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Editorial

The last *Biochemical Education*

The first issue of *Biochemical Education* was published in 1972. It was called a *bulletin* rather than a journal, and ran to a mere 16 pages. The origin of this publication was a round-table discussion at the 7th FEBS meeting in Varna, Bulgaria, where it was agreed to set up an Advisory Committee to enable IUB to “take an active role in biochemical education”: there was representation from the regional organisations such as FEBS and PAABS. The Committee, which was chaired by Peter Campbell and included Albert Lehninger¹ among its members, agreed that there should be a quarterly publication to facilitate the international exchange of ideas and information between biochemists who are actively engaged in teaching to science and medical students. (As Harland Wood mentioned in the first article in this first issue of the bulletin, this was the first publication to be sponsored directly by IUB [1].) The bulletin was edited from the Department of Biochemistry, University of Leeds, by Peter Campbell and Bernard Kilby. The subscription price was \$6 — including postage!

The first issue contained an article by Donald Nicholson entitled “Some Reflections on Metabolic Cartography”, and it is interesting to note that Donald’s first metabolic pathways chart had appeared 12 years earlier and that over 450 000 copies of 11 editions had been distributed by then. Donald wrote a “follow-up” article some years later [2]. There were also articles by Stanley Dagley (“The Biochemical Education of a Teacher”), Keith Tipton and David Kerridge on numerical problems in biochemistry, one experiment for lab class use, one description of plastic molecular models, nine book reviews and two film reviews. Interestingly, there was a proposal for people to exchange the lab class protocols, and this scheme ran for a number of years before lapsing. The *bulletin*, subsequently *journal*, printed laboratory practical experiments and still does, but one wonders whether in these days of e-mail and the Internet, this distribution might now be resumed electronically rather than by mail.

Bernard Kilby continued as Editor until 1979 (when he retired from the University) and I took over until the present year. The journal has continued to expand and has become widely known. A glance at the origin of papers published in recent issue will confirm how international the journal has become.

As Editor for the past 21 years I count myself fortunate in having had correspondence with so many teaching biochemists around the world, and in many cases having actually met these individuals at educational sessions at IUBMB, FEBS, FAOBMB, and other congresses. I am grateful to the members of the Editorial Board who have contributed in various ways, as well as to book, video and software reviewers, the Features Editors, and the two individuals who have provided Monitor over the years. To all those whose manuscripts were rejected, I have tried to indicate to them that I know how much work goes into a finished manuscript and that therefore I am aware of how disappointing it is to have one’s paper rejected. Nevertheless, the journal has always had a good flow of submitted manuscripts allowing us to select what we considered the best.

Starting in July of this year we look forward to a new era with a newly formatted journal with a new name: *Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Education* (BAM-Bed), with new Editors, Judy and Donald Voet, in Philadelphia. We wish them every success, hope they have an energetic Editorial Board, an increasing readership, and are deluged with submitted papers — attesting to the importance we attach to teaching the next generation of biochemists and molecular biologists. It is our responsibility to train the next generation of biochemists — no one else can do it — and I hope that BAMBed will serve as an inspiration, a forum, and a help to all those entrusted with this important task.

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¹ It is interesting to note that Lehninger’s textbook (first edition) was advertised in the first issue, at \$13.50. It seems to me that allowing for inflation, the price of biochemistry textbooks has actually gone down over the years!

References

- [1] H.G. Wood, *Biochem. Educ.* 1 (1972) 2–3.
- [2] D.E. Nicholson, *Biochem. Educ.* 25 (1997) 62–70.