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Contributors

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I

BOROUGH OF BLANDFORD FORUM

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE

YEAR.....1966

BOROUGH OF BLANDFORD FORUM

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

ChairmanCouncillor G.O. Fry

Vice-Chairman.....Councillor Lt.Col.P.E.
Salkeld.

Her Worship the Mayor.....Councillor Miss A.A.
Williams, J.P.,
(ex-officio)

Councillor Major A.N. Lane

Councillor M. Suffield

Councillor J.O.R. Tupper

Councillor A.G.H. Woodward

2.

STAFF OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

G.B. Hopkins, M.B., CH.B., B.PHARM., D.P.H.

holding appointments of:-

Senior Assistant County Medical Officer } 5/11th of time.
School Medical Officer }

Medical Officer of Health - Borough of Blandford Forum

Medical Officer of Health - Blandford Rural District

Medical Officer of Health - Wimborne Minster Urban District

Medical Officer of Health - Wimborne and Cranborne Rural District

Contributing roughly:-

Borough of Blandford Forum..... $\frac{1}{4}$ day per week

Blandford Rural District..... $\frac{1}{2}$ day per week

Wimborne Minster Urban District..... $\frac{1}{3}$ day per week

Wimborne and Cranborne Rural District..... $1\frac{1}{2}$ days per week

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR:

H.L. Birkett, M.R.S.H., M.P.H.I.A.

Dr. Noel Pearson of the North Dorset area very kindly acts as my deputy in an honorary capacity during my holidays.

Health Centre,
Rowlands Hill,
Wimborne Minster.
Dorset.

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I present my Annual Report for 1966.

The list of notifiable diseases provides the usual evidence of the vast strides in the prevention of infectious diseases made during recent decades, both by the application of scientific advances in the sphere of immunisation and by advancement in social circumstances. Measles is now the only traditionally notifiable infectious disease of note which presents in large numbers. Little use has been made of the new vaccines against measles, partly because of the mild course the disease often pursues and partly because the more effective live vaccine itself produces symptoms of very mild measles in a proportion of cases. However, measles can occasionally still be rather vicious and one feels that greater use is destined to be made of the live vaccine in the future. There is at present no intention of widespread administration through the public health service.

There was one addition to the tuberculosis register, a transfer from elsewhere in the country. Two non-pulmonary cases were removed from the register. This step is never taken lightly and follows years of careful and regular supervision, which explains the relatively large numbers on the register, very few if any being infective.

1966 was not without its smallpox scare, this time the minor form of smallpox, which though not the killer that the major form is nevertheless involves the same effort and technique to eradicate. We know that one very mild case sojourned in, and travelled though, Dorset while having the disease but not a single case of infection emerged from this. People still enjoy Mediterranean cruises, involving trips ashore in North Africa, without being vaccinated and one is bound to describe this as anti-social behaviour. A definite risk is taken, not just by themselves, but for friends, neighbours, relatives and chance contacts, because it is easily possible to be back home in England before symptoms emerge. /

Modern

Modern air travel makes it possible to return to this country within the incubation period of any known infectious disease, and from time to time air passengers are warned that they have been in contact with a suspicious case of smallpox and necessitate action through the public health services. There are currently known to the World Health Organisation only about 50,000 to 100,000 smallpox cases annually throughout the world and the World Health Organisation is now embarking on a programme of eradication to rid the world for ever of this ancient scourge. It will involve about 1,790 million vaccinations in ten years!

I was able to report last year a lung cancer death rate much lower than the national rate and it is again gratifying to report that this state of affairs has been maintained. In fact there was only one case during 1966. The national rate continues on its inexorable way upwards, and indeed 39% of all male cancer deaths in 1966 were due to lung cancer in England and Wales. It may be that we are destined to see this figure rise to 50%, a macabre but not fanciful prophocy. Recent evidence suggests that young women have quite lost the former inhibition of their sex to smoking in public and they are showing signs of smoking as much as young men. If this trend is maintained women will maintain their ascendancy over man in the incidence of cancer. It has always been higher in women but men have for many years past been trying to equalise by smoking and thereby increasing their lung cancer death rate. The facts should continue to be put before children of impressionable age, and the primary school was visited for this purpose in the autumn term, but parents can set the best example.

