

ISLAND DIET SURVEY 1993

MICHAEL GURR is Visiting Professor in Nutrition in the University of Reading and at Oxford Brookes University where he teaches for short periods in the Lent and Michaelmass terms. He graduated in chemistry from the University of Birmingham in 1960 and completed a PhD in biochemistry in 1963. His professional interests are mainly in the area of dietary fats. After some academic research he worked for Unilever Research for 11 years, where he established a research programme in human nutrition, before becoming head of the Nutrition Department at the National Institute for Research in Dairying in Reading. Then followed two years as Director of the Agricultural and Food Research Council's Food Research Institute in Reading and then four years as nutrition adviser to the Milk Marketing Board. In 1990 he and his wife Anne set up a consultancy partnership in St. Mary's providing scientific and technical information mainly for the food industry, and editorial and proof-reading services for scientific journals. Professor Gurr is Editor-in-Chief of the Nutrition Society's journal *Nutrition Research Reviews*. He is the author of two books on fat metabolism and over 100 research papers, reviews and other articles.

SUMMARY The survey, whose main aim was to assess nutrient intakes of a sample of the St. Mary's population, was planned as a result of a conversation with the Isles of Scilly Health Centre's practice nurse who had concern about the diets of islanders. The small compact St. Mary's community lent itself to such a survey and the opportunity was taken to employ the services of a graduate student of Reading University who subsequently presented some of the results as part of her MSc Thesis.

An invitation to participate, with details of the purpose and nature of the study was sent to every 5th name on the electoral list. The survey was completed by 106 participants. The student visited them individually and explained the use of the food frequency questionnaire (FFQ), which was the main technique for assessing food intake in this study. (A sub-set of 24 people completed a three-day weighed intake and the results of the two methods were compared). Information was also provided on age, height, weight, smoking habit and alcohol consumption. The study was approved by the University of Reading ethical committee and the Island's medical practitioners.

