Notes and activities

Thomas Cecil Hunt, CBE, DM, FRCP
Tommy Hunt, who died on 22 December 1980, played a leading role in British gastroenterology for over 50 years. In 1937 he was a founder member of the Gastroenterological Club, which became the BSG. He helped to inaugurate the European and Mediterranean Society of Gastroenterology and in 1956 was President of its meeting in London; this, indeed, was the first international congress in gastroenterology. He played an equally important role in the early days of the World Congress of Gastroenterology and his great skill in diplomacy enabled it to survive and flourish. For many years he had a key role in the affairs of the BSG and was President in 1956. The first paper in Volume 1 of Gut was written by him, recording the early history of the BSG.

He was a fine physician and one of the first to appreciate the importance of psychosomatic aspects. He studied endocrinology in Vienna under Professor Bauer while holding the Radcliffe Travelling Fellowship, but his first research study related to duodenal intubation; this was undertaken while holding the Mackenzie Mackinnon Fellowship of The Royal College of Physicians. The work greatly impressed Sir Arthur Hurst and indeed determined his lifelong interest in gastroenterology. Hunt was closely concerned for many years with clinical trials on duodenal ulcer using carbenoxolone and with the geographical epidemiology of alimentary tract cancer. His energy continued throughout his life and at the age of 70 he started the British Digestive Diseases Foundation; its success over the next 10 years in raising funds for research was largely due to the same enthusiasm and pleasing personality which had been so characteristic of his life's contribution to world gastroenterology.

C A Ewald Prize
The German Society for Digestive and Metabolic Diseases will be awarding, for the first time, the C A Ewald Prize of DM10 000 for outstanding work on the theme 'Pathogenesis of peptic ulcer'. Scientists under 40 years of age are eligible for the prize, and work should be submitted in either German or English, accompanied by a curriculum vitae and a bibliography (five copies each). The work may have been published or accepted for publication in 1980 or 1981 or be unpublished. Applications must be received before 15 May 1981 and should be addressed to: Herrn Prof Dr W Creutzfeldt, Direktor der Medizinischen Universitätsklinik Göttingen, Humboldtallee 1, D-3400 Göttingen, West Germany.

World Congress of Gastroenterology, Digestive Endoscopy, and Colo-Rectology

16th Meeting of the European Association for the Study of the Liver
This meeting will be held in Lisbon, Portugal, on 3–5 September 1981. Closing date for abstracts is 15 May 1981. Details from Helmer Ring-Larsen, Division of Hepatology, Hvidovre Hospital, University of Copenhagen, DK-2650 Copenhagen, Denmark. Telephone: (45 1) 47 14 11.

Books
Practical Points in Gastroenterology By E D Palmer. (Pp 279. Illustrated. £9.00.) Henry Kimpton: London. 1980. This is an unusual book. It is neither a mini-encyclopaedia nor a series of lecture notes. Although it has been advertised as a gastroenterological dictionary, it is more than that, being one man's life-long experience of the specialty. Dr Palmer originally intended to write a handbook for interns and as such it is a useful work to keep in the ward office even though the drugs bear American names and SI units have yet to be introduced. There are chapters on all aspects of alimentary and liver disease including such Cinderella areas as the spleen, parasites, electrolytes, and gastrointestinal manifestations of other diseases. The test is not quite comprehensive and many will disagree with some of the author's unconventional views. However, he disarms criticism in a preface which explains that the book should be read as a companion to larger tomes and urges the student to use it as a template on which to develop his own experience. There are a number of idiosyncrasies—quaint pathological terms, eponyms, and a complete absence of references, so that the sources of his data are not disclosed. It is not really a book for undergraduates, who might be tempted to memorise details without reading elsewhere. Similarly, it might mislead some candidates for higher examinations. However, it is an excellent text for their teachers and should encourage all thinking gastroenterologists to re-examine aspects of their practice.

Hepatic Biliary and Pancreatic Surgery
Edited by John S Najarian and John P Delaney (Pp 739. Illustrated. £66.00.) Year Book Medical Publishers: London. 1980. Each spring the University of Minnesota sponsors a meeting for continuing education in surgery. This book records the proceedings of the meeting held in 1979. It opens with the Judd Memorial Lecture given by Lord Smith—'Some lessons from the history of medicine'. There follow five sections, four of which (biliary tract, spleen, pancreas, and oesophageal varices) are almost entirely surgical but the remaining section (liver) contains much of medical interest. At the end of each session there is an account of the discussions which took place at the meeting. Many of the most distinguished names in American surgery took part and references are given at the end of each contribution. There are a number of self-evaluation quizzes.

The papers are generally of a high standard and deal with most of the relevant controversial topics. The information is mostly up to date and balanced so that the references represent a good starting point for anyone wishing to read up a particular subject. It is difficult to single out individual contributions from more than 50, but the contributions on bile duct strictures (Lord Smith) sclerosing cholangitis (Dr K W Warren), unusual bile duct lesions (Dr W P Longmore), and hepatic trauma (Dr A J Wait) were among the best. The contribution on liver abscess describes 20 consecutive patients who were treated by surgical drainage and antibiotics with no deaths; most other series record a less satisfactory result and in the discussion there is no mention of what is nowadays regarded by some clinicians as a reasonable alternative—namely, needle aspiration and antibiotics.

Some of the most enjoyable and instructive parts of the book were the discussion sessions. The one moderated by Dr R M Zollinger is a model of how to cajole and extract the most from a panel of experts. The self-evaluation quizzes