Foreword

This is our first Editorial, and also the first time the EDTA has changed editors. Following in the footsteps of David Kerr and Walter Elliott will not be easy; fortunately Daniel Fries will continue to edit the French texts. We begin our editorship with one main object in mind: to maintain and increase the rapidity of publication which our predecessors achieved. The end of November is, we feel, as late as we can reasonably produce the Proceedings, just five months after the meeting has finished. Remember the ASAIO proceedings appear in just under two months.

We would like to give good marks to all participants for getting their manuscripts to us. All 46 papers actually presented in Barcelona returned to Britain and France in the Editors’ luggage, and the texts of only three demonstrations were not available by the end of the meeting. However, the presentation was not as good. Clearly many authors had not even looked at the instructions to authors which we circulated, and which we print again at the end of this volume. If the proceedings are going to appear even earlier it is essential that the editorial work should be reduced to a minimum before the text goes to the printers. Please note that references cause a disproportionate amount of work and this was probably the worst feature of the manuscripts submitted for this seventh volume.

To those whose papers do not appear we can only say that 134 eligible papers were submitted and 48 accepted. Paper selection was based on quality alone with the result that 11 of the 48 accepted (23%) came from countries outside Europe and adjacent areas. This is almost exactly the same proportion as that of the papers submitted.

This year we have sent reprints on request only, as discussed at the annual general meeting. Next year, and thereafter, we hope to issue reprint request forms in advance to all authors for up to 100 reprints, if Council’s agreement to underwriting the cost of the extra printing is obtained.

We have given much thought to the problem of including the discussion of papers in the Proceedings. The difficulty is that this is generally unprepared and the discussor seldom has a text for the Editor. Recording and transcription solves part of this problem but is quite inadequate when slides are shown. Furthermore, inclusion of the discussion adds considerably to the Editorial work, thereby delaying publication of the Proceedings, and adds substantially to the length and cost of the Proceedings. Last year, in the Proceedings of the VIth Conference of the EDTA, David Kerr deleted discussion altogether. Some members were unhappy about this, since discussion, on occasion, does contain valuable points. On the other hand, much is of little permanent value. There seem to be four possible solutions:

1. to include no discussion at all;
2. to include all discussion but not send proofs to discussers;
3. to edit the discussion to include only points which, in the opinion of the editors, are important;
4. to include a summary of any important points raised in discussion.

We feel at the moment that (3) would be invidious, and (4) which we attempted on this occasion, proved impossible. However, we would be interested to hear the views of members of the Association on this point.

The second Editorial review, which David Kerr introduced last year, is included in this volume. We would like to thank Dr. Linton and Dr. Lawson for the enormous amount of work involved in collecting and sifting this mass of material. No subject has been suggested for next year's Editorial review and we urge you to write to us with suggestions for future topics if you think the idea a good one. Suggestions as to who might do the work on them would also be welcome! There must be many areas of general interest which you would like to see examined in a critical review: tell us what they are.

These are the Proceedings of your Association. As the society enlarges, there is always a feeling that contact has been lost, to some extent, with the centre. We have grown from a few dozen friends to an organisation approaching 1000 members and associates. One way we can avoid this loss of contact is to make sure that channels of communications are always open in both directions. Your secretary has emphasised this elsewhere in his report; may we labour it again and ask for your comments on any aspect of the Proceedings, preferably constructive, which you may feel is important.

Finally, we have with regret to mention the loss of Karl Wolfgang Fritz of Bonn, who died earlier this year aged 43. He was a member of council from 1967–69 and a good friend of us all.

Stewart Cameron and Chisholm Ogg