

Pay Dirt

The 1943 discovery of streptomycin in the lab of Selman Waksman led to a cure for tuberculosis and changed history. Much less heralded was a second antibiotic—neomycin—also discovered in Waksman's lab, this time with the help of graduate student Hubert Lechevalier (GSNB'51).

The former professor, who spent 43 years on the Rutgers faculty before retiring in 1991 to a farm in Vermont, can still remember collecting soil in a campus cow barn. One sample yielded a strain of actinomycete called *Streptomyces fiadiae*. From this inauspicious beginning sprang neomycin, the active agent of first-aid creams found in medicine cabinets around the world.

The second-Eddie antibiotic gets its day in the sun on November 18th, the 50th anniversary of its discovery, with a symposium at Rutgers' Waksman Institute, named after the professor with whom Lechevalier—one of the featured speakers—once studied (below).

