President's Message

Dear Fellow IOMP Members,

Questions I am frequently asked are “What does the IOMP do?” and “Why do we need the IOMP?” These are not easy questions to answer because, quite frankly, the IOMP has always been a low-key organization. Most of what we have done has been behind-the-scenes with little (probably too little) fanfare. Our major problem has been limited access to members: we meet as a group only once every three years at our World Congress, and then only with only a small fraction (about 10%) of our members, and we communicate with members via Medical Physics World only every six months. Consequently, the majority of IOMP members are unaware of most of our activities.

A second problem is that membership in the IOMP is more “transparent” than it is for other organizations: members are not required to apply for membership and are not asked to pay annual dues. It is your national societies who apply for membership and it is they who pay your annual dues for you each year (about $2.40 US per member each year). Most members are not even aware of this, it is so “transparent.”

This lack of recognition has always been of concern to me, as I know it has been to all IOMP Officers, past and present. Your current Officers, Gary Fullerton, Oskar Chomicki, and I have been working hard to rectify this situation. We now have a very powerful new tool at our disposal: the Internet. This allows us to open a continual dialog with members. We realize that many members are not able to access this resource today, but “tomorrow they surely will. With this in mind we have developed, and are continuing to enhance, our Internet web site www.iomp.org. Secretary-General Gary Fullerton, especially, has made outstanding contributions. Without question, with Gary’s leadership, the IOMP web site will soon become the major resource for medical physics communication and information transfer, professional development, and education. The future is limitless with such a resource.

Speaking of the future, we are rapidly approaching our next World Congress, WC2000. Apart from scientific exchanges and renewal of friendships, this is where we conduct most of the business of the IOMP. This is where our committees and Governing Council meet. This is where we elect new Officers to lead us into the future and it is vitally important that these Officers represent all of our constituents. The members of the Nominating Committee (Past-President Keith Boddy, Vice-President Oskar Chomicki, Secretary-General Gary Fullerton, Lila Carrizales (Venezuela), Akira Ito (Japan), Wynand Strydom (South Africa) and myself) seek suggestions for candidates to be nominated for the position of Vice-President and Secretary-General. Although suggestions are welcome from individual members, we would prefer to receive proposals from your national organizations, if possible. Please send suggestions to any of the above Committee members by September 1st, 1999. We need your input.

Since I started this Message with some questions, let me conclude by providing some answers. Following are some of the activities of the IOMP and its representatives during the past six months:

- sponsorship of workshop/courses in Mexico City, New Delhi and Cluj, Romania
- agreement to sponsor programs in Patras, Greece (with EFOMP) and Guangzhou, China

(Continued on page 6)
Secretary-General’s Report

IOMP Membership

There is satisfying growth in IOMP membership in practically all categories. IOMP now has 69 countries on the membership rolls (http://www.iomp.org) representing more than 16,000 individual members. While this is good, the number of countries presently in good standing is only about 25% of the total, which raises grave concern about IOMP ability to function effectively. In addition there are a number of countries that have not responded for 1998 and these countries are no longer eligible to vote at IOMP Council Meetings, participate in IOMP sponsored meetings, or receive assistance for their members to participate in IOMP programs. The Secretary-General would greatly appreciate the assistance of National Member officers in resolving this problem. In the Fall of 1999 the Secretary-General will have no alternative but to proceed with purging the list of non-responding National members. Individual IOMP members can determine if their organization is current by going to the 1999 National Members page on the IOMP Home Page to see if dues are paid and determine if they are current to participate in IOMP events. The National dues for 1999 is $2.40 per individual member times the number of members (defined as the number of Medical Physics World Bulletin necessary to fulfill member needs independent of local category designations). The IOMP Headquarters Office is presently working on listings of Corporate and Regional Organization members for the Home Page and these lists should be up by the time you read this report.

