelled a safe distance from his temporary bush hospital, he would jettison the cargo with a sigh of relief. His selfless and varied career came to a tragic end when he was killed on the Mombasa-Nairobi road when his driver swerved to avoid an errant petrol tanker.

Dr. Louis Jacques told startled delegates to a seminar held by the Ontario Optometrical Association that the eye afflicted by myopia was "much more beautiful than normal eyes." One patient in a South African town believed her eyes to be so beautiful that a frame of exquisite unusualness was required for them. She took over six months to select a frame, and her kindly but increasingly exasperated 'friendly' optometrist had to trot out no fewer than 800 frames for her selection. He ordered large numbers of frames which roughly corresponded with the magazine illustration she had produced, and recounted that she finally chose the first frame he had shown her on her first visit.

One optometrist on the Chicago near-north side had a rather special problem. He wished to bring his Labrador Blackie to work with him each day, but found that the Chicago Transit Authority would not permit bus drivers to allow dogs inside their vehicles. The dog was considered necessary to protect the rear of the premises which opened onto a run-down lane, and in the middle of summer it was imperative to have the back door opened, purely for survival. The solution? Put Blackie in a large hemp sack and carry him aboard the bus. Blackie got used to these indignities, and the bus drivers turned the proverbial blind eye to Blackie's sack.

L. Slator, a Leeds optician, got himself into trouble when his credentials were queried in the Leeds Assizes in July, 1935. He used the letters Q.B.E. after his name, and when compelled to reveal their meaning, raised his hand to brush away his hair and muttered inaudibly "Qualified by experience." Q.E.D.

Benvenuto Cellini had the misfortune to have a splinter fly into the pupil of his right eye. He called upon a surgeon, Maestro Raffaello de Pilli, who brought along a couple of live pigeons and ordered Cellini to lie on his back. The surgeon opened a "a large vein they have beneath the wing" and allowed the blood to pour onto the wound. Cellini noted "I felt immediately relieved, and in the space of two days the splinter came away, and I remained with eyesight greatly improved. Against the feast of St. Lucia, which came round in three days, I made a golden eye out of a French coin, and had it presented at her shrine by one of my six nieces, daughters of my sister Liperata; the girl was ten years of age, and in her company I returned thanks to God and St. Lucia."

About Alpheus W. Smith:

Retired optometry professor Howard Haines, O.D., has suggested that some special historical attention should be paid to the late Alpheus Smith, Professor of Physics and erstwhile Dean of the Graduate School at The Ohio State University, author of a widely used General Physics textbook, a key figure and policy maker for many years on The Ohio State University campus in a wide variety of roles, an immediate colleague of Charles Sheard in their early academic years, an honoree of the American Academy of Optometry, a star testifier on the optometry corps bill in the forties, my first employer after I received my optometry degree, and, in the minds of many a contemporary optometric leader, the "patron saint" of optometric education.

He never taught an optometry course, nor did he have any personal or family tie with optometrists or optometry. He merely believed that the courses should be scientifically based and that faculty members should engage in research. He took administrative responsibility for guiding the academic development of optometry in a circumstance when the program might will have been abandoned, and within a decade saw it as a model academic unit whose signal features were eventually adopted by many optometry schools.

Few, if any, optometry students of even that era knew these things about Alpheus Smith. At most he was known, if at all, as a calm, slow, deliberate, preoccupied professor who was a bit distinguishingly unkempt in appearance, and who seemed a bit frightening to challenge or even interrupt, though he spoke little and, to my knowledge, never said anything threatening, vindictive, or even unkind. (HWH)

More costs revealed:

Our mentioning the costs of printing and mailing a single issue of this mighty periodical reminded our Secretary-Treasurer that she neglected to include \$20 for envelopes.

It is a reminder of an incident a few weeks ago in which the president of the optometric student council requested an analysis of the cost of xeroxing, especially to determine whether or not students were being charged too much. A complete analysis of every actual cost detail showed that not enough was being charged, and so the price was raised, much to the students' sorrow.

There is little doubt that a thorough cost analysis of OHS activities would show that a very large share of its operation is subsidized by volunteers, organizations, institutions, and corporations by mere affiliation on such a casual and incidental scale as to make bookkeeping adjustments and compensation unjustifiable. There are, of course, some reciprocal benefits to these supporters but difficult to measure or even to identify.

History of an optometry school:

"Historical Perspective" is the title of the first of a six-part series being contributed by Student Editor Glenn Hiura in the March/April, 1981, issue of Optometry Forum, Vol. 17, No. 2- a publication of the University of California Optometry Alumni Association, Berkeley, California. The first instalment, on page 9, is a descriptive chronology of the School of Optometry from its inception in 1923 to the present.

