

Historical Perspective

An ongoing feature as we approach the 50th Anniversary of the AAE

The AAE: Daring and Changing



Edward M. Osetek, DDS
President, 1980-81

1980-81 was a year of daring for the Association. Chuck Cunningham was the chairman of the annual session and Carl Tinkelman was the local arrangements chairman. The meeting was scheduled for the Sheraton in Philadelphia. At the urging of Carl, a site visit was made to Philadelphia and it was determined that the Sheraton could not really accommodate the AAE. Arrangements were made to cancel the agreement with the Sheraton and a new agreement was made with the, then under construction, Franklin Plaza Hotel.

It was a nervous time for everyone, contracting to occupy a hotel that was still a hole in the ground. The only person not nervous was Carl. Confidence has always been his long suit. Thanks to Carl and his terrific committee, and to the program that Chuck put together, the meeting, by any measure, was a great success.

1980-81 was also a year of change for the Association. Change is inevitable! Not all change is progress, just as not all motion is forward. However, for the American Association of Endodontists, 1980-81 was a year of change and progress. Just prior to that year, the AAE Board of Directors (then known as the Executive Committee), after considerable deliberation, elected to move the headquarters office from Atlanta to Chicago and to inaugurate a search for an executive director in order to establish stability and continuity in its headquarters office. The unanimous choice of that search committee was Irma Kudo. The decision to move to Chicago, to establish an office in the ADA building and to employ the services of a professional administrator signaled the Association's resolve to enter, seriously, into a partnership with the rest of organized dentistry.

It was difficult to say goodbye to the old way of doing business but it was essential to move on and up. The nature of our professional relationships required that we not only be organized, but also be visible, viable and clearly in control. If you can't run with the big dogs, stay on the porch. We got off the porch!

It was the year that the Association committed to gaining the recognition it truly deserved and to crafting the image that the AAE is the parent of the specialty of endodontics. We members knew that from the very beginning nearly 40 years earlier but we took for granted that organized dentistry also knew and believed that. Unfortunately, probably because of our "low profile," that perception did not emerge as a universal truth. Prior to making the move and engaging the services of a truly professional association executive, the

Association's business was expertly conducted either by the spouse of the Secretary or a highly qualified executive secretary with a sometimes part-time staff. We certainly owe a debt of gratitude to Jack Bucher's wife Kitty, the spouses of all our former Secretaries and to Elly Baker, our first hired professional. She and her staff provided strength and stability during our early years. We have come a long way since. As we grew, the demands also grew. As relationships with other organizations in dentistry became more complicated so did the job of guiding the Association through these relationships. If you are ever in Chicago, be sure to visit the headquarters office and meet the fine staff that Irma has developed.

The growth and development of the Association did not stop then, nor has it now, nor will it ever. Just as we had dedicated, talented and politically savvy volunteer leadership prior to 1980, we continue to have dedicated, talented and politically savvy volunteer leadership after 1980. This leadership, it should be noted, was not and is not limited to the Officers, Board of Directors or the headquarters office staff. The countless volunteers who serve on all the committees, the members who provide constructive suggestions and recommendations - the unsung must also share in the credit for the growth and development of the AAE and for the position of esteem that the Association enjoys.

Presidential Profile

John R. Pear, 1956-57

Dr. Pear's term as president is most significantly remembered as the year the first Board of Endodontics was established. Recognized for his work ethic and administrative abilities, Dr. Pear was a member of the Executive Committee from 1949-51, was honored with the vice presidency in 1955 and then the Presidency in 1956.

Although he belonged to many dental organizations, his interest in endodontics and the AAE were his first, and favorite, priorities. Dr. Pear served as Scientific Program Chairman for two years, during which period the annual meetings were extended to three days. He was also a member of the original Fellowship Committee and eventually served as chairman of that group as well.

A Fellow of the American and International College of Dentists, Dr. Pear received his DDS from the University of Michigan in 1917 and served as a First Lieutenant in the U.S. Army during World War I.