

OEP

IN A CHANGING WORLD

By **J. Baxter Swartwout, O.D., President, OEP Foundation**

While it may be the most dramatic to date, the *Journal of Behavioral Optometry (JBO)* is actually just the latest in a series of innovations that the Optometric Extension Program has implemented in recent years.

The impetus for change actually came with the deaths, within three months of each other, of the founding fathers of OEP, A. M. Skeffington, O.D., in March of 1976 and E. B. Alexander, O.D., in June. The passing of these two optometric pioneers left a void in the leadership of OEP that had to be filled. Dr. Alexander's position as president and executive director was admirably filled by long-term OEP board member and then associate executive director, Homer Hendrickson, O.D. Dr. Hendrickson quickly surrounded himself with capable, creative leaders, including Drs. Tole Greenstein, J. Baxter Swartwout, and Charles W. McQuarrie. Dr. J. C. Tumblin, continued serving on the board of directors as he had for several years.

One of the first actions taken by President Hendrickson was to survey OEP leaders, soliciting their opinions on the direction OEP should take. Those queried readily concluded that OEP would have to implement program and structural changes in the post-Alexander/Skeffington era. In 1980 the board commissioned an in-depth study of OEP by the American Society of Association Executives. The results indicated that change was imperative if OEP were to continue operating.

A NEW LOOK, A NEW HOME

Many of the changes were obvious, others rather subtle. The employment of a full-time, professional executive director was one of the first major adjustments made by the board. Linda Grussemyer, a staff member at the St. Louis office of the American Optometric Association, assumed the position in 1981, separating for the first time in OEP history the positions of chief executive officer and chief policy officer.

Operating for more than 40 years with executive offices in California and the production and distribution from Duncan, Oklahoma, most Clinical Associates equated OEP with Duncan. In fact, to communicate with OEP, it was only necessary to address an envelope to "OEP, Duncan, OK" and delivery was assured. It is rumored that the Duncan post office reduced its staff by 50% following the Foundation's relocation to Santa Ana, Calif., a move the board decided upon in early 1982. All operations were consolidated in the Santa Ana office.

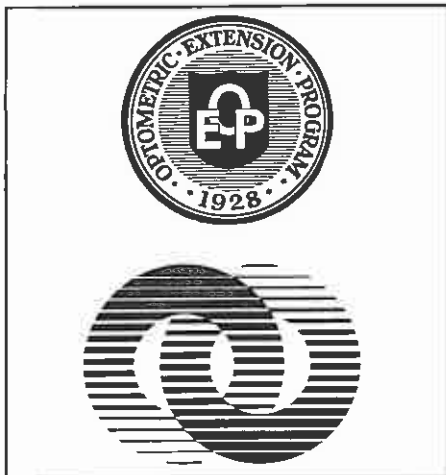
Later that year, OEP commissioned an advertising agency to develop a new logo and logo-type for the Foundation. Upon investigation, the agency discovered that the OEP image throughout optometry was anything but positive. Most viewed OEP as out of step with the profession and consisting primarily of pre-World War II optometrists who were not responsive to changes taking place in optometry. The outdated logo and publi-



■ A.M. Skeffington, O.D.



■ E.B. Alexander, O.D.



From the top, original and 1982 OEP logos.

cation style continued to foster this image. The new logo, letterhead and pamphlet style was developed and adopted by the board in 1982.

Concurrent with the relocation to California, the nature of the OEP staff also evolved. Communications professionals, administrators, accounting personnel and computer operators came on board. Computerization of administrative functions, including the Associates data base, accounting and word processing, quickly followed.

In 1988, with the purchase of computer desk-top publishing and typesetting hardware and software, the modernization of OEP's publication process became complete.

But these changes, while important, were merely means to an end. The "end" is to most efficiently disseminate the body of knowledge related to the practice of behavioral optometry.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Since 1982, improvements have been implemented in virtually all educational and communications arenas. Major changes have occurred in the Assistants' Program, Student Services and OEP curricula for optometrists. Numerous communication tools have been added to the OEP portfolio.

The Assistants' Program has been elevated to "division" status, equal to Communications, Research and Education, in recognition of the importance of paraoptometrics in the delivery of behavioral vision care. Under the leadership of Caryl Croisant, O.D., and, most recently, Joyce Adema, O.D., assistants' educa-

tion has expanded in scope and improved in quality. 1988 saw the implementation of a four-level educational program featuring a basic introductory curriculum, series for both beginning and advanced vision therapists and a separate course for vision care assistants which covers a wide variety of topics not related to vision therapy.