Science, Education and Professional Programs

In 1998 the IOMP sponsored Educational Programs in Egypt and India and the first of a new type of Regional Science Program in Mexico. The unofficial reports of these programs indicate that all three were successful but more details will be available soon when the official reports are posted on the IOMP Home Page. The new programming on Science and Professional aspects of medical physics are intended to fully encompass the full range of member activities and needs. At present two Regional Science programs have been approved for 1999. The European Federation of Medical Physics (EFOMP) and the Greek Society have spearheaded the regional meeting in Patras, Greece in September 1999 while Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and Hong Kong are National Member sponsors for the regional meeting in Guangzhou, China in October 1999. Details of both meetings and contact addresses are on the IOMP Home Page. The Developing Countries Committee has been renamed the Professional Relations Committee with an expanded charge to begin to promote regional activities in the development of the medical physics profession. Both National and individual members of IOMP are encouraged to present proposals or suggestions for regional science, education and professional programming to the Secretary-General’s office.

Formation of Advisory Councils

The IOMP has formed two Advisory Councils to advise the IOMP Council of Delegates concerning regional IOMP activities and needs. The International Advisory Council consists of representatives of all formally recognized regional medical physics organizations and all affiliate organizations such as IAEA, PAHO, and WHO. The Corporate Advisory Council consists of representatives of all Corporate Members of IOMP. The intent of both councils is to provide needed relevance to the IOMP medical physics programs and activities to more quickly achieve Organizations goals. The intent is to optimize use of IOMP resources to better meet global needs. You will read more about these Councils in the next issues of MPW.

International Union for Physical and Engineering Science

The IOMP and the International Federation for Medical and Biological Engineering (IFMBE) joined together almost 20 years ago to form the IUPESM. The IUPESM is presently an Associate Member of the International Council of Science (ICSU). At present your Past-President, Keith Boddy, serves as President of IUPESM and I as Secretary-General of IOMP serve as Secretary-General of IUPESM. The Administrative Council of IUPESM is (Continued on page 6)

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MPW Vol. 15 (1), June, 1999
secretary-general's report

iomP membership

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Treasurer's Report
As some of you have, I'm sure, heard, the IOMP Treasurer, Ann Dixon Brown, has retired due to illness effective December 1998. I ask you all to join me in wishing her well during her recovery from surgery. Under the circumstances the IOMP Executive Committee decided to reintegrate the Treasurer's office into the Secretary-General's responsibilities until the Meeting in 2000 at which time consideration can be given to alternatives. Although the Secretary-General has been acting as Treasurer since January 1, 1999 and funds were transferred from Oxford to San Antonio in February, the transfer of records and final audit of the Oxford accounts have not been completed. The Executive Committee has asked Prof. Brian Stedeford, Past IOMP Secretary-General, to act as auditor of the Oxford records to complete the transfer process.
The Executive Committee presents the IOMP budget for 1999 for consideration by all members. Specific attention is drawn to the monies set aside for regional science, education and professional programs. The IOMP Committees responsible for these areas are ready to assist National Members and Regional Organizations to prepare programs of significance to all members.

International Organization for Medical Physics
Budget 1999
USA Account 1/01/99 - 12/31/99

Income: Members Dues $2.40 $39,325.00
Corporate Dues 10 $1,500.00 $15,000.00
Grants 1 $1,000.00 $1,000.00
Income Sub-total $55,325.80

Expenses:
Office Operations $2,600.00
Executive Secretary Salary $1,200.00
Postage $600.00
Supplies $600.00
Services $200.00
Travel $3,000.00
Homephone $2,000.00
Maintenance $500.00
Awards and Honors $800.00
Library Program (Shipping Fees) $1,000.00
Medical Physics World (Corporate Member Discount Sharing) $1,000.00
Electronic Medical Physics World $500.00
Global On-line Medical Physics $500.00
Professional Relations Program (formerly Developing Countries) $2,000.00
Education Program $16,000.00
Cash grants $7,000.00
Dues waivers $400 x $2.40 $9,600.00
Research Program $7,000.00
Dues waivers $400 x $2.40 $9,600.00
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Expense Sub-total $50,600.00
Budget Balance to Reserves $4,728.80

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MPW Vol. 15 (1), June, 1999
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International Organization for Medical Physics
Budget 1999
USA Account 1/1/99 - 12/31/99

