

## Reports from National Societies

**August 2007**

*I have altered some of these reports slightly and apologise for any inadvertent alterations to the meaning.  
H.C.S.*

### **1. Report from the Balint Society of Australia**

Our membership has grown to 57 members.

We held our first Balint Leadership Workshop in Hobart, Tasmania from May 31-June 3 with faculty consisting of three guest leaders from the American Balint Society: Clive Brock, Frank Dornfest and Lisa Buck, and Australian leaders (Marion Lustig, Laurie Lovell-Symons and Leonie Sullivan) and Penny Love (workshop co-ordinator). 34 people attended from many parts of Australia. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive.

We have had a number of meetings and workshops:

Brisbane meeting for registrars;

Brisbane workshop for a GP group - the Australian College of Psychological Medicine;

Sydney meeting;

Perth meeting.

These events have involved both Australian and visiting American leaders.

At our AGM in July, Marion Lustig stepped down after convening a Balint interest group for 4 years and then serving for 2 years as the inaugural President. John Barton is our new President and Bill Betts our new Vice-President.

Our current plans include: a subcommittee to consider leadership, accreditation and training; a Balint weekend for medical educators; a Balint weekend in Perth in October, 2007; another Balint Leadership Workshop in 2008; a presentation at the World Psychiatric Congress in Melbourne later this year; a presentation at Ozzawa, a medical educators' conference in Melbourne in 2008.

Two of us are working to compile a comprehensive data base of Balint literature in English. If anyone has any reference lists, we would appreciate your sharing them with us (contact [mlustig@optusnet.com.au](mailto:mlustig@optusnet.com.au))

As always, we would love to hear from any Balint people who are visiting Australia.

**Marion Lustig**

**Immediate Past President**

[mlustig@optusnet.com.au](mailto:mlustig@optusnet.com.au)

### **2. Report from the Belgian Balint Society**

We had very bad news: on March 28th, 2007, we regretted the death of Jean-Georges Roman who was 54-years old, after a long illness. He occupied numerous functions within the SBB Belgian Balint Society, among others he was a founder in 1986, the first chief editor of the review and president. He had been a Balint leader for many years, etc...

In these 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters 2007, the SBB was especially occupied by:

1. The retirement of 2 experienced Balint leaders, Jean Gillis and Roger Van Laethem. We were concerned to assure the continuance of their groups in Brussels and fortunately have been

successful, thanks to the enthusiasm of new leaders and to the dynamic work of the committee for training leaders.

2. The recruitment and the training of future leaders stemming from Balint groups. Two begin in September, which will enable them to lead groups in 2 years or more.
3. The preparation of the annual Big Day which will take place on November 10th on the subject « Suffering in Work ». It requires a lot of energy on behalf of all the administrators.
4. The work of publishing of the biannual Balint review, each edition centred on a particular subject. After « *Sufferings of the Soul – Les souffrances de l'âme* », « Looking beyond figures – soigner au-delà des chiffres », the September edition will be entitled: « The masculine and feminine in relation to care – Masculin et féminin dans la relation de soins ».
5. The fifth annual Balint-training day, always well appreciated, « *Balint Spring – Les Printemps Balint* » will take place March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2008

**J Fléchet**      **M. Delbrouck**  
**President**      **Past President**

#### ***French version:***

Une très mauvaise nouvelle : le 28 mars 2007, nous avons déploré le décès de Jean-Georges Romain, âgé de 54 ans, à l'issue d'une longue maladie. Il a occupé de nombreuses fonctions au sein de la SBB, entre autres : fondateur en 1986 et premier rédacteur en chef de la revue, président, animateur d'un groupe pendant de nombreuses années, etc ..

