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Anne Mary Steiner

17 January 1915 - 22 February 2010

Anna Steiner was born in 1915 in a family of three girls and five boys. When her mother died at a young age, Annie's dad remarried another Mary and they had five more boys to add to the Muller clan.

In 1936 Annie married Herman Steiner, and they were blessed with three sons - Albert, Michael and Kasper. They were happily married for 56 years until Herman passed away in 1992. Annie's longevity is attributed to pure dairy products off the farm, veges out of her garden and, of course, the pure mountain air of Mt Egmont. Annie was well known for her legendary cooking skills.

Annie lived with two of her sons on their Hastings Road farm. Recently she left the farm to go to a nursing home, and the staff could not believe how well her sons had managed to care for their mother.

The Taranaki Swiss Club and the Swiss Society of New Zealand extend their deepest sympathy to Annie's family.

Im Nebel

Seltsam, im Nebel zu wandern!
Einsam ist jeder Busch und Stein,
Kein Baum sieht den andern,
Jeder ist allein.

Voll von Freunden war mir die Welt,
Als noch mein Leben licht war;
Nun, da der Nebel fällt,
Ist keiner mehr sichtbar.

Wahrlich, keiner ist weise,
Der nicht das Dunkel kennt,
Das unentzinnbar und leise
Von allen ihn trennt.

Seltsam, im Nebel zu wandern!
Leben ist Einsamsein.
Kein Mensch kennt den andern,
Jeder ist allein.

Hermann Hesse

New antibiotic offers hope against "superbug"

Swiss scientists have found a new class of antibiotics which target a so-called hospital "superbug" - the multi drug-resistant and often deadly *Pseudomonas*. Big pharmaceutical companies have already expressed an interest.

The joint research team from Zurich University and Swiss biotech company Polyphor has described the new drug class as a rare and significant step in antibiotics development.

Pseudomonas aeruginosa is one of the most common bugs found in hospitals. One of its features is that the structure of the outer membrane protects it from many antibiotics.

Such bacteria account for an estimated 63 per cent of infections in hospital intensive care units. Experts have voiced fears that their resistance to antibiotics is rising. These antibiotic resistant bugs are a severe problem for immune-compromised patients, such as those with severe burns, or lung infections like pneumonia, or people who are on ventilators.

They also affect those suffering from the genetic disease cystic fibrosis, where the lungs are clogged with mucus and are unable to clear bacterial infections easily.

There is thus an urgent need for new drugs in the fight against this type of bacteria. What makes the Swiss team's development exciting is that it works in an entirely different way from conventional antibiotics.

Pseudomonas has a hard outer cell wall, making it difficult for a conventional antibiotic to penetrate it. What is more, if the antibiotic does manage to break the cell's defences, the bacterium uses a pump action to get rid of it.

The new antibiotic has been developed to actually hit a protein which is in the outer cell membrane, so it's a sort of battering ram direct onto this essential protein machinery in the outer membrane, which is responsible for building the outer membrane. The antibiotic doesn't have to get into the cell to act.

It is quite rare for a completely new mechanism to be found in antibiotic research - it is believed that such events only happen every 20 years.

Big pharma partners are interested in negotiations, which shows that this discovery and the potential of these kind of molecules has been recognised.

However, it is likely to take some five to eight years for the antibiotic to come onto the market.

The antibiotic could eventually be administered in hospitals, the research team believes. Possible applications could also be an inhaled form for cystic fibrosis patients, so that it would reach the lungs directly.

from swissinfo