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Expenses:
Office Operations $2,600.00
Executive Secretary $1,200.00
Postage $600.00
Services $600.00
Office Travel $200.00
Homepage $3,000.00
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MPW Vol. 15 (1), June, 1999
Vice-President's Report

The boundless energy of our Secretary-General has left us with not so much scope for our own initiative. Nevertheless, a stream of e-mails that reach us everyday keeps us vigilant and busy and forces us at least to send back our "yes" or "no" answers. As far as I can remember, the Executive Committee of the IOMP has never worked so efficiently: we have become a smoothly running virtual machine (on the Internet). On my part, I still operated in a very old-fashioned way: I have been able to come up with two issues (nos. 11 and 12) of the Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering Bulletin of the Developing Countries Committee of IUPESM, printed on paper, published and distributed in 250 copies to our devoted readers, especially in the emerging countries of Central and Eastern Europe and/or developing countries of South America and Asia. We have, as some of you know, already published several issues of the Bulletin on the IUPESM web-site. Now new arrangements have to be made since the site has moved to the USA. As Vice-President of the IOMP I took part in the 11th General Assembly of the Polish Society of Medical Physics on February 4-5, 1999 combined with a training conference on the physical aspects of quality assurance in mammography (see separate item), and I delivered an invited paper on the history and activity of the IOMP, which met with very good response. In June 1999, I will go to the prestigious Science Conference in Budapest (Hungary) as one of two representatives of the IUPESM, who have received invitation to attend. I promise to tell you more about this conference in the next issue of MPW.

Oskar A. Chomicki, M.Sc.
Vice-President, IOMP

REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

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Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand, May 29-June 2, 2000

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(Continued from page 2)

(Continued from page 2)

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Chicago ’2000 and Sydney ’2003

World Congress Presidents William Hendee and Al Potvin report that plans are on schedule for the World Congress on Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering in Chicago, July 23-28, 2000 (see http://www.wc2000.org/) for preliminary program. They also announced that Vice-President Gore has been invited to give the plenary address because of his specific interest in the development of global knowledge networks. Dr. Barry Allen has already begun development of the web page for the Sydney meeting and access is available from both the IOMP and IUPESM home pages. Interested National Members or regional organizations are encouraged to submit letters of interest for hosting the World Congress in 2006. Application forms and assistance are available from my office.

Gary D. Fullerton, Ph.D.
Secretary-General, IOMP

Colin G. Orton, Ph.D.
President, IOMP
Vice-President's Report

The boundless energy of our Secretary-General has left us with not so much scope for our own initiative. Nevertheless, a stream of e-mails that reach us everyday keeps us vigilant and busy and forces us at least to send back our "yes" or "no" answers. As far as I can remember, the Executive Committee of the IOMP has never worked so efficiently: we have become a smoothly running virtual machine (on the Internet). On my part, I still operated in a very old-fashioned way: I have been able to come up with two issues (nos. 11 and 12) of the Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering Bulletin of the Developing Countries Committee of IUPESM, printed on paper, published and distributed in 250 copies to our devoted readers, especially in the emerging countries of Central and Eastern Europe and/or developing countries of South America and Asia. We have, as some of you know, already published several issues of the Bulletin on the IUPESM web-site. Now new arrangements have to be made since the site has moved to the USA. As Vice-President of the IOMP I took part in the 11th General Assembly of the Polish Society of Medical Physics on February 4-5, 1999 combined with a training conference on the physical aspects of quality assurance in mammography (see separate item), and I delivered an invited paper on the history and activity of the IOMP, which met with very good response. In June 1999, I will go to the prestigious Science Conference in Budapest (Hungary) as one of two representatives of the IUPESM, who have received invitation to attend. I promise to tell you more about this conference in the next issue of MPW.

