JCP

The Journal of Clinical Pathology

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Sixty years of knowledge generation

Knowledge is a burden
 If it robs you of innocence
 Knowledge is a burden
 If it makes you feel you are special
 Knowledge is a burden
 If it gives you an idea you are wise
 Knowledge is a burden
 If it is not integrated into life
 Knowledge is a burden
 If it does not bring you joy
 Knowledge is a burden
 If it does not set you free

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, humanitarian
 and founder of the Art of Living
 Foundation, Bangalore, India,
 August 1999.

By any standards and in any walk of life, 60 years of existence is a monumental feat. This is especially true for a journal in a highly competitive market. I wish to extend hearty congratulations to both the BMJ Publishing Group and the Association of Clinical Pathologists (the co-owners of the *Journal of Clinical Pathology*; *JCP*) on this diamond jubilee. *JCP* now sits proudly as an internationally read journal and one that is entrenched firmly in the pathology literature.

1945 was a momentous year with the termination of the Second World War and out of that great conflagration emerged a new beginning, a new order. So it is somewhat fitting that the year in which the first issue of *JCP* appeared coincided with the end of that cataclysmic event. *JCP* appeared on the scene to provide a vehicle for the discussion and dissemination of information pertinent to the field of clinical pathology. I dare say that most practising pathologists of the day were purveyors of all matters that related to laboratory work. It is

therefore relevant, and indeed poignant, that the first paper to appear in *JCP* was entitled, "The significance of the laboratory". The realisation then that laboratory diagnosis was fundamental and pivotal to patient management has remained and endured, despite the views of a some clinicians (diminishing in number, I hasten to add). As laboratory physicians, our roles have evolved and ramified into a labyrinth of complex and multi-faceted tasks that now constitute laboratory medicine. So called clinical pathology has spawned dedicated specialists ("boutique" pathologists and pathology) that now subserve all the demands and needs of modern medicine. Is there room for the "journey man", all rounder pathologist? In larger countries with scattered pathology services, the traditional clinical pathologist remains a sought after commodity, and rightly so. Serving the needs of the community in which one works is of paramount importance and is a fulfilling and rewarding job. *JCP* tries to position itself to cater for all denominations of pathologists and hopefully still has something of interest for most, if not all, readers.

"2005 sees pathology at a crossroad: ever increasing subspecialisation and a worldwide shortage of pathologists of all persuasions are two key issues"

That advances that have been made in pathology are axiomatic. If pathology is truly an amalgam of science and art, then the science component has progressed in leaps and bounds. Pathology and pathologists are at the epicentre of the molecular maelstrom that we find ourselves immersed in currently. Our understanding of the basis of most

diseases has expanded exponentially and so rapidly such that gene manipulation is a reality. The seminal issue also contains two papers on "Examination of bronchial biopsy tissues" and a "Clinical pathologist's histological interpretation of the endometrial biopsy". The appreciation of histological nuances through a microscope is the quintessential definition of the art of pathology. The so called demise of the morphologist is premature, unfounded, and a fable. The interpretation of both bronchial and endometrial biopsies remains of considerable interest and, parenthetically, I commissioned two "My approach to" papers on these very subjects without knowing they were evaluated in the very first issue of *JCP*!

In 1947, an article on "Familial intestinal polyposis" was published in *JCP*, perhaps the harbinger of molecular pathology and the elucidation of the genetics of that condition. Cytology debuted in February 1950 with the publication of "The diagnosis of neoplastic cells in sputum by two new methods". By 1951, an introspective slant was taken by "Whither clinical pathology? Trends and opportunities". Fifty four years later, we are mulling over the same thoughts.

2005 sees pathology at a crossroad: ever increasing subspecialisation and a worldwide shortage of pathologists of all persuasions are two key issues. *JCP* will continue to publish high quality, relevant papers in all branches of pathology, address educational needs, and encourage debate on a wide range of topics that affect the specialty. As a journal, our mantra remains one of quality, relevance and efficiency. The need to build on the 60 year inheritance and progress is obvious: this editorial team will endeavour to maintain the tradition and values that *JCP* has built over the past 60 years.

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