50 years *Thrombosis and Haemostasis* (1957 – 2007): Keeping thoughts and blood in flow

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Readers of *Thrombosis and Haemostasis* are privileged to celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2007. From 1957 to 2007 the official journal of the International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis (ISTH) has literally gone through the mill in terms of publication policy and methods, but has remained a reliable and respected platform for scientific information. Its editors have been able to maintain this high standard through the selection and refereeing of manuscripts, as well as the timely delivery of the journal.

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Prepublished online June 12, 2007
doi:10.1160/TH07-05-0377

*Thromb Haemost 2007; 98: 1–2*
mylen (1993–1999) took over the duties as editor-in-chief and, together with Harold R. Roberts and other associate editors, expanded the scope and visibility of the journal among scientists inside and outside the thrombosis field. Thereafter, Pier M. Mannucci was responsible for a strong interactive journal until, in 2002, the ISTH and Thrombosis and Haemostasis separated. With a board of forty dedicated section editors, since 2003 I have been responsible for the scientific editorship of our "independent" journal, and we try our very best to keep the tradition of publishing papers with biomolecular and medical contents side by side and to strengthen the position of Thrombosis and Haemostasis in the field of Vascular Medicine.

In order to give our readers an authentic insight into some discoveries and the researchers behind them, several outstanding investigators including former editors-in-chief and associate editors provide insightful contributions and personal views as well as snapshots from the “world of clotting” for this anniversary issue. Other authors review the development of a special topic that was particularly influenced and driven by their visionary work. All in all, the 24 articles collected provide a potpourri of birthday presents that are meant to reflect the many directions and views of haemostasis and thrombosis, both from the basic science and the clinical medicine point of view. I am extremely grateful to all authors who immediately agreed to submit a paper for this anniversary issue under the pressure of a tight publication timeline. Unfortunately, I could not ask many more potential authors who would have liked to contribute: There will be another chance in 10 years time!

On the following pages readers will be entertained with some historical sketches by fathers and mothers of modern coagulation, with backgrounds of great discoveries in the field as well as memories and (sentimental) retrospects on the "good old days", where principal clinical observations paved the way for breakthroughs in medical science. You will appreciate how enjoyable coagulation reaction kinetics can be, supported by lots of footnotes or by philosophic insights, respectively. We will be surfing on both sides of the Pacific as well as being taken on a calmer North Sea sailing trip for approaching tissue factor. As everyone knows: there is no proper wound healing without platelets, and especially their adhesion molecules will be viewed by some outstanding "plateologists": looking back without anger into the past and forward into the future. Moreover, two individuals who perfectly manage to handle the electron microscope over several decades, will uncover some morphological secrets of platelets. Thus, "without this bit of glue, you (the platelet) wouldn’t look like you" is true indeed for the smallest cellular wound sealing unit.

Both, the contact-phase system and the intrinsic coagulation pathway are always linked in virtually all textbook drawings, although nature plays another more complex game to distinguish between physiological haemostasis and pathological thrombosis: Interesting insights are provided here by reviews on the plasma kallikrein-kinin system and the role of factor XI in thrombosis and haemostasis. To balance coagulation reactions and the explosion of thrombin formation and action, natural anticoagulants, including antithrombin I and antithrombin "III", heparan sulfates or hirudin are reactive on many fronts and for diverse purposes as outlined in additional contributions. A special tale is reserved for protein S and its link with the complement system, a unique case for interactive relations between two biological defense systems. We finish off with the omnipotent vitamin "Koagulation" and its role for the function of non-clotting proteins, as well as with a more than 150-year-old observation that has stimulated intensive work on thrombosis and cancer. The final note will take us even further back into evolution and reports on the ancestor clottable protein from Limulus.

I hope this bouquet of contributions with diverse themes and topics to celebrate the “golden anniversary” of Thrombosis and Haemostasis will find interested readers who should be stimulated and encouraged to continue surfing through this or other issues of the journal. If you get tired of reading, start writing your own paper and submit your best work to T&H.

On behalf of the editorial board, the editorial staff and the publisher,

[Signature]

Editor-in-Chief