Oska A. Chemicki, M.Sc.
Vice-President, IOMP

REQUEST FOR SUPPORT
INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE PROGRAMS
THE PHYSICS OF RADIATION THERAPY
Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand, May 29-June 2, 2000
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Washington, DC 20007 USA
Tel: 202-784-3234
Fax: 202-784-3233
E-mail: ninomia@gunet.
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(Continued from page 2)

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Colin G. Orono, Ph.D.
President, IOMP

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Letter From the President of IUPESM

Dear Fellow Member of IUPESM:

On reflection, these Presidential Letters resemble a soap opera or a serial but, since the episodes appear at three monthly intervals, it is understandably easy to forget the plot. Consequently, with your indulgence, I will briefly recapitulate the story so far before bringing you up to date.

At the World Congress in Nice, your President and Council were charged with seeking Full Membership of the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), which was itself reviewing our relationship at the time, and also with establishing innovative Key Programmes in which the collaboration of ICSU would be sought.

As I intimated in the previous letter from the President, ICSU advised us in July 1998 that it had concluded that "the Associate relationship was the most appropriate method of cooperation at the moment." My letter in response was published in full and asked for the status of our relationship to be reconsidered.

Further negotiations were undertaken and I can report that ICSU has kindly agreed to consider again our application for Full Membership. A revised submission, including an Executive Summary and substantial supporting information have been submitted. Our application will be considered in the first instance by ICSU's Standing Committee on Membership. Structure and Statutes (SCMSS) on 13 April 1999. IUPESM has been invited to attend and Council has agreed that I, as President, and Professor Jean-Pierre Morucci, as President Elect will undertake this daunting task. Precedence is not in our favour as no Associate has ever graduated to Full Member previously. It will be an uphill struggle but we will do all we can.

If SCMSS supports our application, its recommendation will be considered, as the ultimate hurdle, by ICSU in its entirety at a meeting in Cairo in September 1999.

As evidence of our wish to collaborate with ICSU, IUPESM proposed a joint presentation at the World Conference on Science to be held in Budapest this summer and a draft abstract was sent to ICSU. A positive outcome is that IUPESM has received a formal invitation to participate in this prestigious conference at which we will be represented by Oskar Chomicke from Poland and Nandor Richter from Hungary, both experts in the relevant areas of the conference.

The primary benefits of Full Membership of ICSU are potentially symbiotic for both organizations. ICSU brings to the table its substantial international stature, greater resources (from which we may not directly benefit financially) and progrmames and committee structures linking closely with our own. IUPESM can offer vast international experience, complementing that of ICSU, to create an authoritative international advocate for the appliance of science, including engineering, for the benefit of the sick and disabled worldwide. Our Key Programmes to promote: Governmental and public understanding of Physical and Engineering Sciences in Health; Education, training, and Continued Professional Development; global biomedical information networking; evidence based health technology and equipment evaluation, all with special reference to Developing Countries, link with ICSU's Committee on Science, Technology in Developing Countries; its Programmes on Capacity Building in Science and its International Network for the availability of Scientific Publications. We hope to convince ICSU of these potentially important mutual benefits but, as I indicated earlier, it will not be an easy task.

In conclusion, the role of President of IUPESM is a difficult one and nothing could be achieved without substantial support from others. Consequently, I wish to pay tribute to our Officers, Council Members and Constituent Organizations, IOMP and IFMBE, for their unstinting and generous contributions of time and effort, which I greatly appreciate. In particular, our Secretary-General, Gary Fullerton, has made outstanding, innovative and dynamic contributions on our behalf. He has instigated Virtual Council Meetings, using the Internet, at quarterly intervals, thereby enhancing simultaneously democracy and the availability of collective wisdom. In addition, he has generated vital documents at short notice, revitalized the administration and our Web Site as well as contributing greatly to our Key Programmes and links with Chicago 2000. On your behalf as well as my own, I take pleasure in recording special thanks to him and those mentioned previously.

I hope that the next episode of this soap opera will contain good news. We can try — but this drama is real life!

Keith Boddy, CBE, DSc, FRSE
President, IUPESM

IOMP/AAPM Libraries Report

Currently there are 81 active libraries in 48 countries. Seven of these libraries were reactivated when they responded to our second request for updated information.

