

Editorial

The European Society for Veterinary Virology was created in 1988 with widespread and enthusiastic support from veterinary virologists throughout the whole of Europe. The objectives of the Society are:

- to further progress in veterinary virology;
- to provide an organization for individuals who devote a significant portion of their professional activities to research, teaching or the practical application of veterinary virology;
- to encourage and promote improved methods of diagnosis, prevention and treatment of animal viral diseases;
- to further veterinary virological education;
- to promote the exchange of information in the field of veterinary virology.

It is not our intention that the Society should replace or duplicate the efforts of any existing societies or associations. Rather we have sought to provide fresh insights to veterinary virology by approaching the subject from the virological viewpoint, rather than the pathological or the epidemiological. In pursuit of these objectives the Society held its first scientific congress, attended by some 230 delegates, at the University of Liège in Belgium from 5 to 7 April 1989, under the main theme of "The Contribution of Molecular Biology to Veterinary Virology". The congress took the form of a series of keynote addresses by renowned scientists, together with selected papers from congress delegates, and a poster display. Three specialist sessions focussed respectively on the seal morbillivirus, bovine herpesvirus 1, and bovine virus diarrhoea virus, while a small informal meeting reviewed current knowledge on rabbit haemorrhagic disease.

The first general assembly of the Society was also held at the congress, during which the formal constitution was ratified and the five members of the first executive council were elected.

We wish to express our deepest gratitude to our fellow members of the steering group of the Society (Bernd Liess, Gunnar Rockborn and Alberto San Gabriel) for their help in planning the congress; to the Rector of the University of Liège (Prof. Bodson) and the Deans of the Faculties of Veterinary Medicine (Prof. Pouplard) and Sciences (Prof. Collin) for their support in the arrangements for the congress; to the speakers and chairmen, who responded so enthusiastically to the invitation to participate; to the local staff and students who kept the meeting running smoothly; to all those who have supported the Society by subscribing to membership and by acting as national co-ordinators; and finally to the sponsors, without whose support this con-

gress could not have taken place.

We are extremely grateful to Elsevier Science Publishers, and to the editors of Veterinary Microbiology, for the opportunity to publish the congress proceedings in this special issue.

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