Patrick M. McGrady, Sr. (1908–1980) was a journalist with an Irish twinkle in his eye and a skeptical albeit sympathetic view of scientists and their work. For over a quarter of a century, he was Science Editor of the American Cancer Society. He organized and conducted the American Cancer Society’s Annual Science Writers’ Seminars.

Early in the 1950s, Pat conducted tours of science writers to cancer research laboratories. One such tour, in 1953, is shown visiting Stanford University. McGrady is in the rear right corner, in the dark shirt.

In 1959, the tours were substituted with annual seminars. They were held in the spring at attractive sites throughout the country. Here were brought together cancer researchers who presented papers and journalists who heard and interpreted them. The writers received summaries of the papers but were then brought together with the research workers for questions and discussions. Dispatches on the material were then prepared for the newspapers.

The annual Seminars became, and continue to be, a viable and widely reported American Cancer Society event.


M.B.S.