During calendar year 1998, 47 donations were processed, compared with 22 donations in 1997. To date in 1999, 31 donations have been completed, several more have been initiated and are pending notification from the library that the material were received.

We are working with Kathy Burroughs at AAPM to coordinate donated subscriptions of Medical Physics for all libraries needing ongoing subscriptions. We also continue to work with Brenda Trigg to coordinate donations of IOPP books to new and existing libraries.

The IOMP Web Site (www.iomp.org) contains a list of the currently active libraries and their locations. The curator welcomes applications for new libraries and offers of donations. Information concerning the procedures to request a new library or make a donation is available from the curator.

Marilyn Stovall, Ph.D.
Curator of the IOMP/AAPM Libraries
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PUBLISHED FOR IOMP

EDITORIAL COVERAGE

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- Distributed to all medical physicists in the 69 IOMP member nations plus over 14 other non-member countries.
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News items, calendar events and advertising inquiries should be directed to the Associate Editor, Ishmael E. Parsai, Ph.D., at address below:

Ishmael E. Parsai, Ph.D.
Radiation Therapy Department, Medical College of Ohio
3000 Arlington Avenue, Toledo, Ohio, 43699-0008, U.S.A.
Tel: (419) 383-5113 FAX: (419) 383-3040 Email: eparsai@mco.edu

Rev. 4/99

MPW Vol. 15 (1), June, 1999
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Report From the Education and Training Committee (ETC)

Since the World Congress in 1997 in Nice, France, the first task of the Education and Training Committee (ETC) was to establish policies and procedures for supporting education and training programs worldwide. This was achieved and approved by IOMP Officers by mid 1998 and was reported in the last issue of MPW (Vol. 14(2), Dec. 1998, page 10). These policies and procedures as well as the ETC Application are now available at the IOMP website (www.iomp.org).

Since our financial resources are very limited, we are unable to provide financial support for all the IOMP co-sponsored programs. However, we can offer our technical expertise in planning and organizing an educational program in your country and/or in your region of interest. Please contact an ETC member in your region for any IOMP co-sponsored educational program.

Following is a summary list of the ETC co-sponsored educational programs since the last World Congress (Nice, 1997):

Beijing, China, May 22-25, 1998 ($0.00)
Co-sponsored by: Chinese Society on Medical Physics

1998: The Physics of Radiation Therapy
Cairo, Egypt, May 10-14, 1998 ($0.00)
Co-sponsored by: American Association of Physicians in Medicine
Egyptian Association of Medical Physics

1998: International Conference on Medical Physics
New Delhi, India, November 6-9, 1998 ($3000.00)
Co-sponsored by: Association of Medical Physics of India

1998: First Iberian Latin American and Caribbean Congress on Medical Physics
Mexico City, Mexico, November 22-25, 1998 ($3000.00 from Science Committee)
Co-sponsored by: Latin American Association of Medical Physics

1999: Quality Assurance in Mammography
Warszawa, Poland, February 4-5, 1999 ($0.00)
Co-sponsored by: European Federation of Organizations of Medical Physics

1999: The Physics of Radiation Therapy: Review and Update
Sao Paulo, Brazil, June 2-5, 1999 ($2000.00)
Co-sponsored by: Associacao Brasileira de Fisica Medica
American Association of Physics in Medicine
Radiological and Medical Society of New York

1999: The Physics of Radiation Therapy
Cluj, Romania, June 10-14, 1999 ($1500.00)
Co-sponsored by: Romanian Medical Physicists’ Association
American Association of Physicists in Medicine

For 2000, we are planning a course/workshop in radiation therapy physics for Thailand and neighboring countries at the end of May/early June, 2000. Please contact us if you are interested to participate.

If you are interested in IOMP co-sponsored educational program, we encourage you to submit an ETC Application, with or without financial support request, as early as possible. Thank you.

Azam Niroomand-Rad, Ph.D.
Chair, ETC

Report of the Professional Relations Committee (PRC)

Since the last report, the name of the Developing Countries Committee (DCC) was changed to the Professional Relations Committee (PRC). The contention for this change was that the need of IOMP members could be served better through the charge of the PRC. The charge of the PRC follows for those who do not have access to the IOMP Homepage.

