

**LETTERS FROM FRIENDS
AND COLLEAGUES**

**From the International Symposium
Honoring the Career and Research of
Henry Blackburn, MD**

**“Primordial Prevention of
Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factors:
Visioning the Future”**

May 2-3, 1996

April 15, 1996

~~HB~~
Done

Dr. Russell V. Luepker, MD
Professor and Head
University of Minnesota
Twin Citites Campus
Division of Epidemiology
School of Public Health
Suite 300
1300 South Second Street
Minneapolis, MN 55454-1015

Dear Dr. Luepker,

This letter is in response to and to thank you for the invitation to share in the recognition and celebration of Professor Henry Blackburn's retirement.

Henry is a wonderful person and a dear friend, and I feel honored that he chose to mention me to his colleagues. He has shared some important and helpful information with my family and myself, and we have also read some of his works on cardiovascular disease, but is hardly enough to know in the brief visits during his time home in Florida.

I deeply regret that I will not be able to attend this honorable occasion, but again, I do thank you for the invitation.

Sincerely,

Thelma G. Smith

W. McFate Smith, M.D.
43 Second Street East
Sonoma, California 95476

NF (folded)
KR

April 23, 1996

Henry:

Regretfully neither Jackie nor I will be able to be there for your "recognition, reception and banquet". I've been trying to rearrange my schedule for next week to permit stopping by enroute back to San Francisco from PA/NJ where I'm drumming up business for SRI. Unfortunately even cutting a day off my work schedule in PA/NJ wouldn't get me there in time for the festivities, to say nothing of the symposium. So please understand and accept our heartfelt congratulations on your richly deserved honor.

I don't have to tell you how much your friendship means to us, nor how much we admire and respect your professional contributions as well. The symposium is a fitting recognition and accolade for your seminal ideas, which I see imbedded throughout the program, and clearly evident to all who know you and are aware of what's been driving you these past few decades.

Hopefully the Parsons will prevail in their plan to celebrate 20 years at Granlibakken by the Epi Seminar and we will see you and Stacey there. Until then, congratulations and our very best wishes for a healthy retirement.

Sincere regards,

Mack & Jackie

DR. MED. EDUARD LEUTHOLD

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1996

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April 17,

8032 Zürich,

Prof. Henry Blackburn MD
1525 Kaltern Lane
Minneapolis,
MN 55416
USA

Dear Henry,

Thank you very much for having sent an invitation to attend the Symposium which will be held in your honor on May 2-3.

As you see from the enclosed copy of my answer to professor Luebke I will not be able to come to Minneapolis.

I want to congratulate you to your achievement as you have climbed high in medical career. I am sending you with separate mail a panoramic view of an other summit.

For your retirement I send you my best wishes. May you be allowed to enjoy fully your retreat in the wilderness of Florida and spend much time making music. Come back to see us in Switzerland

With best regards to you and all the old friends from the lab.

yours

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February 13, 1996

Russell V. Luepker, MD
University of Minnesota
Twin Cities Campus
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Suite 300
1300 South Second Street
Minneapolis, MN 55454-1015

Dear Dr. Luepker:

Thank you for your letter of February 8 concerning the symposium in honor of Dr. Blackburn.

He has been my good friend, client and confidant over many years.

He is certainly one of a very few personal heroes of mine. I do not find it possible to attend the symposium but I will attend the reception and banquet.

Thank you for sending the invitation to me.

Sincerely,



Thomas A. Keller III

TAK/ckp

cc HIB x
sent to CME

84060 Pioppi SA
Italy
April 9, 1996

Professor Russell V. Luepker, M.D.
University of Minnesota
Division of Epidemiology
Suite 300
1300 South Second Street
Minneapolis, MN 55454-1015
U S A

Symp. letter
cc HB

Dear Professor Luepker,

Thank you for your letter of February 9, and for the kind invitation to the symposium honoring Henry Blackburn May 2-3. I highly esteem Henry as a friend, magnificent collaborator, great epidemiologist. I very much regret that I shall not be able to accept your invitation. I trust that the gathering will be a pleasant milestone in Henry's unique career of achievements.

Sincerely yours,

Martti J. Karvonen

Martti J. Karvonen, M.D., Ph.D.

Zita Hawley Wright

4/17/96

HR

Dear Henry,

I wish my entire family could be with you for the Symposium on Primordial Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factors visioning the future to honor you....

I feel privileged we have been a part of your many accomplishments in this field. What comes to mind immediately...the Henry Blackburn, MD.. "Hearty Heart" 10 year study and the discovery of the simple Greek diet as the most healthy.