Separated se tenant stamps:

Responding to our mention of two East German postage stamps of historical optical interest in the April issue of this newsletter, page 24, Alan York, O.D., mailed us a photocopy of a clipping showing that the two stamps had been separated from a museum se tenant issue of four stamps. The German Democratic Republic had issued 3.5 million sets of the four se tenant stamps on August 12, 1980, each showing a microscope from the Optical Museum of the Carl Zeiss foundation at Jena. In case you are a philatelist you already know what se tenant means but you may wish to know that the quartet was designed by Prof. Gerhard Voigt of Halle and printed in rotogravure by VEB Wertpapierdruckerei der DDR.

The two not mentioned in the April issue of this newsletter were the 20 Pfennig stamp depicting a 1740 Huntley microscope of London and the 35Pf. stamp showing an 1845 Amici microscope of Modena. The foursome in Dr. York's clipping, of 150 Pfennig or 1.50 Mark total denomination, is singularly canceled by a Berlin, East Germany, postmark identified with the Optisches Museum der Carl Zeiss Stiftung Jena.

Se tenant, by the way, means "holding one another" and refers especially to postage stamps of different design joined together in the originally printed sheet.

From OAP, PODA, and PROA, to SOP:

Most of us tend to consider history as that which is chronologically far enough behind us to be forgotten unless steps are taken to preserve the archival details. Occasionally a special event advances the forgetting time so significantly as to make the event itself an historical landmark at virtually its moment of occurrence.

Such is certainly the case with the dissolution of three long-established and usually rival optometric associations in the Philippines in favor of a single new national organization called the Samahan Ng Optometrist Sa Pilipinas (Tagalog for Society of Optometrists of the Philippines), abbreviated SOP. That the newly integrated organization is functioning effectively is documented by its publication of the first issue of the SOP Newsletter, Vol. 1, No. 1, for January-February 1981, in which was announced the fourth SOP Congress held on May 1-5. (Actually the 34th Philippine Convention of National Scope under different organization auspices.)

The SOP Newsletter itself presumably replaces the prior serial publications of the three terminated associations.

The significance of these landmark developments is reinforced by my own inability to recall the unabbreviated full titles of OAP, PODA, and PROA, the three deceased organizations, though quite familiar to me only five years ago. The SOP Newsletter itself identified them only by their abbreviations, perhaps fearing their resurrection if addressed by full title.

May steps be taken to preserve an adequate collection of pre-SOP documents and memorabilia for the future scholars of history who would test whether or not optometric history will repeat itself.

True gags:

Another clipping sent to us by Dr. Alan York from the February 1981 issue of the TAMS Journal (Token and Medal Society), Vol. 21, No. 1, page 6, is an article about a classified advertisement of Mr. B.C. True which appeared in the January 5, 1838, issue of the Albany (N.Y.) Microscope.

Mr. True was a "die sinker", one who makes or engraves the dies or stamps used for amking coins, medals, tokens, etc.

The first paragraph of his advertisement merely announced some of his various skillful services, but of special fascination was the

second paragraph, as follows: "N.B. Some stamps on hand, ready cut for gag mechanics, and Plates for gag Professors of Music, Optics, Black-leging, fancy house bullies, etc. which have on them "names of men so mean, that to be despised, need but be seen!"

The TAM Journal editor parenthetically identified "gag mechanics" as professional gamblers (my dictionary says swindlers), and "fancy house bullies" as brothel strongmen. "gag Professor of Music" and of "Optics", are unexplained.

Clarifications are welcome. (HWH)

Absolutely free membership for you:

Announced but almost completely unexploited has been the provision by which you need only inform the Optometric Historical Society that you have added a codicil to your will to bequeath \$1,000 or more to the Society, and henceforth your membership is free. This, of course, will cost your heirs a tidy sum, but it costs you nothing at all.

\$ contributions:

Quite unsolicited, two OHS members tacked on a few extra dollars with their 1981 membership dues. Bill Baldwin, O.D., Ph.D., optometry dean at the University of Houston, donated \$20, and Frieda Visser, O.D., retired, Middlefield, Ohio, gave five dollars.

TIME won:

It was TIME, the March 16 issue, rather than the April issue of the OHS Newsletter that prompted Professor James Bailey of the Southern California College of Optometry to read the article about Van Gogh in the February 20, 1981, issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association, and to write us about it. Our appreciation nevertheless.

TIME also gave a lengthier commentary than we allowed in our publication.

H. W Hofstetter
D. K. Penisten, Editors

OPTOMETRY LIBRARY