The charge to the IOMP Professional Relations Committee is to improve medical physics worldwide by providing systematized knowledge concerning clinical training, standards of practice, personal resources and physical resources necessary to provide quality services in the areas of clinical medical physics. The Committee promotes research and documentation to determine the nature and principles of professional conduct necessary to assure quality patient care and put such information in a useful form for all countries but especially in developing countries.

Methods:

1. The Professional Relations Committee will consist primarily of regional representatives representing (Middle East, North Africa, Southern (Central) Africa, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, North America, Latin America, Central Asia and Far East) as well as Directors of all programs of the committee (e.g. Library, Twinning and Communications Programs).

2. The Committee will identify the need for international professional relations and standards development through symposia, regional meetings and/or workshops and will assist with the organization, funding and arrangements of these ventures.

3. The Committee will assist Regional and/or National Organizations of Medical Physics to prepare sponsorship proposals for such “professional relations” meetings for official presentation to the IOMP Executive Committee.

4. The Committee will provide prioritized recommendations for sponsorship to the IOMP Executive Committee to best achieve the charge to the Professional Relations Committee within the budget limitations of the IOMP.

5. The Committee will work on any and all alternative mechanisms that will promote international cooperation in addressing the professional and clinical needs of medical physics.

Please make use of this opportunity that the IOMP offer and contact the PRC member responsible for your country (names of the committee members and regions were published in the December 1998 issue of MPW).

One task that is being addressed at the moment is to establish a database on the Status of Medical Physicist Certification in the IOMP member states. A questionnaire recently went out from the Secretary-General’s office in this regard. Each country official that received the form is urged to submit it without delay.

Activities involving PRC members included organizing of two successful workshops held in Bangladesh and Poland respectively. The first was a workshop on Medical Physics in Radiotherapy and Nuclear Medicine that was attended by 70 participants. The second was on Physical Aspects of Quality Assurance in Mammography that formed part of the X1th Congress of the Polish Society of Medical Physics.

The equipment exchange program is progressing well. A report on this activity can be found elsewhere in this issue.

The PRC kindly invite all IOMP members to participate in the activities of the committee. One hears the cliche often, but the truth is that a committee can only function successfully when members are actively involved and support the charges of the committee.

Andries van Aswegen, Ph.D.
Chair, PRC

MPW Vol. 15 (1), June, 1999
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Editor’s Corner
Maria Sklodowska-Curie’s Achievements - Part III
(Continued from MPW Vol. 14 (1), 1998, Page 14 and

The Second Stage: Large Scale Research
Radioactivity which, in its initial stage, was closely related to physics and chemistry, in the later period found many applications in other branches of science. The development of the new field induced the French government to establish a specialized research laboratory in Paris. The Radium Institute was to include two research laboratories: (1) physico-chemical laboratory administered by the Faculty of Science of the University of Paris, and (2) biological and medical laboratory administered by the Pasteur Institute. The faculty of science of the Sorbonne assigned the organization of the physico-chemical facility, to be later named Laboratoire Pierre Curie, to Maria Curie.

The year 1910 saw the publication of Maria Curie’s famous book “The treatise of radioactivity” in two volumes. This treatise remained for many years a valuable textbook for young researchers and, to a great extent, contributed to the rapid development of the science of radioactivity. In 1911, Maria Curie was awarded the second Nobel prize in chemistry for her work in chemistry of radioactive substances.

On Maria Curie’s suggestion a unit of the quantity of radioactive substances was established, and named “curie” in honor of her. It was defined as the activity of the emanation remaining in equilibrium with 1 gram of radium. A primary international standard was placed at the Bureau International des Poids et Mesures at Sevres, a secondary standard was conveyed to the Radium Institute in Vienna.