Au rayon des activités, en ces 2<sup>e</sup> et 3<sup>e</sup> trimestres 2007, la SBB a été occupée surtout par :

1. La succession de 2 animateurs chevronnés, Jean Gillis et Roger Van Laethem, arrivés en fin de carrière. Nous avons eu le souci d'assurer la continuité de leurs groupes à Bruxelles et cela est en train d'être réussi grâce à l'enthousiasme de nouveaux animateurs et au travail dynamique de la commission de formation des animateurs.
2. Le recrutement et la formation de futurs animateurs issus des groupes Balint. Deux d'entre eux entament cette formation en septembre, ce qui pourra les amener à animer un groupe dans 2 ans ou plus.
3. La préparation de la Grande Journée annuelle, qui aura lieu le 10 novembre sur le thème « La souffrance au travail ». Cela demande beaucoup d'énergie de la part de tous les administrateurs.
4. Le travail d'édition de la revue, semestrielle, axée chaque fois sur un thème particulier. Après « Les souffrances de l'âme », « Soigner au-delà des chiffres », le numéro qui paraîtra en septembre s'intitule : « Masculin et féminin dans la relation de soins ».
5. La cinquième édition de notre journée annuelle de formation, toujours bien appréciée, « *Les Printemps Balint* » aura lieu le 22 mars 2008

**J Fléchet and M. Delbrouck**

### **3. Report from The Danish Balint Society**

Since our last report from March 2007, one electronic newsletter has been published. We are planning a 2½ days seminar in September, organised by Tove Mathiesen and Erik Pedersen. In November we look forward joining an event arranged by the Swedish society. Our society have planned next seminar in January 2008 with Lars Thorgaard, who will give a lecture about relation therapy and empathy in general practice.

**Helena Nielsen**  
**President**

### **4. Report from the Finnish Balint Society**

The Finnish Balint Society is organizing a weekend seminar in October 2007.

It is also organizing a half day seminar in January 2008 during the Finnish Medical Convention. The title is: "Chaos in consulting room - the survival kit."

Our book has been selling quite well.

**Kristiina Toivola**

**President**

## 5. Report from the French society ; (Société Médicale Balint)

### I REGULAR ACTIVITIES :

As usual, we will have our national day for the leaders ( *Confrontations des pratiques*) on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May , in Paris on the theme: "**acting out in the groups**".

Our last national congress in Lille ( 6, 7 et 8 October) was interesting but we had a very big disappointment with the lack of students while for the first time we got a lot of money to subscribe their inscription

As usual, we are ready to welcome you at our next congress, in Le Havre on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2008 on the theme "**Le secret et l'intime**" ( *sorry: I don't find the word in English, because the name even doesn't exist in french!-only the adjective*)

### II NEW THINGS

A new workshop: Leaders'workshop directed by Roger Lageux, psychologist psychoanalyst who has already asked you for questions about **training for leaders**. He thanks you again.

The **Balint seminars**, which are paid for by the GP and now specialists, are going on well. We have now several seminars (Paris, Strasbourg, Thionville, St Briec and Nice- new-) and several themes (depression, addiction). Balint groups are obviously included during two days, and some theoretical papers are also given between the groups. These seminars are very new, is this actual Balint work? Some of the French leaders seem to be troubled and dare not participate. It makes everybody a little sad we cannot find a "consensus".

So we have created a **new "reflexion group"** ( for leaders only) about how to participate or not in the new seminars of continuing education

Some groups are also set for **students** (Necker, Bichat...) but we know this is not enough and we have to develop that a little more.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST: the " Société Médicale Balint" has been **accredited** by the national "Medical Continuing Formation" organisation, that means that those who participate in a Balint group can gain points for compulsory continuing education.

### III FUTURE WITH YOU

the first "e-International Balint Journal"= e-IBJn°1 March 06 is now on our international web-site (and in France on our French web-site Only one issue has been made. Idem a number 2= e-IBF n°2 march 07. André Matalon is the " secretary" and read it again to check the English! And then Henry put it on the web. Thanks to them both

A new page on our international web:" New books, new articles". Send to Marie-Anne Puel all you can read on or about Balint in your country: we will put it on the web. Henry checks it.

