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Editorial Note - Professor Turner's Retirement.

Whose name comes to mind when you think of the word "biosensors"? For many in this field, it will probably be Anthony P. F. Turner. It is for this reason we want to share that, from January 2020, Prof. Turner will retire as the Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Biosensors and Bioelectronics*, bringing to an end a prominent era in this journal's existence.

Not only has Prof. Turner diligently served the journal for 35 years, he also founded *Biosensors and Bioelectronics* as a peer-reviewed scientific journal published by Elsevier, in 1985. The journal now is among the most influential publications in the fields of analytical chemistry and biosensors in the world, impacting not only technology development but also the broad applications of biosensing technology including medical diagnosis, environmental monitoring, food safety, forensics and homeland security. Initially, Prof. Turner (Cranfield University, and latterly Linköping University), worked alongside Prof. I. John Higgins (Cranfield University, UK) and Dr. W. Geoff Potter (Science and Engineering Research Council, UK) as Managing Editors, but he soon took the lead as his co-founders moved on to other activities. He oversaw the establishment of *Biosensors* (its original title) as the principal journal in an emerging field and helped to shape not only the publication, but the field itself, by actively promoting the area. In 1991, the journal was renamed "*Biosensors and Bioelectronics*" as it sought to encompass broader aspects of this rapidly evolving discipline.

In the early 80's, the field of *Biosensors* was a tiny niche area that was little known, with just a handful of papers being published each year. However, the pioneering work of scientists in the USA, Japan, Sweden and elsewhere in Europe was beginning to make headway. Moreover, there was a small but enthusiastic cohort of multidisciplinary researchers striving to realize a vision of a new class of powerful analytical devices with wide ranging potential from medical diagnostics to environmental monitoring, and from process control and food safety to defense and security. Both publications and conference presentations were widely dispersed and difficult to find in those days before computerized searches. Prof. Turner frequently

says he was just in the right place at the right time, but it took considerable vision and tenacity to recognize the need to create a focal point for the emerging "biosensor community" and to deliver the world-class journal workers needed to consolidate advances in biosensors.

Another challenge that Prof. Turner faced was the very nature of what a biosensor exactly was, and this conundrum appears to be emerging as a problem once again now. He once told us that in the 1980's, it seemed that every meeting where biosensors were presented was plagued by an extended discussion about what a biosensor was. Under his leadership, the journal adopted a clear definition of a biosensor and has maintained a strong stance that papers must be within this scope in order to keep coherence for its readership.

Under his dedicated and fair leadership, the reputation and quality of this journal has continuously grown. From the onset, he was pivotal in forming the inaugural Editorial Board that comprised some of the leading figures of the day working on biosensors. This choice was clearly impactful as, in its first year, "*Biosensors*" published 11 of the 75 articles in this field. Now, 35 years later, the journal attracts more than 4,000 submissions annually. In the early years of the journal, Europe and the USA were the dominant contributors and papers from Asia were rare. However, as the area grew in importance early contributions from Japan were supplemented by increasing numbers of papers from China, Korea, and India etc. Initially, acceptance rates were from these countries were low, but there was a rapid increase in both the quantity and quality of papers coming from Asia and elsewhere, and now papers from Asia dominate the journal.

The impeccable reputation of the journal is now clearly established: according to Journal Citation Reports, *Biosensors and Bioelectronics* has a current impact factor of 9.518. Moreover, in 1990, Prof. Turner worked with Elsevier to complement the journal with an associated conference, Biosensors 90, and this timely initiative continues to this day, with The World Congress on Biosensors meeting biannually. Prof. Turner recalls that in the late 1980's, Elsevier had a small conference division headed by Penny Moon, the objective of which was to support Elsevier journals. When asked

whether he would like to run a conference on biosensors, Prof. Turner told us that he initially refused because there were too many little symposia on this subject. Penny then asked him a key question "which is the one everyone goes to?" This triggered the thought that the community needed its own dedicated conference where all the latest advances were presented.

An important boost to the journal was Prof. Turner's recruitment in 2002, of Dr Alice Tang (latterly Alice Turner) to work on the journal full time. At the beginning of her 18-year tenure, there were only 250 submissions and the Impact Factor of the journal was only 2.5. Alice will also leave the journal from January 2020 and we should thank her for her very valuable work as Managing Editor. It was also her suggestion to create a special issue, to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the founding of the journal, authored by the then Editors and focusing on subjects that they were most passionate about. The outcome published in 2015, according to Prof. Turner, was *"a concise, up-to-date and personal synopsis of this burgeoning field."* His assessment about this action was that *"a quick glance through the contents will demonstrate how many of today's hot topics are rooted in the journal's original themes, but also how they have grown well beyond early expectations and evolved in new directions, stimulated by advances in measurement science, novel materials, fabrication technology, interdisciplinary concepts and ingenious configurations."*

Biosensors and Bioelectronics is greatly indebted to Prof. Anthony P. F. Turner for his dedication, insight and fearless commitment during his 35 years as Editor-in-Chief. He himself also confessed that he is *".... a fairly typical Biosensor researcher and if I produced what I needed, then it was likely that my colleagues and peers would appreciate it too."* Prof. Turner has run the journal with the overriding philosophy throughout that the journal must serve the Biosensor community, which is an unusually coherent group of scientists with a common goal. The journal's focus on high quality applied science that serves society was the theme of Prof. Turner's very first Editorial in which he wrote that the development of biosensors and *"sensors specific for chemicals has, in general, lagged behind sensors of physical effects ..."*. This is no less true today than it was in 1985; now the focus is on wearables and digital information technology, but the need for real-time biochemical measurements

of the human body and the environment surrounding it is even more crucial to success in maintaining our well-being and the well-being of the environment. Prof. Turner said that *"Biosensors and Bioelectronics has a leading role to play in this exciting future and, far from being a mature field, I believe we are simply on the cusp of an entirely new era."*

Tony's energetic leadership will be deeply missed, but we are confident he and Alice will find new ways to contribute in positive ways to the biosensing community he has grown to love. On behalf of the journal of *Biosensors and Bioelectronics*, we thank Tony for his measureless service and wish him and Alice a very happy retirement and congratulate him again for the major contribution to the journal and of course achievements in the science during his career.