INTRODUCTION

It has been a distinct honor and pleasure to serve as Executive Director for the American Aging Association from 1992-2002 and as Editor-in-Chief of our Journal initially called AGE and now the Journal of the American Aging Association from 1992-2003. As my term as Editor-in-Chief comes to a close, I thought it was important to compile a summary of the history of the organization and create a single document that describes the history, previous activities and bylaws of AGE as well as a document that summarizes and reviews the many seminal articles published in our Journal, denotes our membership list and the particular research interest of our scientific members.

This compilation will be helpful as we plan our future and enter the 21st century. My hope will be to include this material on our online website so that it will be easily accessed by our members.

The American Aging Association was organized and established at a seminal time in the development of modern biological research. It provides a venue for scientists to exchange data about the biology of aging and provides a forum for students and new colleagues brought into the field to exchange ideas about the basic mechanism(s) of the aging process. The American Aging Association has served a formative role in helping to give birth to this discipline.

There now exist a number of organizations, which are devoted to various aspects of aging. Some organizations have an important focus on the social problems of the elderly; others focus on the psychological aspects, while other organizations focus on the medical problems of the frail and elderly. Still other organizations are interested in the biology of aging but it is not their sole purpose. No other organization focuses on the biology of the aging process with the primary interest of understanding the basic mechanisms that cause the aging process. In this endeavor, the American Aging Association is unique.

Besides providing a forum for scientists to exchange ideas and collaborate, our Journal has consistently provided a peer reviewed mechanism to present creative and innovative studies designed to discover the underlying

mechanisms of the aging process and transmit them to the scientific community.

The organization through its membership has provided an advocacy voice to congress explaining the importance of supporting basic biomedical aging research.

The number of scientists that are working on this important fundamental biological problem called *aging* remains too few. The field is still in its infancy. The American Aging Association has been a cornerstone and continues to provide for the development of this burgeoning field.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Arthur K. Balin, MD". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the "MD" at the end being more distinct.

Arthur K. Balin, MD, PhD, FACP
Executive Director 1992-2002
Editor-in-Chief 1992-2003
Treasurer 1992-2004