Additional assistants' meetings have been organized, both in conjunction with congresses and forums and as free-standing educational meetings. The assistants' division has been recently charged by the board of directors to develop the curriculum for a new "Vision Therapy Institute" to provide a basic, practical introductory course in vision therapy philosophies and treatment regimens for optometrists and vision therapists.

Changes in the leadership structure of the division of assistants included the appointment of area representatives and, later, the development of an assistants' advisory council. Several sessions, including a two-day strategic planning meeting of the advisory council at Pacific University, have been held to review program elements and to plan new programs.

Dr. and Mrs. Homer Hendrickson established and funded an annual \$500 award in honor of Miss Jewel Young, who served OEP in Duncan for more than 54 years, to recognize the contributions of optometric assistants to the visual welfare of their patients. Past Jewel Young Award recipients have included OEP assistants Betty Wolfe, Lora McGraw, Marianne Christison, Larene Smith, Bobbie Weiss, Margie Thompson and Diane Braun.

The Student Services Department has witnessed similar transformation. The *Student Enrichment Series* was introduced in 1984, specifically directed to the educational needs of optometric students. This four-level course provides a basic introduction of behavioral philosophy and care concepts to students in a concise series. The Externship Program for students, for many years under the leadership of Howard Kahn, O.D., with the able assistance of his wife, Dorothy, has continued to serve the needs of optometric students wishing to explore the practical world of behavioral vision care. Student clinical seminars have been held at four optometric campuses. A Mentor Program is in its infancy. New student awards and

research grants were created to stimulate behaviorally-oriented research by students at the schools and colleges of optometry. The 1990 Skeffington/Alexander grant has been awarded to a student at the Pacific University College of Optometry to update the "Bibliography of Stress-Relieving and Vision Therapy Research" (detailed report in the News on page 48).

OEP is, always has been and always will be, an educational institution. Therefore, it is no surprise that significant effort has gone into improvements in the educational curricula for optometrists.

For many years, serving the needs of optometrists, worldwide, the writings of Skeffington, Renshaw, Getman and countless other OEP Associates were published serially and delivered each month to the offices of OEP Associates. As methods of communication broadened, it became apparent to the board of directors that the print media was no longer the only option to deliver the educational and clinical information related to behavioral vision care, nor was it always the most efficient method. OEP began to produce and distribute educational phonograph records and, later, audio cassettes to bring the lectures of Skeffington, Greenstein, Getman, Schrock, Ludlam, Forrest, Frantz and many others to Associates who would not have otherwise had access to this material.

In 1982, the Foundation experimented with a "journal" format. The *Curriculum II Journal* contained the same 12-chapter series as had previously been included in the "monthly loose-leaf packets." This delivery system did little to enhance the content and readability of the educational materials and created some new problems for those Associates who traditionally collated the chapters into bound volumes. The *Curriculum II Journal* was abandoned after three years.

The division of education searched for acceptable alternatives for enhancing the delivery system of educational information. In 1986, the Foundation began offering Associates a choice of receiving *Curriculum II* in monthly loose-leaf form or as bound completed volumes. Concurrent with this option, OEP published several educational monographs as part of Curriculum II. A monograph by James Gregg, O.D., on writing for publication in either the lay or professional press,

Wanted: Optometric Writers, was distributed in 1986. *A Behavioral Vision Approach for Persons with Physical Disabilities*, by William Padula, O.D., was published in hardcover in 1988 as part of *Curriculum II. Vision Enhancement Training*, a book written by Al Shankman, O.D., was published in 1988.

Responding to very positive feedback from Associates on the bound option for *Curriculum II* and the monographs, the division of education, chaired by Joseph Sullivan, O.D., decided to make *Curriculum II* a series of monographs, books and manuals, beginning with the 1989-90 curriculum year. Monographs by Monty Gosnell, O.D., *Desktop Publishing for Optometrists*, by Howard Kahn, O.D., *Video Display Terminals and Vision*, as well as books by Ben Lane, O.D., Stephen Cool, Ph.D., and Jean Paul Blouin, O.D., will be included in the 1989-90 *Curriculum II* program.

In recent years, video tapes have become a popular and effective means of communication. OEP has produced several informational videos including "Vision in the Classroom," "The Positive Impact of Vision Care on Juvenile Delinquents" and "Vision and Learning."

