An article on ‘The contribution of Henry Maudsley to the Institute of Psychiatry’ by Dr Rosen will appear in a forthcoming issue of the *Psychiatric Bulletin*.

The bust of Henry Maudsley was presented to the College by the sculptor, Dr Ismond Rosen, and by Mr Colin Lynn, Chairman of Lundbeck Pharmaceuticals, at the October Quarterly Meeting. The cost of casting the bronze was generously paid by Lundbeck.

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**Obituary**

Editor: Henry R. Rollin

**Karel Bobath, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, Bobath Centre for Handicapped Children, London**

The treatment of disabled people has been transformed by a number of active, enabling methods of which neurodevelopmental therapy, also known as the Bobath approach, is one of the best known. It was developed by Karel Bobath’s wife, Berta, a talented gymnast, sculptress and acute observer of posture movement and tone. Both were pre-war Jewish refugees from Nazism, born in Berlin but working in London for 50 years. They founded the Bobath Centre in 1951 and the Bobath Foundation in 1985. Berta was appointed MBE in 1978 but both were recipients of many international awards.

Karel Bobath had an early training in orthopaedic surgery in Germany but in Britain he worked as a psychiatrist for people with mental handicap in Hertfordshire. He was also a teacher and author. Berta found Karel willing to investigate the classical neurophysiology literature to explain phenomena she demonstrated in her work. These included inhibition of spasticity by postural adjustment and facilitation of active movement using key...
points of control such as head posture and movement. She appreciated that development in childhood was not simply attainment of a series of milestones but the simultaneous acquisition of diverse skills within a wide age range. Thorough knowledge of the work of Magnus, Scaltenbrand, Sherrington and others was shared with Berta and her students, but such static physiology could not account for her success. He had no opportunity to carry out original neurophysiological research and it is only recently that this has been linked to the work of the Bobath Centre by Dr Bobath’s successor, Andrew Evans. Part of Berta’s genius was to appreciate the psychological dimension of disability and to seduce disabled people into achievement by mechanisms too subtle for the laboratory. She understood why people move as much as he understood how.

The three main achievements of Karel’s career were as wholehearted support for a creative wife, his commitment to multidisciplinary training for the treatment of disabled people and his internationalism.

The first of these was uncommon in post-war Britain. For a doctor’s wife to be working full time was unusual. That she should be a leader professionally was exceptional.

Postgraduate education in the care of disabled people, especially for therapists, has always been scarce and the Bobath Centre has been the major source of this in Britain for 40 years. Karel supported his warm personal teaching style by such books as 'The Neuro-Developmental Treatment' in David Scratchon’s Management of the Motor Disorders of Cerebral Palsy (1984) when he was 85, as well as his commitment to internationalism.

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In keeping with the practice adopted by an increasing number of journals, it has been decided to drop the anonymity of our obituarists. From now on all obituaries will be signed in full.

However, the compilation of an obituary is an arduous and painstaking task, and as a mark of our appreciation of the help given to us over the past few years a list putting names to the initials is given below.

It occasionally happened, and will continue to happen, that an obituarist cannot be found and an obituary has been compiled by a member of staff. These have been unsigned and will continue so to be.