

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE 12TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ANZSCBI, SEPTEMBER 1993

The past year has been an eventful one for the Society, and the Executive has instigated a number of innovations which will enable the Society to better serve the membership, and meet its fundamental role to promote research and teaching in cell biology.

Earlier this year a professional secretariat was appointed to assume responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the Society. This initiative will ensure continuity of administration with the biennial transfer of the Executive; and will release the Executive to concentrate on the development of policy, and the implementation of initiatives which have been on our the agenda for some time. These include the promotion of a greater awareness of the Society among cell biologists; the encouragement of graduate, post-graduate students, and young investigators; and, the provision of support for regional workshops, courses and seminars throughout the year. The Secretariat will also assist in the compilation of a membership directory which will form the basis of a continuously updated register of Cell Biologists which will be available to the membership to facilitate communication and collaboration.

With the Secretariat in place the Newsletter has been revamped. It will appear in its new format on a quarterly basis, and we welcome contributions. The quality of the publication has already lead to greater interest from advertisers, and the cost of the first two issues have been recouped. The summer issue will generate a profit. This initiative has been possible due to the considerable effort put in by the Secretary, Marie Dziadek, with the assistance of the Secretariat. We should also place on record our appreciation of the past efforts of Keith Dixon in single-handedly initiating and producing the newsletter for some years.

The Society has always had a strong commitment to the promotion of young investigators, and this year has witnessed an expansion of the Young Investigator Program. This was done to encourage a larger number of students to participate in the Society's activities, and to provide an opportunity for young less experienced post-graduate students to present their work. The importance of Young Investigators has also been recognised in the allocation of a dedicated session at the Annual Meeting. The quality of the applications this year has been encouraging, and we urge all members to promote the program and put forward their students. The program will be promoted more widely next year.

The executive has also been concerned to see that the Society continues to grow and remain relevant to its membership: extending its functions beyond providing infra-structural support for the organisation of annual meetings. The retention of membership, and the issue of relevance, is a universal problem for "generalist" societies at a time of growth in specialist societies and the promotion of specialist focussed symposia. Societies such as ours serve an important role, particularly in providing a forum for cross-fertilization among disciplines. However, we are acutely aware that Societies will not survive unless members see them as relevant and responsive. This issue is a complex one, and will challenge the committee in the coming year. I feel we have a very good, and active committee prepared to take up this challenge, and we look forward to the support and input of the membership in addressing this task.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the other members of the executive for their support, dedication and hard work in the past year. In particular, the smooth implementation of most of the initiatives which I have outlined could not have been possible without the considerable efforts of the Secretary, Marie Dziadek.

On behalf of the committee of the ANZSCBI I would also like to thank Melbourne organising committee, and Tracy Hocking (acting as the conference secretariat) for their efforts in organising this conference.

The coming year promises to be an exciting one for the Society. Next year will see the ANZSCBI hosting and organising the APOCB meeting in Sydney 1994. This will also be the annual meeting of the ANZSCBI for 1994. This is a major undertaking, Plans are well advanced, and we thank the Sydney committee for their efforts to date, and wish them well in the coming year.

Ivan Bertoncello
President