Recognizing the value of video presentations, the division of education will regularly include educational video tapes as part of *Curriculum II*. "The Walking Rail," a tape dealing with vision therapy procedures that utilize this device, will be produced and distributed to all *Curriculum II* enrollees in 1990. Additional educational video tapes to be produced for *Curriculum II* will soon be announced.

Long recognizing the need to produce an introductory educational series on behavioral vision care, the board of directors established *Curriculum I* in 1974. It included series by optometrists Amiel Francke, Leonard Emery, Jack Reid, Homer Hendrickson, Irving Shapiro and Robert Kraskin. Modifications to *Curriculum I* made in 1976 and 1984 included the addition of series by Drs. Charles Margach, and J. Baxter Swartwout.

In 1987, to update the introductory program, a committee met during the OEP Leadership Conference and selected a broad-based collection of basic behavioral vision care literature to be offered as a package. The *Introduction to Behavioral Optometry* became a reality in 1988 with

the publication of the first *INTRO* monograph. The series will eventually include at least 15 volumes by many of the most renowned writers in behavioral optometry. Authors include: optometrists A. M. Skeffington, Donald Getz, Coleman Hatfield, Amorita Treganza, Robert Wold, Leonard Emery, Paul Harris, Alan Reichow, Dorothea McCoy, Claude Valenti, and Leonard Press, assistant Lora McGraw and Martha Stem, former Director of Communications. *INTRO* provides a well-rounded basis for any optometrist to understand and adopt the behavioral approach to vision care.

In 1989, the education division completed work on an extensive "Vision Assessment Library," compiled from more than 80 volumes of previously published material in an exhaustive collection, covering models of vision, testing and diagnosis, treatment and patient management. With the "Introduction to Behavioral Optometry" and the "Vision Assessment Library," new practitioners are given a base upon which to build their knowledge of behavioral optometry.

COMMUNICATING FOR SUCCESS

OEP is also in the business of communication. Since Barstow first began writing on practice development through effective patient communication, OEP has been dedicated to providing guidance, services and tools to help practitioners communicate the unique benefits of behavioral vision care to their patients and

communities.

With computerization, it became possible to offer personalized press releases to Clinical Associates. The Press Release Service (PRS) offers bi-monthly releases mailed directly to local newspapers selected by the subscriber, quoting the subscriber as the local authority. Professionally written, PRS releases inform the public of the vision care services and benefits available through behavioral optometrists. More recently, generic press releases have been provided to all Clinical Associates for release to their local press.

In addition to the video tapes noted earlier, OEP produced two public information slide shows which Associates can personalize for presentation to community groups and educators. "VDTs and Vision" and "Vision and Learning" have been presented to thousands of consumers since first offered in 1983 and 1984.

Seasonal issues of the "Efficient Vision" patient newsletter have been published by OEP since 1983. Written in lay language, "Efficient Vision" offers the behavioral optometrist a low cost and effective method of communicating with community leaders and patients.

Special reports on "VDTs and Vision" and "Vision and Juvenile Delinquency" were published to communicate more effectively with professionals concerned with these topics. A symposium on vision and juvenile delinquency, co-sponsored by OEP, COVD and the Southern California College of Optometry was held in



1982 OEP Board of Directors in front of new California headquarters. From the left, J.C. Tumblin, Tole Greenstein, Homer Hendrickson, Charles W. McQuarrie, and J. Baxter Swartwout.



1990 OEP Board of Directors from the left, Joseph B. Sullivan, James Cox, J. Baxter Swartwout, J.H. Robinson, and Sidney Cohen.

1987 to provide information on the vision problems of juvenile offenders to professionals who work in the juvenile justice system. David Dzik, the optometric pioneer in the relationship between vision and juvenile delinquency, provided much needed supplementary funding to the symposium.

Dr. Dzik was instrumental in the establishment of another significant communication program. In 1984, he discussed with the OEP Board of Directors the importance of optometrists' involvement in their local communities. To honor the recently retired president and former executive director of the Foundation, Dr. Dzik founded and funded the Homer Hendrickson Award to stimulate community involvement by behavioral optometrists. This \$1,000 award is presented annually to an optometrist who has worked to improve the lives of people through projects which inform the community about behavioral vision care.

CONSTRUCTIVE LIAISONS

OEP is a major organization within the profession of optometry. In recognition of the need to interact with other optometric organizations, the board of directors has sought to create liaisons with other professional optometric organizations.

