

## MEDICINE

# Gift Restores Cancer Lab

Science Service story inspired \$50,000 gift from the Ladies Auxiliary, V.F.W., for the new summer students' laboratory buildings of the Jackson laboratory.

► **CANCER** fighting all over the world will move forward at a faster pace, thanks to an event celebrated at Bar Harbor, Me., on Aug. 7.

The event was the dedication of the new summer students' laboratory buildings of the Roscoe B. Jackson Memorial Laboratory. The buildings, consisting of a laboratory where 40 students can work and learn, and dining, recreation and residence halls, have been built with a \$50,000 gift from the Ladies Auxiliary, Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Inspiration for the gift was a Science Service story in a Florida newspaper, the ST. PETERSBURG TIMES. That story reported that medical authorities expected the search for a cancer cure to be slowed for years because forest fires last fall had destroyed the Jackson Laboratory at Bar Harbor and its invaluable collection of mice specially bred for cancer research.

When Mrs. Anna Mae Shaw of St. Petersburg, a past commander of the Ladies Auxiliary, Veterans of Foreign Wars, read that Science Service story, she immediately clipped it from her newspaper and sent it to Mrs. Evelyn B. Monaco of Gallup, N. Mex. Mrs. Monaco is chairman of the organization's cancer research fellowship fund. Mrs. Monaco immediately got in touch with Dr. C. C. Little, director of the Jackson Memorial Laboratory, and the planning that followed resulted in the buildings dedicated at Bar Harbor.

The significance of these buildings lies in the fact that they make it possible for the Jackson Memorial Laboratory to carry on with its new idea in cancer fighting. This is the training of talented young men and women to become assistants to cancer researchers.

The great dearth of such trained assistants, even before the fire last fall, brought requests from cancer-fighting institutions everywhere for the Jackson Laboratory to train workers for them. The more trained assistants the research workers have, the faster they can get on with their search for better ways to stop cancer. The long-sought cure for cancer might even come from one of the young students training there now.

The need for trained assistants is so great that Dr. Little and the trustees of Jackson Memorial Laboratory considered replacement of the summer students' Laboratory buildings an emergency that had to be met and gave it first place in their reconstruction plans. The new buildings dedicated are the first unit in the reconstruction of the fire-destroyed institution.

Present for the dedication besides Mrs. Monaco were Mrs. Dorothy Mann of St. Louis, national president of the Ladies Auxiliary, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Mrs. Helen M. Murphy of Union, N. J., senior vice president of the organization, and Mayor James F. Reynolds of Everett, Mass., representing the national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. It was Mrs. Mann's idea, proposed at the last encampment of the Ladies Auxiliary, that the organization should aid cancer research.

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## ASTRONOMY

## Many Comets Whirl Around Terrifically Hot Star

► **THOUSANDS OF BILLIONS** of miles away from us is a star, tremendously hot, surrounded by a vast number of huge whirling comets. It is a so-called planetary nebula, Dr. Donald H. Menzel, Harvard astronomer, told the International Astronomical Union which met in Zurich.

This is a new picture of an astronomical object that has long puzzled astronomers. The filaments that comprise the luminous mass surrounding the central star are pictured as possessing a sharp condensed head and long streamers that extend to enormous distances.

Such nebular shells are probably much less massive than previously estimated, Dr. Menzel's calculations indicate.

Only about 100 to 150 such stars with concentric shells of luminosity are known to exist in space. These planetary nebulae are easily recognized by their gaseous spectra.

In the past, the nebula surrounding the star was believed to be as massive as the star that forms the central nucleus of the planetary nebula. The new estimate reduces its total mass by a factor of at least 100, and makes more reasonable the idea that planetary nebulae are stars that exploded thousands of years ago.

The central stars are known to be extremely hot, with temperatures ranging from about 30,000 to 150,000 degrees Centigrade. Most of their radiation is in the far ultraviolet.

Dr. Menzel reported to the meeting as yet unpublished observation by Dr. Walter Baade of Mount Wilson Observatory, who found the nebular matter in the helical nebula in Aquarius to be distributed in knots and filaments. This particular planetary nebula is the largest of them all

when seen through a telescope. Probably not more than one percent of its nebular volume is filled with matter.

Dr. Baade's observation, which fits in well with Dr. Menzel's theory, indicates that the present estimate of the abundance of hydrogen relative to oxygen is much too high. Hydrogen still proves to be very abundant, however, accounting for more than 99% of all atoms in the nebula.

Science News Letter, August 21, 1948

## Science Service Radio

► **LISTEN** in to a discussion on advances in chemistry on "Adventures in Science" over the Columbia Broadcasting System at 3:15 p.m. EDST Saturday, Aug. 28. Watson Davis, director of Science Service, will have as his guest Dr. B. D. Van Evera, general chairman of the local committee of the American Chemical Society in Washington. Dr. Van Evera will give advance information on discoveries to be reported at a national meeting of the American Chemical Society the following week, and will tell of new research in progress in government laboratories.

Science News Letter, August 21, 1948

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