**We do hope you will be very numerous in Paris, for the Wonca (17-21 October 2007) . Everyone who wants to participate has to ask Marie-Anne Puel for the program ( [mapuel@wanadoo.fr](mailto:mapuel@wanadoo.fr)). Two workshops can be managed: Heide Otten will manage the first and Helena Nielsen will manage another one. One is missing. Balint groups will be lead by John Salinsky and Heide Otten and two French leaders ( Marie-Anne Puel et Louis Velluet ?) . The details have been already sent to the officers of the IBF**

*See below:*

**PROJET WONCA PARIS N°6 (20 août 2007)**

**1. LES GROUPES BALINT (15 personnes max)**

*tout au long de la durée de la Wonca:*

- un groupe Balint en français tous les jours 17h30
- un groupe Balint en anglais tous les jours 17h30
- un groupe en VO (choix des participants) tous les jours 17h30

*Les leaders pressentis pour animer les groupes Balint sont : John Salinsky (GB), Heide Otten (Germany), Helena Nielsen (Denmark), (Ingrid Wermelin de Lange (Suède) can't finally come), Marie-Anne Puel(France), Louis Velluet (France).*

*Autrement dit : 3 petites salles (15 personnes) les jeudi 18, vendredi 19 et samedi 20*

**LES GROUPES BALINT DOIVENT ETRE MENTIONNES DANS LE PROGRAMME**

**2. LES ATELIERS (salle de 120 personnes)**

<i>jeudi 18 octobre</i>	<i>workshop 14h-15h30</i>	<i>Danemark ( Helena Nielsen)</i>
<i>vendredi 19</i>	<i>workshop 14h-15h30</i>	<i>Germany ( Heide Otten)</i>

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**6. Report from the German Balint Society:**

We were happy and proud to be the host of the International Delegates Conference in Potsdam-Griebnitzsee in March 07.

The following weekend we had a workshop in Dresden. There were three small groups, a leaders' training group and Supervision for Balintleaders.

In April Heide Otten and Werner König were in Lindau for the 57<sup>th</sup> Psychotherapy weeks to represent Balintwork, where Michael Balint had been in the 50ies to introduce his ideas in Germany.

In Aachen we ran a weekend workshop in May with the topic "Adolescence". We had 5 lectures and one special Balintgroup focusing on the "doctor-adolescent patient- relationship" besides two leaders' training groups and "classical" Balintwork.

Two weeks later E. R. Petzold gave the opening speech at the "Maymeeting" for the Student Anamnesis Groups ("Prebalintgroups") in Aachen.

Stephan Alder and Heide were invited for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Psychosomatic Congress in St. Petersburg to speak about Balintwork and to contact the local Balint people.

At the end of June we had a leaders' intensive in Celle to discuss the future of Balintwork in Germany. The participants worked on a structured questionnaire asking for: 1. strength, 2. weaknesses, 3, opportunities, 4. threats to Balintwork and the organization.

We got some interesting answers: the international contacts, the fact that Bw is part of postgraduate training and the independency from sponsoring were seen as strength. The lack of young members in the Society and of political influence was stressed as weakness. Opportunities like going more into the Universities, working closer together with other medical Societies, making a better

publicity (“do good and talk about it...” in TV etc., updating the homepage). As threats were mentioned: lack of money, lack of time, workload, lack of interest at the Universities.

**Heide Otten**  
Secretary

**E. R. Petzold**  
President

Wienhausen/ Kusterdingen, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007

### **7. Report from the Israeli Balint Society**

The Israeli Balint Society has about 45 paying members.

There have been the usual 3 meetings. 2 were for leaders and aspiring leaders, in November 2006 and spring 2007. Another meeting in March 2007 developed a “contract” (general rules and aims) for new Balint groups, this was attended by 30-35 participants.

In June 2007 there was a national Balint Conference to which all physicians and therapists are welcomed, in order to “taste the Balint flavour”. There have previously been 70 participants at this conference, but this year there were only 50.

During the year we have developed regular supervision sessions for Balint leaders. These take place every 2 months and are supervised by Benyamin Maoz.

There are now 25 Balint groups in Israel, including groups for Residents in Family Medicine. It is difficult to interest colleagues who are not Family Physicians, although there are a number of psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers.

In the future, we hope to have more guests from other countries at our conferences and we will try to “penetrate” into the psychiatric profession in Israel.

