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 into the history and movement of the AAE and endodontics as a specialty, as we approach the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the AAE.

Robert A. Uchin
President, 1975-76

James C. McGraw
President, 1990-91

"Endodontists Bite the Dust!"

CHICAGO—On April 1, 1999, in a sudden, shocking development, the ADA Council on Dental Education, after exhaustive review, denied recertification for the specialty of endodontics. Citing a pattern of quality diminution in the character of endodontic research by the ex-specialty, and mounting evidence that the static scope of endodontics could easily be assumed by the new specialties of Oral Neurology and Implantology, as well as the failure of the former specialty to demonstrate unique public need under the sapping Universal Health Care Reform Act, endodontics as a specialty ceased to exist.

Outgoing terminal president, Dr. I. M. Complainant, noted the primal causes of the specialty’s demise in an emotional requiem:

1. Failure by endodontists to seek and serve avidly in local, state and national ADA leadership positions.

2. Failure to recruit, develop and fund capable endodontic education-researchers.

3. Timidity by endodontists in shaping new directions for the specialty into the next century.

Reflecting on the central theme of the long past 50th Anniversary in 1993 (Historical Reflections - Future Directions), Dr. Complainant responded, resoundingly, “WE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN!”

A look into the future can be frightening. By the year 2000 the water could be boiling and endodontists, just like the poor frog that didn’t feel the pot heating up, could be poached.

The only way to endow our future is to GET INVOLVED. Climb out of the pot and into the swamp to volunteer your services and talents in our chosen profession.

Office in the ADA building in Chicago.

With the expert legal guidance of Mr. Harvey Sarner (former attorney for the American Dental Association), we had worked through the growing pains and necessities required to be the sponsoring agency of the American Board of Endodontics and the Endowment and Memorial Foundation, both of whom shared a portion of our office expenses.

By 1976, our office had seen the addition of both a full-time and part-time secretarial position. Additionally, our annual budget was now in excess of $125,000, with our dues at $65, a $15 increase over the previous year.

Our 1976 Annual Session saw Gerald Cathey as Program Chairman, coping with simultaneous translations between English and Spanish.

A strong expanding interest in endodontics around the world resulted in increased foreign membership and requests for professional information exchange. These were the seeds for the eventual formation several years later of the International Federation of Endodontic Associations (IFEA).

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