

RETIRING PRESIDENT'S REVIEW

Marie-Geneviève Barthés-Labrousse : Triennium 2001-2004

To begin, I have to report, with sadness, the lost during this triennium of several past members. Madeleine Berthaud was the last living Founder Member of the IUVSTA. Besides her role in drafting the original Statutes and By-Laws of the Union, she had served as Councillor for France and Scientific Secretary. John Peter Hobson was Administrator of the IUVSTA Medard W. Welch Scholarship in the early eighties. The methodology he established for selecting the winner from the applicants is still in use. I would like to associate to these remembrances. Mr. Bro. Our Union remains grateful to the Bro family, in which Mrs Bro is the daughter of the late Medard W. Welch, for their generous funding of the IUVSTA Welch Scholarship.

During the course of the General Meeting, detailed reports of the IUVSTA activities have been presented based on written records of the Secretary General, Treasurer, Scientific and Technical Directorate (STD) and Committees. I will thus restrict myself here in taking a broader view of the Union's progress during the last triennium.

In my inaugural statement two and a half years ago, I defined several goals for this triennium: to promote new scientific and technical activities, to strengthen the educational activities, in particular in developing countries, to make a better use of electronic communication facilities to widely disseminate scientific and technical information, to improve the IUVSTA visibility, to increase mutual interaction between our member societies and to have closer interactions with groups that are not represented in the Union. I would like now to report on the new initiatives that I endeavoured to implement during this triennium to progress toward these goals.

The IUVSTA scientific activities have continued to flourish under the guidance of the STD Director, Massimo Sancrotti, assisted by the STD Secretary, Bill Rogers. In addition to the IUVSTA-related conferences (ECOSS, EVC, ICTF, VASSCAA...), the Workshop and School Programme has been very successful, with 8 workshops and 2 schools approved during the triennium. A new kind of workshop, titled the "Triennial STD Initiative for Technology Transfer" has been put forward to improve relations between scientists and industries that support fields of interest to the Union. This workshop is held in the form of a special session at the IVC-16. To ensure that the divisional structure of the Union appropriately reflects its scientific interests, a review of the activities of the divisions has been initiated during the triennium. As a first step, it led to the change in name of two of the existing divisions: the Vacuum Metallurgy Division became the Surface Engineering Division whilst the Vacuum Science Division became the Vacuum Science and Technology Division. I believe that such a review can help in identifying emerging topics and provide a simple opportunity to quickly move into new areas of science and technology. Of course, the STD and the Divisions have also been active in the organisation of the IVC-16 / ICSS12 conference and I am grateful to all of the members of the International Program Committees and to our Italian colleagues who worked hard for more than 3 years to ensure the success of this conference. The IUVSTA Prizes were presented at the opening of the conference. I congratulate the 2004 winners: Prof. Joost W.M. Frenken for the Prize in Science and Dr. Martin P. Seah for the Prize in Technology.

The IUVSTA Education Committee, under the direction of Joe Greene, has vigorously expand its activities and enthusiastically promoted a number of new initiatives. The Visual Aids Program has made significant progress in updating the existing modules and putting them in electronic format. Under the guidance of the new Editor-in-Chief, John Robins, Power Point formatting guidelines for the authors have been developed. Two modules have been completed, three others are close to completion and two new modules are being developed. Short courses have been successfully organised in conjunction with various conferences. A new programme has been launched, the Technical Training Courses Programme, with Nikola Radic as the first Director, to assist vacuum societies in lesser developed countries. This programme offers modest financial support to help the local vacuum organisation to settle technical short courses, presented in the local language, for training of engineers and technicians working in the fields of interest to IUVSTA. The first Technical Training Course was organised in China and was very successful. Further courses are planned in Croatia, Pakistan and Poland. An educational Web section has been created, overseen by Angus Rockett, which contains a variety of useful scientific and technical information such as periodic tables, vapour pressure curves, sputter yield charts... and links to other useful sites. Of course, this section will be constantly up-dated with additional data and links.