Soon after it was organized in 1970, liaison with the College of Optometrists in Vision Development (COVD) was established. OEP and COVD programs frequently dovetail with one another and seldom overlap because of the close working relationship between these two organizations active in behavioral

optometry. Historically, the OEP President serves as the liaison to COVD. Similarly, the COVD President has served as the liaison to OEP. Working cooperatively, OEP and COVD continue to advance the cause of behavioral optometry.

Though the working relationship with the American Optometric Association has always been positive, the OEP Board felt it important that a formal relationship be established to facilitate even better communications. To this end, OEP determined that the vice president of the OEP Board would serve as liaison to AOA. Dr. James Cox currently holds this position. As an allied organization, OEP has direct input into AOA through the AOA Board Member Liaison to OEP, Dan Houghton, O.D..

Through the AOA liaison relationship, OEP has become involved with the AOA Council on Research (COR), chaired by OEP Clinical Associate, Willard Bleything, O.D., Dean of the Pacific University College of Optometry. OEP has provided seed grants to support pilot studies conducted through COR, which then serve as the basis of applications for submission to the National Eye Institute (NEI) on subjects of interest to behavioral optometry. One grant application, dealing with optometric treatment of intermittent exotropia, will be submitted to NEI later this year.

OEP has recently become a Sustaining Member of the International Association of Boards of Examiners in Optometry, assuring a voice in that organization. In 1989, OEP became a charter member of the newly established National Association for Adults with Special Learning

Needs (NAASLN). NAASLN is dedicated to determining and serving the learning needs (including visual needs) of handicapped and illiterate adults. Three OEP Associates lectured at the Second National Conference of Adults with Special Learning Needs in 1989. Further program involvement is planned for the 1990 NAASLN Conference.

BEHAVIORAL OPTOMETRY WORLDWIDE

The growth in behavioral optometry outside the United States has been astonishing. Much of the increased international interest in behavioral optometry can be traced to the self-funded, worldwide tour of OEP Clinical Associate Greg Gilman. Dr. Gilman conducted more than 40 seminars in 25 countries to more than 2,500 attendees over a two-year period from 1982 to 1984. International Clinical Associates now comprise approximately 15% of OEP enrollment. Two organizations, both heavily supported by OEP since their inception, are directly responsible for much of the growth in international behavioral optometry.

The Australasian College of Behavioral Optometrists (ACBO) grew out of the OEP Division in Australia as a result of the efforts of OEP National Director for Australia, Chris Henderson, and many other dedicated Australian behavioral optometrists. OEP-Australia recognized the need to provide extensive education in behavioral optometry in Australia to supplement the printed educational materials produced by OEP. Because the cost of "importing" lecturers on a regular basis limited the amount of education available to the Australian optometrist, developing local experts was a priority. ACBO was formed as a means to recognize expertise in behavioral optometry. A provider in 1988 of more than 2,000 hours of continuing education in behavioral optometry, ACBO grants fellowships upon examination by a national examining board. Enrollment in OEP educational curricula is a requirement of membership in ACBO. OEP maintains liaison with ACBO through the Chairman of the International Affairs Committee.

The European Society of Optometry (SOE) was established in 1967 to enhance the profession of optometry on that continent. Soon after its organization, SOE's

request of many optometric organizations around the world for assistance and support was responded to by OEP. Homer Hendrickson, then secretary of the board of directors and associate executive director, provided a great amount of information and printed materials, as well as permission to translate OEP publications. Lead by the current SOE president, Ugo Frescura of Asti, Italy, an OEP Clinical Associate for more than 20 years, SOE translated many *Curriculum II* series into Italian, French, Dutch, German, Spanish and Portuguese. The thrust of the education division of SOE has become behavioral optometry.

While many renowned lecturers from the United States have given seminars in behavioral vision care in Europe through SOE, the single most important individual in the development of behavioral optometry there is a French-Canadian from Montreal. Armand Bastien, an OEP Clinical Associate for nearly 50 years, has given more than 30 seminars on behavioral optometry in Europe over the past 20 years. Recognized as the "Father of Behavioral Optometry" by SOE, Dr. Bastien was granted the prestigious SOE Award, *Honoris Causa*, in 1988, for his contributions to SOE and behavioral optometry in Europe. The OEP Foundation was similarly honored by SOE in 1987.