Reference to the statistical tables on causes of death reveals that the largest single cause was due to coronary disease, which claimed fifteen men and six women, 28% of the total deaths. The comparable national figure was 20%. At least part of this apparently higher incidence in Blandford merely reflects the higher age structure of the local population, but a national incidence of 20% of total deaths merits reflection. Man adapted himself to his environment successfully so long as his environment changed

slowly by natural phenomena but in the 20th century he has changed his environment so quickly as to have outpaced his adaptive capacities. He has substituted for the killers which he has learnt to tame, degenerative diseases which are currently winning. For example, he has learnt to transport ample quantities of highly refined foodstuffs, such as sugar and white flour with which to compose very attractive low bulk and high calory foodstuffs and at the same time to live a life of relative leisure and lack of exercise, probably responsible for the remarkable rise in the present century of diseases such as coronary artery disease, diabetes and appendicitis. The availability of animal fat in the shape of meat, cheese, eggs and butter may be a factor and much clinical and epidemiological research continues to elucidate the causation of these 20th century diseases. In the meantime, certain adverse factors stemming from 20th century affluence are well established, they are excess weight, lack of exercise and smoking, while others are inborn, such as blood pressure, amount of circulating fat in the blood, age, sex, stature and lung capacity.

Excess weight carries with it the risk of excess mortality from a variety of diseases ranging from heart disease, diabetes and peptic ulcer to surgical operations for any cause. The effect is noticeable from such apparently innocent beginnings as 10 lbs excess (easily concealed under a lounge suit and not very obvious in a bathing costume!) and becomes disastrous at 50% excess.

Lack of exercise correlates with the advance of the motor age and television has aggravated this. It can and often does reach surprising extremes, compare modern man with his ancestors several hundred years ago. He may be on his feet dressing for ten minutes, lounge at ease in a car on his way to work, sit in a chair all day, lounge at ease on his way back, and spend the evening at ease watching television, eating too much at intervals. All not in the least calculated to expand that network of small arteries, the coronary arteries, supplying his heart muscle. Even walking a few miles a day would be a great help, not that walking/
alongside

alongside modern roads is entirely free from risk and it is certainly not free from unpleasantness in the form of noise, fumes and dirt. Efforts by local authorities in recent years to identify and preserve footpaths are by definition of greater value to health than many realise and will certainly come more and more to be recognised as such. Operation Neptune helps for those near enough, but why not convert disused railway tracks into the modern equivalents of the mediaeval green lanes or drovers tracks which used to traverse the countryside?. Operation George (Beeching) Stevenson!.

Smoking has an adverse effect on mortality from numerous diseases and almost doubles the death rate from coronary disease. The rate being already a high one smoking probably claims more lives in this way than by promoting lung cancer.

All this may be unpalatable but one is moved by hard figures to say it. The fact is that man has acquired certain bad habits because he likes them, and remedying this situation is bound to be unattractive.

Having discussed the value of exercise one passes appropriately to the subject of the swimming pool, which provides another admirable form of exercise but in an environment which is even more liable to contamination than the air along our highways, indeed some of the dirt from the highways can unfortunately drift into outdoor pools to add to the wide variety of particulate matter which can accumulate in the absence of very effective filtration plant. The pool on the Marsh and Ham car park suffers from this disadvantage and it is unfortunately not possible to aim at the standards of water purity recommended by the Ministry of Health.

There follows the customary details under Sections A, B and C, and the report of the Public Health Inspector.

F. B. Hopkinson

SUMMARY OF VITAL STATISTICS

Area of Borough	253 acres
Population as estimated by Registrar General (mid-year).....	3,630
Rateable value at 1st April, 1966	£154,493
Estimated product of 1d rate on 1st April, 1966.....	£590
Estimated number of inhabited houses on 31st December, 1966.	1,265

<u>AS SUPPLIED BY THE REGISTRAR GENERAL</u>			
<u>LIVE BIRTHS</u>			
	<u>Blandford Borough</u>	<u>England & Wales</u>	<u>Adminis- trative County</u>
<u>Total Male Female</u>			
Total number registered	84	50	34
Legitimate.....	78	46	32
Illegitimate.....	6	4	2
Standardised rate.....	16.3	17.7	18
<u>DEATHS</u>			
Total number registered	75	38	37
Standardised rate.....	15	11.7	10.9