The IUVSTA Publications Committee, under the chairmanship of John Grant, has also been very active. The means of communication are a constant preoccupation in an organisation spread across many parts of the world and the IUVSTA website has become increasingly important in the operation of the Union. In January 2003, the server for the website moved from the AVS in New York to the SFV in Paris. The site has been re-designed and a "Members Only" area has been added. Further modifications should be effective early in the next triennium to facilitate internal communication. In 2003, the responsibility to edit and publish the IUVSTA News Bulletin has been transferred to the Secretary of the Publications Committee and, consequently, Alain Roche took over as Bulletin Editor from Lars Westerberg. The Bulletin is published twice per year (in December and June) in electronic format. During this triennium, the second edition of the "History of the International Union for Vacuum Science, Technique and Applications", covering the period 1958-2001, and its companion volume, the "Short Histories of the National Societies within IUVSTA" were completed by John Robins, assisted by James Lafferty. A 2001-2004 triennial update has also been produced by John Robins. These documents have been posted on the IUVSTA website and distributed as a CD to pre-registered attendees at the IVC-16 / ICSS-12 conference. They provide an excellent basis to understand the objectives and activities of the Union.

I pointed out several times the special nature of IUVSTA in being an organisation whose members are national societies rather than individuals, even though most of our activities, such as workshops, conferences, courses... are devoted to individuals. I believe we should take advantage of the opportunity that we are offering to the representatives of all 31 of the national societies to meet twice a year at the occasion of the IUVSTA Executive Council meetings to promote collaboration between the national societies. This could perhaps help in reducing the number of scientific conferences which are anarchically flourishing across the world. Of course, fruitful and successful exchanges require the partners to have an intimate knowledge of each others activities. Due to the highly multidisciplinary character of our Union and the diversity in size of our members, this is not an easy task. As a nano-step towards this direction, I have introduced a 5 minute presentation of the host national society in the agenda of the Executive Council meetings during this triennium. Of course, more

should be done to encourage our members to develop common activities. Such a need for a better interactivity clearly appeared during the last decade among the European vacuum societies, and had already been discussed at the occasion of three regional meetings of vacuum society Presidents held in France (1995), Sweden (1997) and Germany (2003). These meetings evidenced a strong desire to increase cooperation. IUVSTA can certainly facilitate exchanges. Discussion has started in the Long Range Planning Committee, under the chairmanship of Ugo Valbusa and a meeting of the European Presidents was called at the beginning of this week.

In my inaugural statement, I expressed the hope that IUVSTA would extend the services of the Union to new countries and regions which do not have a national society or committee and might be interested in setting up such an organisation and join IUVSTA. Of course, this is a long term issue. Nevertheless, Jean-Jacques Pireaux made fruitful contacts during the triennium in South Africa, New Zealand, Singapore, Iran, Denmark whilst Maria-Carmen Asencio investigated the situation in Latin America. I feel confident that these preliminary informal contacts will prove profitable to our scientific community in the next future.

To conclude, all the committees have been extremely lively during the triennium. Established activities have flourished and new initiatives have been introduced which show the vitality of our Union and have added strength to it and increase its impact. I sincerely thank all those who have contributed to these achievements, particularly the Councillors, the Chairs and Secretaries of the Divisions and Committees and the Officers. Nothing would have been possible without their hard work and constant support.

With so many people contributing to the progress of the Union, it is impossible and it would be unwise to mention every name. However, I wish to express my gratitude to the three Officers who are leaving the Union this year. Funding new activities with a modest budget is always a challenge and I thank our Treasurer, Hartmut Wahl, who introduced the necessary flexibility in the IUVSTA budget at the beginning of the triennium and lead our financial matters with a great wisdom and efficiency in spite of the difficult economic situation. Bill Westwood has carried out the role of Secretary General with great dedication. I am grateful to him for his efficiency in facing the enormous paper load which is associated to the Secretary General position. He was of great help to keep the Union in good order. Our Past-President, Phil Woodruff, has always shown a very receptive mind and I appreciated his pertinent advices throughout this triennium.

I have considered it an honour and privilege to serve as President of IUVSTA. The Union is alive, active and thriving and I feel confident that it will continue to flourish.

Marie-Geneviève Barthés-Labrousse
President of IUVSTA
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