

## Historical Perspective

Through April, 1993, the *Journal of Endodontics* will continue to feature addresses and/or profiles of all 49 AAE past presidents. Begun in 1991, this feature is intended to give members insight to the history and movement of the AAE and endodontics as a specialty as we approach the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the AAE.



Henry J. Van Hassel, DDS, MSD, PhD  
Past President, 1981-82



Noah Chivlian, DDS  
Past President, 1982-83

We are charged in this brief column to reflect on significant events during our presidential year. I confess to difficulty in recalling events of 1992 much less of 1982, so my contribution is necessarily restricted. Indeed when attempting such reminiscences I have a feeling of kinship with Wordsworth's *Solitary Reaper* who was described as musing on "old, forgotten (sic), far-off things and battles long ago."

Nevertheless, it seems to me that there have always been two types of issues in our organization: the recurring and those that are unique to the times. Recurring problems are sort of like keeping your dog off the sofa. Passioned remonstrances and brandishing of folded newspapers work marvels... for awhile. But inevitably the sly hound is back and confrontation must begin anew. Examples of such recurring problems in our specialty might be the N-2 issue, generalist-specialist relations, government interference in private practice, etc. They were there in 1982 and no doubt will still be in 2082. The trick seems to be to keep calm and keep at them - don't let 'em wear you down.

There are, however, issues which are/were specific to the times. In our organization, the late 70's and early 80's might be thought of as a period of transition from a sort of club-like atmosphere of well-acquainted friends supported by a part-time staff to one of a modern, expanding, professional society with a need to establish its presence in organized dentistry. In any such transition, the hope is to preserve the good of the old while encouraging healthy growth. An objective evaluation of the present state of the AAE and of its fine central support staff would seem to indicate that our organization survived its adolescence and has achieved its maturity.



Drs. F. Darl Ostrander and Maynard K. Hine were co-recipients of the AAE's Edgar D. Coolidge Award at the 1983 AAE Annual Session in Hollywood, Florida. Pictured, from left, are Dr. Noah Chivlian, AAE president; Dr. Jacob Freedland, Dr. Ostrander, Dr. Burton Press, ADA president; and Dr. Maynard K. Hine.

Reflecting on my presidential term, I find it difficult to believe that I took office ten years ago. It seems like the proverbial yesterday. I have a vivid recollection of the hectic pace of those twelve months, filled with numerous trips to Chicago, endless amounts of correspondence and telephone calls throughout the day and night. Lacking only were sufficient hours in which to accomplish everything.

Having joined the AAE in 1961, I had the opportunity to meet, listen to and study with many of the founders and pioneers of endodontics. I feel fortunate to have heard the history and the early battles for acknowledgment from these living legends. Additionally fortuitous was having the honor to preside during the 40th anniversary year and the 20th anniversary of our recognition as a specialty.

The year started on a somber note, however, when I arrived in Phoenix for our Annual Session and learned of the death of Warren Wakai, who was to be installed as president-elect at that meeting. Although Warren's illness had precluded his active participation in the Association's affairs for some time, he had lived with the dream of recovering in time to assume his position of leadership. Unfortunately, this was not meant to be.

As the shock wore off, it became apparent that the Board of Directors must take action to establish an orderly transition of officers, since this eventuality was not identified in our constitution and by-laws. The Board, under the firm but Solomon-like direction of Henry Van Hassel, acted as the Nominating Committee and selected Donald Arens for president-elect and Stephen Schwartz for vice-president. My initial concerns at the loss of a devoted colleague were replaced with a renewed sense of anticipation at the prospect of working side by side with accomplished leaders who were also personal friends. The rest of the management team roster read like the Who's Who of Endodontics: Michael Heuer, secretary; Charles Cunningham, treasurer; and Irving Naidorf, editor of the *Journal of Endodontics*.

The year's major task was directed toward responding to the American Dental Association's call for information on the future of dentistry. This committee, chaired by past president and this year's Coolidge Award recipient Edward Osetek, functioned with military-like precision and efficiency. They identified four areas of special interest, prepared position papers and responses, and held a two-day conference in Chicago in July 1982. At the time, the ADA hierarchy had not granted us favored organization status, and it took consider-

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