Comparability Factors

Births	1.18
Deaths	0.73

SECTION A

SECTION A

PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS AND OTHER
DISEASES

Measles 31

CULOSIS

At the end of the year the number of cases on the tuberculosis register was as follows: -

<u>Pulmonary</u>	<u>Non-Pulmonary</u>
Males.....10	Males..... 1
Females.... 6	Females..... 1

<u>Pulmonary</u>	<u>Non-Pulmonary</u>
Males.....10	Males..... 1
Females.... 6	Females..... 1

VACCINATION AND IMMUNISATION
STATISTICS

<u>Poliomyelitis</u>			<u>Diphtheria</u>		<u>Tetanus</u>		<u>Whooping Cough</u>		<u>Smallpox</u>	
<u>Salk</u>										
Res.	R.	P.	P.	R.	P.	R.	P.	R.	P.	R.
68	15	10	85	83	87	89	85	46	46	4

SECTION B

AMBULANCE FACILITIES

The Ambulance Service is provided by the Dorset County Council. Control is centralised in Dorchester and the service operates from Castleman House.

PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY

This is situated at Dorchester and provides an excellent free service for the bacteriological examination of human specimens, food, milk and water.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

The County Council provided an Infant Welfare Clinic in Blandford once a month. The Clinic accommodates this together with the School Dental Service, Speech Therapy, Audiometry, Family Planning Association, Registrar of Births and Deaths, Cervical Cytology Clinic, Home Help Organiser and other facilities.

HOME HELP SERVICE

The County Home Help Scheme provided a service in Blandford and surrounding district of well established utility and the district organiser attends the Health Clinic for messages between 9 and 9.30 a.m.

10.

SECTION CSTATISTICAL TABLES, 1966CAUSES OF DEATHMALEFEMALE

10. Malignant neoplasm, stomach	1	1
11. Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	1	-
14. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms.....	1	2
15. Leukaemia, Aleukaemia	1	1
16. Diabetes	-	1
17. Vascular lesions of nervous system	2	7
18. Coronary Disease, angina	15	6
20. Other heart disease	7	7
21. Other circulatory disease	1	4
23. Pneumonia	1	4
24. Bronchitis	4	-
25. Other diseases of respiratory system.....	-	2
28. Nephritis and nephrosis	1	-
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	1	2
34. All other accidents	1	-
35. Suicide	1	-
	38	37

REPORT OF CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTORAction taken under Acts ofParliament(a) Public Health Acts

Number of Informal Notices served	16
Number of Informal Notices complied with	12
Number of Statutory Notices served	4
Number of Statutory Notices complied with	3

(b) Housing Acts

Number of Statutory Notices served	Nil
Number of Statutory Notices complied with	Nil

(c) Number of Unfit Houses closed 4

Number of Unfit Houses demolished 3

Number of families rehoused 4

Number of persons rehoused 13

(d) Factories Acts and Regulations

Number of Informal Notices served 1

Number of Informal Notices complied with 1

Number of Formal Notices served Nil

Number of Formal Notices complied with Nil

12.

HOUSING ACT, 1957

Considerable progress has been made within the Borough during the past few years in demolishing and closing unfit houses and rehousing the families.

A survey of dwelling-houses in 1960 disclosed the fact that 60 houses in the Borough were considered unfit for human habitation. Thirty-one of these have since been officially represented to the Council and in each case Demolition or Closing Orders placed upon the properties.

The Clearance Area comprising of six dwelling-houses and outbuildings represented during 1965 was confirmed by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government and it is hoped that the buildings will soon be demolished and the site cleared.

OVERCROWDING

(a) Number of dwellings overcrowded at 31/12/66	3
Number of families therein	5
(b) Number of new cases	2
(c) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved	2
Number of persons involved	11
(d) Number of renewed cases of overcrowding	1

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTION OF AREA

Summary of Inspection and re-visits made in the course of routine work during the year 1966 by your public health inspector:-

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS

Houses	112
Other premises	95
Housing Inspections	51

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS (continued)

Infectious Diseases	0
Markets	20
Factories	10
<u>Food Inspections:-</u>	
Meat inspection	3
Cafes	21
Ice cream premises	12
Grocers	12
Butchers	18
Bakeries	3
Fried Fish	2
General	46

FOOD HYGIENE REGULATIONS

The number of food premises subject to the above Regulations are
as follows:-

14.