I hope we can view pictures or a video of all that goes on at the symposium and the banquet. What a wonderful tribute to you.

We will see you and Stacy this summer in Wayzata.

Three Cheers,

Zita

We will be out of town

Zita Hawley Wright

CC HB, RR, CP
Done

4/17/96

Dear Dr. Luepker,

Thank you for the wonderful invitation to the symposium on Primordial Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease and banquet to honor Dr. Henry Blackburn.

I wish we could attend the symposium, but will be out of town.

I am thrilled for Henry to have this symposium in his honor with all the cardiovascular work he has accomplished...the 10 year study of the "Hearty Heart" program comes to mind and the findings of excellent health in the Greek diet.

We all feel privileged to have been a part of this. Best wishes to Cheryl Perry on the health promotion effort in New Delhi.

Three cheers to all of you for the Symposium.

Zita Hawley Wright

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26 April, 1996

Professor Henry Blackburn
1525 Kaltern Lane
Minneapolis, MN 55416
Fax +1-612-377 0304

Henry, my dear friend!

Letters to close friends should be written by hand and not using a word processor. I trust, however that you forgive me that I use this instrument of the modern world.

For the first, warm thanks for your fax of 14 March and for sending to me your touching words in memory of our joint friend, Fred Epstein. No one else could have expressed better, what Fred had been to his closest friends and colleagues in science. My experience about long lasting friendship with Fred was very similar to yours.

But coming to the main issue, I am saddened about being unable due to illness to come to Minneapolis next week and to participate in the Symposium and celebrations arranged in your honour. I was, however, glad to hear that Erkki Vartiainen who was my undergraduate student here at the University of Kuopio will be able to come to the Symposium and present experiences from Finland and to bring to you the greetings from your Finnish friends.

The beginning of our friendship goes back to 1960s and we have experienced together many important developments in our joint fields of research on cardiovascular disease and action to their prevention. Your work and your person have had much influence on my own development as a scientist and human being. Thank you, Henry, for what you have been to me.

It is good to hear that you are well and that your life is good. I am glad to hear that you will continue your writing with Stacy's support. Your memoirs on Seven Countries Study are wonderful and I, as well your many other friends, are waiting eagerly for your next set of memoirs on other aspects of your rich experience in medicine, science and other fields of life.

Yesterday was my 66th birthday and I entertained myself by

reading your thoughts about "a certain age" and came to the conclusion that I have to accept that I have reached the age, when "one needs to do mainly what one loves to do rather than mainly what others want him to do". Although I retired from my university and hospital positions three years ago, I have still been too busy. From now onwards I have to use more firmly the word "no", when people ask me to do something, what I do not particularly love to do. I have continued to be involved with some areas of research, but that contribution can now diminish, when other younger people have matured and are able to take care of the continuation of the work. I may take some part in those long-term research projects, such as MONICA project and the long-term follow-up of the Helsinki Policemen Study etc, but I will no more take any major responsibilities on them. I may also have to stop accepting invitations to speak at scientific meetings. The time has come for other people to do that.

My recent health problems, the recurrence of symptoms of small bowel obstruction, have not yet become completely resolved. I feel better now in the sense that the pains provoked by eating have become less severe, but this time they have not disappeared within a few weeks like earlier. My surgeon colleagues have, however, encouraged me and told that the pains still can become milder or disappear with longer time. Thus, I will try to keep an optimistic mood and to be happy with even small progress.

Henry, I am in my thoughts present at your celebrations.

Ritva joins me in sending to you and Stacy warm regards.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Ritva', written in a cursive style.



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Professor Russell V Luepker,
Division of Epidemiology,
Suite 300,
1300 South Second Street,
Minneapolis, MN 55454-1015,
USA.

3 April 1996

TO KR

Dear Professor Luepker,

Thank you very much for your kind invitation to attend the symposium in honour of Henry Blackburn on May 2-3, 1996. I deeply regret that I cannot be with you on that occasion, as I have longstanding commitments around those dates that make it impossible. I would, however, ask you to add my tribute to the other international observations that are being made on that occasion.