OEP and SOE are co-hosting the 1st International Congress of Behavioral Optometry in Monte Carlo in November 1990. This congress will bring together, for the first time in history, the leaders of behavioral optometry from around the world. More than 400 behavioral optometrists are expected to attend from at least 25 countries. Discussions will be held at ICBO aimed at forming an international association of behavioral optometric organizations to further the cooperative effort of behavioral optometrists, worldwide. (A detailed report on the congress is on page 48.)

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

The method of communications between the Foundation and OEP Associates has changed dramatically. The *OEP News* first appeared in 1943. Its contents were primarily meeting notices; study group information and announcements of educational publication contents. Later, news of the activities of OEP Associates was

added, along with some "feature" stories. The *Newsletter of Behavioral Optometry (NBO)* emerged in 1988 and included Mac's Memos (formerly included in *Curriculum II*) and updated reprints of the Best of Barstow. OEP, as a member of the Optometric Editors Association (OEA), was honored in 1988 for its publication of *NBO* as the Best Newsletter/National-International Class. Plans for publication of the *Journal of Behavioral Optometry (JBO)* were laid as early as 1987. *JBO*, under the leadership of Editor-in-Chief, Irwin B. Suchoff, O.D., and Managing Editor, Sally Marshall Corngold, includes all of the features of the *News* and *NBO* plus refereed, professional papers. Articles that report on research pertinent to behavioral optometry, new clinical systems and methods, and speculation of a clinical nature are solicited. There will be periodic interviews of leading behavioral optometrists along with "Viewpoint" or guest editorials. The board of directors is excited about the new vistas that open with the advent of a refereed journal. Among other long-range plans, *JBO* will apply for inclusion in several indexing services so that more articles of the behavioral literature are carried in computerized vision care data bases.

FROM THE PODIUM

Seminars have been a mainstay in the OEP educational portfolio since the beginning. There is no question that the Skeffington seminars, conducted annually in all parts of the country were responsible for the early growth of OEP. Even before Skeffington's death in 1976, OEP had taken steps to insure the continuation of regular seminars on behavioral vision care on a widespread basis. In the 1960s and 1970s, the OEP Child Vision Care Section, lead by Drs. G. N. Getman, Homer Hendrickson, George Slade, Wayne Knight and W. R. Henry, conducted well over 100 seminars across the United States and several internationally.

Numerous Graduate Clinical Seminars were conducted by Drs. G. N. Getman, Tole Greenstein, John Streff, Larry Macdonald, Arnold Sherman and J. Baxter Swartwout throughout the United States through 1983. That year Graduate Clinical Seminars were replaced by Regional Clinical Seminars (RCS).

Regional Clinical Seminars can be

summed up in a name: Arniel Francke. Dr. Francke organized and conducted the first RCS programs, wrote the Leaders' Manual, trained the Chairs of new RCS Centers, trained the OEP administrative staff, critiqued and counseled speakers, and lobbied the OEP Board of Directors to make RCS a part of the OEP program.

The basic principles of RCS programs are quite simple: quality programs; sound educational logistics; speakers who successfully practice what they present; in-depth, single subject programs and professional administration.

From humble beginnings, RCS has grown to eight centers: Boston, Chicago, Kansas City, Ft. Lauderdale, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle and Washington, DC. Since 1983, 55 seminars have been conducted, attended by more than 1,500 optometrists and assistants (RCS is a "team" program) granting more than 10,000 hours of certified continuing education credit. Plans for the future include more of the same high quality education and expansion into additional regions as demand warrants. (1990 RCS dates can be found on page 45.)

Going hand in hand with Regional Clinical Seminars is a program of Speaker Evaluation and Speaker Development. Under the leadership of Amorita Treganza, O.D., the Speaker Evaluation Program seeks to gather evaluations of all behavioral speakers at OEP programs and assist them in improving their presentations. OEP publishes a Speaker Reference Directory which lists more than 130 speakers on 45 different subjects. Dr. Treganza personally counsels with all speakers interested in their evaluations and makes constructive suggestions for improvements in their delivery, content and use of hand-outs and visual aids.

The Speaker Development Program is designed to match speakers who want to improve their presentation, style and content with counselors who will provide constructive suggestions. When fully developed later this year, Speaker Development will have a significant impact on the ability of the participating optometrist to communicate the uniqueness of behavioral optometry to patients and community leaders.

The Speaker Evaluation Program and the companion Speaker Development