**Benyamin Maoz**  
Honorary President.

### **8. Report of the Polish Balint Society**

*The Polish Balint Society was founded in 1993.*

#### **Main events in 2006/2007:**

Signing of the Agreement on mutual recognition on qualifications exclusivity between Polish Balint Society and Polish Psychiatric Association and Psychotherapeutic Association.

Implementation of Balint training in the official curriculum of psychiatric specialization and psychotherapeutic specialization.

Incorporation of Balint courses to be supported financially by state medical training programmes of family medicine, psychiatry and psychotherapy.

Organization of two Balint courses for physicians and seven courses for other medical professionals and social workers.

Initiation of the editing process of the Polish handbook on Balint method.

Organization of two national Balint symposiums by the Polish Balint Society and Psychosomatic Institute. 20-21.06.2006 , Warsaw: *Balint groups as a method for prevention of “burn out” by medical staff.*, 31.03 – 1.04.2007, Warsaw: Symposium of PBS and CMKP  
Next symposium is going to be organized in Cracow on 25-27.10.2007, and is focused on health promotion.

**Bohdan Wasilewski**  
President

### **9. Report from the Romanian Balint Society.**

I participated at the meeting in Potsdam between 23-25 March, where my request concerning the organizing of the IBF Congress in 2009 in Romania was accepted.

Within the frame of the National Psychiatric Conference held in Temeswar between 20-22 April we also held a Balint section, and performed group work.

Between 18-20 May in Aknasugatag, in Maramures county, we had the Summer Balintian Weekend with 48 participants.

Between 6-8 July, in Moldavia, (part of Romania) in the town of Barlad we held an inter-county Balintian Weekend meeting with 55 participants. We re-vitalized their Balint group, which had not been working for two years. Five new members came in, one of which had been fired before for not paying the fee and being inactive.

The local groups gather once or twice each month.

**Albert Veress**  
**President**

### **10. Report from the Swedish Balint Society**

Since March 2007 the new specific Balint-oriented activities of the Board of the Swedish Society consisted of:

Planning for two accepted seminars at the annual meeting of the Swedish Society of Medicine Nov 30. The seminar "The emotions of the doctor – asset or burden in the professional life of the doctor?" will deal with this issue from a Balint group perspective. The panel contributions will be made by Juanita Forssell, Henry Jablonski, Bengt Hamark (board member and gynaecologist) and Jan Björk (gastroenterologist at the Karolinska Hospital). It will be chaired by Lotti Helström, former President of the Swedish Balint Society. This seminar has been given the top status of National Symposium. The second seminar on "Doctors and writing" is based on the biannual writing competition that our society is arranging and will be lead and chaired by Lena Svidén. The panel will consist of two GPs, one psychiatrist and teacher at the Karolinska Medical School and one professor of otolaryngology who won the competition. This meeting will attract about 10000 doctors and medical students. We expect a large audience.

At our suggestion John Salinsky has been invited by the Society of Medicine to give a Guest Lecture in connection with these seminars. The competition between the specialities for Guest Lectures is quite fierce, so we are very pleased that the Society of Medicine recognises the importance of Balint work and the humanistic approach to our profession.

Planning for future national work-shops and seminars, first scheduled for Dec 1, 2007

Encouraging members and recruiting new Balint interested professionals to participate in international Balint meetings.

We are pleased that five Swedish papers have been submitted and accepted for the Lissabon Congress

A new training course is planned for Balint leaders at the Institution of General Practice, Huddinge (Anita Häggmark)

Participating at the IBF council meeting in Potsdam March 2007 (Henry Jablonski) under the most friendly and generous auspices of the German Balint Society.

Among other activities of the Society should be mentioned:

We previously reported on a seminar in February this year in cooperation with gynaecologists and a journalist on the cultural and the doctor-patient complexities in treating women who have been subjected to "Female circumcision" - ritual mutilation of the female sexual organ. Also this theme has been accepted as a National Symposium to the Annual Meeting. It will be lead – naturally enough - by the section of gynaecology of the Swedish Society of Medicine together with our section as co-organiser.

Looking forward to Lisbon!

