

ABOUT OUR MEMBERS

Position Changes and Appointments

Editor's Note: Members wishing to announce position changes in this section should notify the Editor of *ASM News*.

Janice Webster, West Virginia University School of Medicine, Morgantown, has accepted a joint appointment as Assistant Professor in the Department of Medical Technology, School of Allied Health Professions, and the Division of Clinical Pathology, School of Medicine, Health Sciences Division, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond.

Emory Knowles, West Virginia University School of Medicine, Morgantown, has accepted an appointment as Instructor at Essex Community College in Baltimore, Md.

James C. Hill, from Naval Medical Research Institute to Infectious Disease Branch, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Bethesda, Md.

Elizabeth M. Earley, from Gulf South Research Institute, New Orleans, La., to Bureau of Biologics, FDA, Bethesda, Md. as cytogenetist.

Steven S. Witkin, from Columbia University Institute for Cancer Research, New York, to Sloan Kettering Institute for Cancer Research, New York, as associate in biochemistry.

New Emeritus Member

Scott V. Covert, 8 Woodridge Road, Delmar, N.Y. 12054.

Obituary

Louis L. Dienes (1885-1974)

When Dr. Dienes was elected to Honorary Membership in the American Society for

Microbiology, his acknowledgement read in part as follows: "I regard it as the greatest privilege that since my earliest youth I could give the larger part of my life to scientific work and studies." These words epitomize not only the simplicity and modesty of Louis Dienes, but also his love for, his dedication to, and the esteem in which he held his chosen life's work. Dr. Dienes died on 31 January 1974 at the age of 88 after a brief illness. During his sci-



Louis L. Dienes
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entific career spanning more than six decades, he had opened new avenues of research in widely different areas. In his work on tuberculin hypersensitivity and later in the field of mycoplasma and L-forms he was years ahead of his time. It is gratifying that he lived to see his work and its significance accepted throughout the scientific world.

Louis Dienes was born in Tokay, Hungary, in 1885. From his youth he possessed

the intellectual curiosity that was to characterize a lifetime of scholarly pursuits. After receiving his degree in Medicine from the University of Budapest in 1908, he was appointed to the staff of that university. His first scientific paper, published in 1909, was in biochemistry and microchemical analysis. Exposure to bacteriology came in 1913 with the opportunity to work with Neufeld and Zuntz at the Robert Koch Institute in Berlin. During World War I he served as Army Field Bacteriologist in Poland and the Ukraine, where he had first-hand experience with typhoid fever, cholera, and dysentery. His studies during the War in collaboration with Weil on the immune response to typhus fever led to the use of the Weil-Felix reaction.

When Dienes came to the United States in 1922 to the Von Ruck Research Laboratory for Tuberculosis in Asheville, North Carolina, his attention turned to the study of the immune response in tuberculosis. These classic studies were begun when immunology was in its infancy and was concerned primarily with humoral immunity. Dienes was the first to recognize that "tuberculin-type sensitivity" characterized the specific immune response in tuberculosis. His studies defined the properties of tuberculin hypersensitivity and distinguished them from the previously recognized antibody-mediated immune reactions. He was also the first to show the adjuvant effect of the tubercle bacillus, thus encouraging studies in this area by his colleague Jules Freund. Although Dienes' findings were not accepted by pathologists and other immunologists of the day, they attracted the attention of Hans Zinsser who was instrumental in bringing Dienes to the Massachusetts General Hospital in 1930. In addition to his duties as Bacteriologist, studies with Tracy B. Mallory resulted in further major contributions in the field of delayed hypersensitivity.

Dr. Dienes' work with mycoplasma and L-forms of bacteria is well known to members of the American Society for Microbiology. In 1935 he became fascinated with the observation of Emmy Klieneberger on the L₁ of *Streptobacillus moniliformis*.

Dienes' interest in the structure, morphology, and life processes of bacteria led to meticulous observations of the step-by-step processes of bacterial and L-form reproduction; these he illustrated with drawings and with superb photomicrographs taken and processed by him in his laboratory. He was able to follow the morphological sequence of the transformation of the *S. moniliformis* to the L-form, and the subsequent recovery of the bacilli from the L-form and to show that transition from bacteria to L-form seemed to occur through the formation of "large bodies." Today it seems hard to believe that over a decade elapsed before these observations were accepted. In the following years, Dienes made significant advances in the study of the biologic properties of L-forms from many other species of bacteria.

Louis Dienes was the first investigator to identify mycoplasma in human pathologic material. He was constantly improving the techniques he devised for the study of these organisms. These innovations greatly facilitated the study of mycoplasma in human disease and stimulated other investigators in the field. After his first 'retirement' as Bacteriologist in 1952, Dr. Dienes continued his investigative studies for twenty years, publishing his last paper in 1972.

The work of Louis Dienes was characterized by the highest ideals of the research scientist, in imagination, in tenacity, and in discipline. The legacy of these qualities is appreciated by his colleagues and disciples alike. As a person he had warmth, kindness, and a deep concern for others, but, withal, a keen sense of humor. In addition to his career in science Dr. Dienes had a lifetime interest in painting. The fine details of his favorite subjects, wildflowers and woodland scenes, showed his keen perception of and his reverence for the beauty of nature.

Dr. Dienes is survived by two daughters, Dr. Priscilla D. Taft of Boston, Mass., and Margaret Dienes of Stony Brook, Long Island, New York, a son, Louis J. of New York, two grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

Sarabelle Madoff