The CJC's first 25 years

Robert B Kalina, Publisher

I can still remember holding the first issue of *The Canadian Journal of Cardiology* in my hands 25 years ago. I was very pleased that after so much effort and expense, our concept had finally come to fruition and we were going to be able to relax. I wrongly concluded that all the work was completed because so much had been accomplished in the previous year – not just by me, but by all of those I had persuaded or coerced to help me.

In 1984, once the need for a Canadian cardiology peer review journal was confirmed and the concept was developed, the first step was to find an Editor-in-Chief. Dr Robert Beamish was recommended by many as an ideal candidate, but it was only when I spoke with him that I realized how great he would be. He had always wanted to establish a journal, but was rebuffed by every publisher he had approached. I was very pleased when he graciously accepted the position and put all of his energy into making the journal a success.

Financing had to be put in place – with no business history, most large expenditures, including printing and postage, had to be prepaid because the banks were not willing to finance an unproven venture. I borrowed where I could, remortgaged what I had, and liquidated my insurance and pension plans. The first office consisted of a windowless room within a real estate office after the owner took pity on me and provided a room and answering service for \$100 per month.

I vividly recall being taken aback that the 'Call for Papers' did not bring in the flood of studies expected. There were very few authors who were willing to risk their work and reputation on a new journal with an uncertain future. But eventually, we did get enough studies to put the first issue together. The lack of funds also prevented me from hiring employees. I am eternally grateful to my late father-in-law, Dr Edwin Blakley, a PhD biochemist who voluntarily did all of the copy editing.

The attitude of advertisers was not dissimilar to that of the authors – a new publication by an unknown publisher added to the disadvantage that it was a peer review journal, where they would have no say on the content. Despite this, companies placed enough advertising in the first issue to cover the cost of publication.

Unfortunately, my exuberance over the premiere issue lasted only until it was time to publish the second issue – little content, little advertising – the honeymoon was over. But thanks to Dr Naranjan Dhalla, we did manage to have enough submissions, and things began

to turn around. Throughout the years, we have worked hard to find the right balance, and meet everyone's needs and expectations – the authors, the advertisers, the Society, the Editor-in-Chief, the Editorial Board Members and, last but not least, the readership.

And with longevity, came acceptance by the Canadian cardiovascular community. Eventually, in 1992 (Volume 8), it became the official journal of the Canadian Cardiovascular Society.

Our next hurdle was to get indexed. It is a Catch-22 – if you are not indexed, you are not cited and vice versa. By the time the fourth volume rolled around, we had managed to become indexed by several services, including Current Contents and Index Medicus. The struggle for a higher impact factor then began in earnest and continues today.

From the very beginning, we grasped the importance of technology and I believe this is one of the main reasons for our success. We embraced desktop publishing in its infancy; we were one of the first journals with an online presence and we have developed our own electronic online submission program. This year, we will launch PulsusTrak, a new electronic system that will guide our work from submission through to publication.

Dr Beamish retired after 12 years at the helm. He was the founding Editor, made the *Journal* well known internationally and, most importantly, made it an integral part of Canadian cardiovascular education and research. Dr Eldon Smith became the Editor-in-Chief in 1997. During the next 13 years, he worked tirelessly to develop and raise the *Journal* to an even higher standard. We expect the Canadian cardiovascular community to join us in thanking him for his hard work and dedication to the *Journal* over the years.

Today, we are at yet another important crossroads in the *Journal's* history. Dr Smith is retiring and the very capable Dr Stanley Nattel is taking over the leadership role. We are confident that with his experience and expertise, *The Canadian Journal of Cardiology* will continue to prosper and grow.

And after 25 years, I have accepted the fact that we must never consider the job completed and relax – there will always be significant challenges to overcome.

We at Pulsus look forward, with enthusiasm, energy and expertise, to publishing *The Canadian Journal of Cardiology* well into the next quarter century.