



On Anniversaries: Osseointegration's 25th and *IJP*'s 20th

One of grandparenting's many joys is the recognition of your grandchildren's emerging confidence. This takes varied forms, from recurrent dares to play another game of checkers to solving the latest schoolyard riddles. One recent 9 year old's challenge proved to be a suitable catalyst for this editorial's early planning by posing the following test: If a man walks in a straight line without turning his head, how can he see everything he has walked past? The answer, of course, is that the man is walking backwards—an opportune reminder of what anniversary celebrations comprise. They are, after all, about revisiting special terrain already traveled, with renewed opportunities for merging journeys undertaken with destinations reached. They are also a time to pause and give thanks for accumulated blessings and memorable times.

This issue celebrates 2 significant anniversaries: the seminal Toronto Conference on Osseointegration in 1982 and the launching of *The International Journal of Prosthodontics* 5 years later. A backward walk toward both these events underscores the merits of this issue's celebratory tone. The *IJP* was conceived as a forum for international scholarship in our discipline. Under the imaginative and enlightened leadership of my predecessors, it pursued eclecticism in the discipline as it sought to catalyze high standards of clinical science in a global context. It established several partnerships, first with the International College of Prosthodontists, and subsequently with those distinguished organizations that now grace our cover. In so doing, it expanded its international readership and improved its scientific citation position. Quite significantly, this was achieved without manuscript recruitment demands on presenters at supporting organizational meetings. Our modus operandi has always been one of attracting the best manuscripts on the basis of our reputation—a policy that has yielded rich dividends for all of our readers. Our entire editorial board, together with the inestimable help of everyone at Quintessence and Janet DeWinter as my assistant, persist in their altruistic commitment to creating a better world of scientific communication through these pages.

I readily concede that osseointegration was actually "born" before its formal 1982 North American launch. However, it remains tempting to attribute its unique, routine, and universal clinical application to its Toronto debut. Hence this designated anniversary date, which launched the worldwide trajectory of Per-Ingvar Brånemark's influence. It unarguably ushered in a therapeutic revolution in rehabilitative dentistry, plus a continuing and exciting synergy between the surgical and prosthodontic disciplines.

Brånemark remains the one indisputably great clinical scientist of our era, since his body of work has so profoundly impacted the dental profession. Not unlike Charles Darwin in the late 19th century, he articulated a case for scientific humanism as an outgrowth of his groundbreaking if empirical observations—provocatively different from the current

required rigor of randomized controlled clinical trials. And yet, quite ironically, his dispassionate observations and results have had far more impact than any other reported research that conforms to current predilected research design standards. It is worth recalling that throughout his entire career he faced opposition and polemics, yet his scientific odyssey ended with the vindication of his beliefs and a much-deserved fame. In retrospect, it could be said that his innermost convictions had to be employed in his unique way in order to gatecrash prevailing educational attitudes and profound doubts about the endosseous anchorage of alloplastic materials. I will always recall that heady week in May of 1982 when so many outstanding minds from across the North American continent came to criticize but ended up staying to pay homage. Osseointegration had arrived and dental scholarship would never be the same again.

It is therefore disappointing to be invited to speak at meetings that seek to acknowledge the genesis of osseointegration by emphasizing that 1982 was all about the introduction of "one implant and one technique." While this strategy may reflect a well-intentioned desire to recruit financial support from other implant companies, it regrettably ignores what this one special anniversary is really all about. What we celebrate in May 2007 is so much more than such a restrictive perception. We honor the brilliance of one man's scientific ingenuity and humanism, his journey from the edges of clinical science to the center of our clinical lives. So, let's raise our voices and a glass or two as we honor Per-Ingvar Brånemark's legacy. And in so doing, let us renew our gratitude for his enrichment of our patients' quality of life as well as our professional and humanitarian skills.

This editorial celebration also recognizes the indispensable contribution of female prosthodontists, a number of whom are members of our editorial family. Last issue's editorial by Joke Duyck from the University of Leuven in Belgium correctly identified the disparity in our gender distribution, an imbalance we will continue to try to rectify. Dr Duyck also underscored her unique perceptions regarding gender-influenced academic careers in the discipline. Hence the inclusion of a few invited biographical sketches as a follow-up to Dr Duyck's editorial, which highlight the commitment and concerns of a small cross section of viewpoints from some exceptional women in the discipline. I also believe they underscore the fact that women need to be offered new types of career paths, since they clearly have different needs in the workplace. It is only after their male colleagues understand this and commit themselves to implementing the necessary changes that women will join them at the top of the prosthodontic scholarship ladder.

George A. Zarb, BChD, DDS, MS, MS, FRCD(C)
Editor-in-Chief