**Henry Jablonski**

**President**

### **11. Report from the Balint Society (UK)**

The year began as usual in Oxford, from 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> September 2006.

The weekend began with the society's newest departure. Friday was a day devoted to group leadership training. 16 participants were divided into two groups, led by Andrew Elder and John Salinsky. The model was of switching leaders each session, with half each session devoted to the discussion of the group itself and the leadership. This exhausted the participants who then continued that evening with the regular Balint weekend, with 32 attendees divided into 3 groups over the weekend. The AGM of the Society followed at 12 on Sunday, at which 9 new members were admitted and Dr Jane Dammers was elected to Council. It is the last year of Dr Lenka Speight's tenure as president.

Group leader training continued through the year at the Balint Group Leaders' workshop at the Tavistock Clinic. This met three times and groups described included Don Bryant's tribulations with clergy groups in Kent and David Watt and Paul Julian's new groups at Newham University Hospital for FY2 doctors. Because the Friday followed by the Oxford weekend had been so tiring, we had a full weekend group leaders intensive in Whalley Abbey, Lancashire from June 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> 2007, organised by Dr Caroline Palmer and led by Andrew Elder. 12 leaders or potential leaders attended, each leading the group at different sessions.

There was also another Balint weekend in 2007 in Morpeth, north of Newcastle, organised by Jane Dammers and her colleagues. It took place from 20-22 April and drew more than 30 people, many from the local area (but one or two from far away, including Michelle Moreau-Ricaud from Paris) which has a very vibrant Balint community. We hope that this may also become a yearly event.

The Balint Society Lectures Series had five lecture/seminars at the RCGP in London, most of which are published in the Journal. Attendance varied, from 6 to more than 50 at the 17th Balint Memorial Lecture, which included a customary reception, and tries to bring more people in from outside the Society. Council have discussed recently trying to advertise the whole series more widely to interested organisations with which we have contacts.

The official functions of the year ended with the Annual dinner at the Royal Society of Medicine on June 26<sup>th</sup>, attended by 26 members and friends. Pat Tate gave a wonderful after dinner speech, printed here in the journal, on being good enough as a doctor.

The Council is looking forward to the International Federation meeting in Lisbon September 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> and to the Oxford weekend 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> September.

**D Watt**

**Secretary**

### **12. Report from the American Balint Society:**

Dear Friends in the International Balint Federation,

Greetings from the American Balint Society! Our activities since our report in March have largely consisted of planning at our Council level. In May our Council was hosted for our annual meeting in Portland, Oregon. Our new Council members were welcomed, and we bid a sad farewell to departing members.

Our membership stands currently at about 170. We continue to push ourselves to envision new ways to make Balint methods relevant to our peers, and to reach out to new groups. We spent considerable time at our annual meeting considering these issues, with several initiatives emerging

from that to expand our outreach and further increase value to our members. As a part of the latter, we are planning a bi-annual newsletter, with the first issue to emerge in the Fall. Additionally we have pushed further into the information age with a fully internet capable member database, permitting our officers to store member data securely over the internet.

This Fall, Jeffrey Sternlieb will again host a **Leadership Training Intensive in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania**. Bethlehem is easily reached via Philadelphia or Newark airports for international attendees, and I highly recommend it for your consideration. I was able to participate in last year's event and it was sensational. Dates are **November 1-4, 2007**. You can find more information, and even register online via our website: <http://americanbalintsociety.org> Jeff is also available to answer your inquiries via e-mail at [Jeffrey.Sternlieb@lvh.com](mailto:Jeffrey.Sternlieb@lvh.com). Our Spring Intensive will be in Seattle, Washington, April 3-6, 2008. I will forward more information via Heather when it is available.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Lisbon next month. Until then, best wishes from myself and your colleagues in the American Balint Society.

**Donald E. Nease, Jr., MD**  
**President**

August 14, 2007

**Formal reports have *not* been received from the Societies of the following countries:**

**Croatia**  
**Hungary**  
**Italy**  
**Netherlands**  
**Portugal**  
**Russia**  
**Serbia and Montenegro**  
**Switzerland and**  
**The Association Internationale du psychodrame**

HCS 28-Aug-07