		Fitted with Washbasins	Premises to which Sec.19 Applies	Premises complying with Sec. 19
Bakers and confectioners	4	4	4	4
Butchers	6	6	6	6
Fishmongers	2	2	2	2
Cafes	7	7	7	7
Fried Fish	3	3	3	3
Grocers	15	15	14	14
Public Houses	12	12	12	12
Sugar confectionery	12	12	8	8

It is hoped that the Council will be able to provide the above facilities for market stall holders during the coming year.

ICE CREAM

Eight samples were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for bacteriological examination, the results of which were as follows:

Grade 1 - 7
Grade 2 - 1

MEAT INSPECTION

The only privately owned slaughter house closed during the year 1962.

FOOD INSPECTION

The following foodstuffs were examined and found to be unfit for human consumption:

Canned cooked meats 72 lbs.

Canned fruit 40 lbs.

Meat 10 lbs.

NOISE ABATEMENT ACT

Several complaints were received in 1966 concerning "noise" nuisances.

A number of residents in the vicinity of a Public House complained of excessive noise from "Beat Group" sessions held in an adjacent outbuilding during the evenings from 8.00 p.m. to 11.30 p.m.

The licensee endeavoured to sound-proof the building, but this proved ineffective and following representations from the Council the dances have now ceased.

CLEAN AIR ACT

No action necessary.

PUBLIC SWIMMING BATHS

Ten samples of water obtained from the Swimming Baths were submitted for bacteriological examination and all were reported as satisfactory.

WATER SUPPLY

All premises within the Borough are provided with mains water supplied by the Poole and East Dorset Water Board who carry out regular chemical and bacteriological tests.

16.

The supply has always been found to be very satisfactory in quality and quantity.

There are only two dwelling houses within the Borough not provided with an internal water supply.

SEWAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

All houses with the exception of three are connected with the main sewage system.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES

There are no common lodging houses within the Borough.

REFUSE DISPOSAL

The dumping and burning of refuse on the outskirts of the town gives rise to frequent complaints. Negotiations are still proceeding with the Rural District Council for a joint refuse tip and it is hoped that a properly controlled tip will be in use within the next twelve months.

PIGEONS

A number of complaints were received during the year regarding the damage caused by the large numbers of pigeons on buildings in the centre of the town.

The Pests Officer has endeavoured to reduce the numbers by traps on some buildings, but has only met with somewhat limited success.

RODENT CONTROL

Total number of visits made by Rodent Officer	160
Number of premises surveyed on notification	120
Number of premises surveyed under Act	140
Number of premises found to be infested with rats	21
Number of premises found to be infested with mice	13
Number of premises found to be infested with rats and mice	NIL

A large number of complaints were received from the public of wasps nests and ant infestations. All of these were effectively dealt with by the Pests Officer.

FACTORIES ACT, 1961Part 1 of the Act

1 - INSPECTIONS

<u>PREMISES</u> 1	<u>Number</u> <u>on</u> <u>REGISTER</u> 2	<u>Number of</u>		
		<u>Inspections</u> 3	<u>Written</u> <u>Notices</u> 4	<u>Occupiers</u> <u>Prosecuted</u> 5
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	52	11	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	5	4	-	-
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	-	-	-	-
Total	57	15	-	-

18.

FACTORIES ACT, 1961

Part 1 of the Act (continued)

2 - Cases in which DEFECTS were found

<u>PARTICULARS</u>	<u>Number of cases in which defects were found</u>		<u>Number of cases in which prosec- tions were instituted</u>		
	<u>Found</u>	<u>Remedied</u>	<u>Referred</u>		
			To H.M.Insp.	By H.M.Insp.	
1	2	3	4	5	6
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	-	-	-	-	-
Overcrowding (S.2)	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable tempera- ture (S.3)	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	-	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	1	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Out-work)	-	-	-	-	-
Total	1	1	-	-	-

Part VIII of the ActOutwork
(Sections 133 & 134)

<u>Nature of Work</u>	<u>No. on List</u>
Wearing apparel) Making etc., Cleaning) and Washing	13
Curtains and furniture hangings	2
Total	15

There were no cases of default in sending lists to the Council, no prosecutions for failure to supply lists, no instances of work in unwholesome premises, no notices served and no prosecutions.

