

## Standing on the Shoulders of Giants

I recently heard the sad news of the passing of Dr. Raymond J. Loiselle, the American College of Prosthodontists' first president. Believe it or not, calling Dr. Loiselle the ACP's founding president probably understates his importance to the College. Dr. Loiselle was, in fact, the impetus behind the founding of the organization.

As envisioned by Dr. Loiselle, the ACP is the only prosthodontic specialty association where membership is based solely on education credentials. Noticing a need for such an organization, Dr. Loiselle began a letter writing campaign in the late 1960s. Generating interest among prosthodontists, Dr. Loiselle made his idea a reality, and by 1970, 250 Board Certified prosthodontists were enrolled as charter members. The College was officially launched on February 11, 1971, with 334 charter members.<sup>1</sup> Take a look at pages 9–11 of the 2007 Membership Directory for a listing of these founding fathers and charter members—the list is most impressive!

When I think of this relatively small group of forward-thinkers initiating the College's activities, and compare that initial group to what I saw at the most recent ACP Annual Session in Scottsdale: thousands of prosthodontists, students, technicians, and exhibitors all meeting to discuss ideas, to learn, to network, to socialize, and to continue the forward movement of the specialty of prosthodontics, I am most enthusiastic about the growth of our Specialty.

I hope many of you attended the Technology Forum at the Annual Session. In an environment increasingly saturated by technology, it is the goal of the ACP to position the specialty of prosthodontics as the leader in early adoption. We intend to show that we are the dental specialty most likely to practice on the cutting edge of science and technology.

In fact, the ACP and the UNC School of Dentistry hosted a "Digital Prosthodontics Technology Conference" in mid-January. Discussions included technology transfer within dental school and private practice settings; leading research needs; the

role of digital diagnostics in prosthodontics; and the most appropriate means of storage, management and sharing of digital data.

According to ACP Vice President Dr. Lyndon Cooper, one of the conference co-organizers, "Integrating digital informatics, imaging technology, rapid prototyping and novel dental materials will provide a new level of clinical excellence accessible to a wide array of dentists worldwide. Prosthodontists are innovation leaders and have formed new partners in the rapidly changing technology industry. . . . I think we have a real opportunity here to increase awareness of the rapid evolution of digital technology in dentistry, to paint a complete picture of the digital landscape for prosthodontics and to focus the growing resources of the ACPEF on the issues of technology in prosthodontics."<sup>2</sup>

It may seem incongruous that I link our look to the future and advanced technology with a celebration of one of our founders. But it is upon the shoulders of prosthodontists such as Dr. Loiselle and the other founding members of the ACP (Drs. Stephen O. Bartlett, Louis J. Boucher, Kenneth E. Brown, Anthony N. DeBallo, James E. House, Keith R. Marcroft, Kenneth D. Rudd, John J. Sharry, Edwin H. Smith, Jr, Robert C. Sproull, and Bruce E. Stansbury) that our organization even exists. Indeed, by looking back and celebrating these true forward-thinkers, we can look ahead and continue the ascent of this organization and this profession.

David A. Felton, DDS, MS, FACP  
*Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Prosthodontics*

### References

1. Sproull RC: The American College of Prosthodontists: The early years. *ACP Messenger* 2001;32:4–5
2. Krueger PF: Digital prosthodontics conference explores leading technologies. *ACP Messenger* 2008;39:1

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