I first met Henry when I was beginning work in the nomadic tribes of East Africa at the start of the 1960s and in 1961 I visited Ancel Keys and Henry in their department when they were in the throes of preparing for a study in Greece. That they were able to talk to and enthuse an ill-informed beginner in the "Great Game" gave me tremendous support and their work continued to excite and inspire me thereafter. When I initiated the British Regional Heart Study in Great Britain in the late 1970s, a study of some 8,000 middle-aged men in 24 British towns, it was the

Seven Countries Study and the rigorous standardisation of that study that provided the model and laid the foundation for what has now been 18 years of fruitful endeavour. Whenever there were problems, it was to the work of Henry Blackburn that one could turn to find a solution and I will always be grateful for his gentle encouragement and friendship.

I join with a worldwide company of epidemiologists who have gained immensely from their relationships with Henry to wish him well in "retirement" and to thank him for his sowing of seeds far wider than he could ever have imagined.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gerry Shaper". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a solid horizontal line.

Gerry Shaper

Emeritus Professor of Clinical Epidemiology,
University of London.

1-26-96

Dr. Henry Blackburn, Mayo Professor
Division of Epidemiology
Suite 300
1300 South Second Street
Minneapolis, MN 55454-1015

Dear Henry:

Congratulations! I deeply regret that I will not be there to join with your many other friends and admirers to help give you the proper send off into retirement. I hope that they are flying in the Preservation Hall Band so the music will be appropriate.

I've always been sorry that our relationship got off to a somewhat difficult start, due largely to my inexperience at the "deaning" business. However, I hope you do know how much I admired and appreciated the many contributions you made to the growth of the School, to its reputation, and to the field of public health, generally. The many, prestigious well-deserved awards you have received are national and international testimony to your contributions, and I hope these will be well documented at the Symposium.

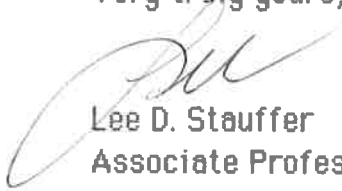
I greatly appreciated your clearly defined, pioneering course in heart disease epidemiology, and the outstanding perseverance and grantmanship that you displayed to pursue your vision. While your scientific standards were high and immutable, you were adventuresome and aggressive enough to bring into your research team disciplines and individuals that challenged all your beliefs and methods. This, I believe was at the heart of the vigor and success of your efforts. As I have said, you had a particular genius for attracting, stimulating and hiring young, gifted researchers. Through them, you have enriched the field of epidemiology for decades to come.

Henry, I also greatly admired and appreciated the musical contributions you made to the School, contributions that are not to be taken lightly. Our social occasions had the best music on campus, thanks to you. I certainly wish I'd practiced more, as a youth, so I could have joined in. Remembering one of our earlier conversations, I recently browsed in my

copy of "Generation of Vipers." As angry as he was about conditions then, one wonders how apoplectic Wylie could get about the current political scene.

Thanks for the memories! All of my very best wishes for you now and in the future. You have made a substantial mark upon America, and your contributions will be long remembered.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Stauffer", written over the typed name.

Lee D. Stauffer
Associate Professor Emeritus

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
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May 6, 1996

Russell V. Luepker, M.D.
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1300 South 2nd St., Ste. #300
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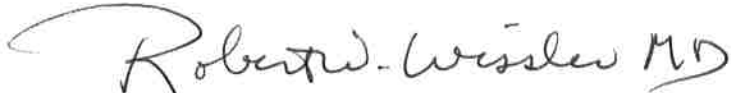
Dear Professor Luepker:

Just a note to tell you how much I enjoyed and profited from the excellent program you organized to pay tribute to Henry Blackburn's outstanding career. It was an outstanding group of presentations on a very important subject.

I also want to thank you for the opportunity to read my primitive poetry at the closing session. I am enclosing a slightly dressed up copy for your files.

I hope our paths will meet again in the not too distant future.

With best regards,


Robert W. Wissler, Ph.D., M.D.

enclosure
RW/am

Hooray for Henry's Dual Personality

*My fine friend Henry Blackburn
Has no trouble to work and earn*

*A place in the world Hall of Fame
Which must be run by a Dame!*

*His work has captured our hearts
Not only those important parts*

*That are concerned with heart disease
But especially the parts that appease*

*Our urge for the hot jazz of our time
Much better than this primitive rhyme.*

*So Henry while you and Stacy are around
Please continue to make our hearts pound*

*With your wonderful jazz tunes
That we knew, when so many moons*

*Ago, we were able to play with big bands
And danced while you played in many lands*

*Please, please continue to play around,
And live long lives in which joys abound!*

*Read by R. Wissler in Minneapolis on May 3, 1996 at
the end of the Symposium on "Primordial Prevention
of Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factors"*