In mid 1914, the construction of the Laboratoire Curie was complete. However, the outbreak of World War I delayed its occupation. In this situation, Maria took the decision to organize and operate a fleet of radiological ambulances to provide service at the various fronts, and set up radiological units in all military hospitals, where all the sick and wounded could be examined with x-rays. In some cases, she even drove an ambulance herself being exposed to direct hazard from military activities. It was that great devotion and competent work in Red Cross that helped her to earn recognition and respect from all Frenchmen. In her book “radiology in the war” she writes at length about the organization of the radiological health services.

The Third Stage: Triumph and Glory . . .

The installation of the laboratory in a new place proceeded under extreme difficult conditions with a lack of adequate financial resources and skilled personnel. The laboratory did not start regular operation until two years after the end of the war.

From 1920, the Radium Institute came under the patronage of the Curie-Carnegie Foundation, which considerably improved the material status of the physics laboratory at the Institute. Consequently, in 1925, the Curie Laboratory was enlarged and gained widespread reputation.

In the postwar period, Maria returned to the fundamental questions involving the production of strong radioactive sources.

At the end of 1921, Maria Curie stopped her research since she had been invited to America. There, accompanied by her two daughters, she made a triumphant journey. President Warren G. Harding presented her with a gram of radium bought as a contribution from American women. That amount of precious radium received as a gift beyond any dreams of many laboratories, she offered for social services and sciences in France.

In view of the very extensive scope of the work done at the Radium Institute it became essential to set up a special department to perform measures of and control over radioactive substances intended for research purposes. This department would also meet the requirements of the ever expanding medical therapeutic industry which called for expertise, determinations of the quantity and quality of radioactive substances in minerals, mineral waters and in various drugs.

In 1922, Irene Curie, Maria’s daughter, joined the scientific staff of the Radium Institute. She published her doctoral thesis “On the properties of alpha radiation from polonium” in 1925. Later, in 1929, Maria and Irene Curie measured the decay constant of RaD. Irene Curie was joined by Frederic Joliot. Like Pierre and Maria Curie, they jointly published their works. The history repeated itself. Mutually shared interests and aims, boundless devotion for science, all these factors contributed to the great research success of both Irene and Frederic Joliot-Curie.

The great discovery made by the Joliot-Curies at the Radium Institute in the last year of Maria Curie’s life was to show that a certain type of nuclear transmutation lead to the formation of radioactive species. Due to their discovery of artificial radioactivity and the synthesis of new radioactive elements, the Joliot-Curies acquired great fame and repute worldwide. The possibilities were revealed of using artificially produced radioactive elements to follow chemical changes and physiological processes or in applications to medical therapy procedures.

Albert Einstein, when he was once in Paris, remarked that “Madame Curie was fortunate to see her work to be continued by her daughter, Irene Curie, who was her equal in talent and scientific activity.”

In 1934, Maria Curie investigated the optical spectrum of actinium. At that time she caught a cold, but, against doctor’s recommendations, she did not want to stop her laboratory work. Unfortunately, Maria’s incessant and intensive research effort, and her continuous presence at the Institute, had all contributed to serious complications and total exhaustion of her body. This time, she had to stop her work and leave for a health resort in the mountains. On July 6, 1934, she died of plastic anemia, the result of long exposure to ionizing radiation.

Maria Curie’s last great work was her comprehensive scientific treatise “Radioactivity.” It was her third book. The Institute of Radium in Paris was to a leading position in the development of the science of radioactivity of matter and the structure of the atomic nucleus thanks to Maria Curie’s own research and intensive and ceaseless efforts leading to continuous improvements in research and measuring methods and techniques.

In recognition of her great merits Maria Curie was included among the members of numerous Academies of Science of various countries and 107 French and foreign scientific societies and associations. Her name and her creation—the Radium Institute in Paris—will remain forever in the memory of all scientists and researchers.


Article by: Cezary Anatol Pawlowski.
IPEM Journals from IOP Publishing: Recent Developments & Innovations

On behalf of The Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine (IPEM), Institute of Physics Publishing published two academic journals, *Physics in Medicine & Biology* and *Physiological Measurement*. Both are official journals of the International Organization for Medical Physics (IOMP) and individual members of the IOMP can benefit from a reduced subscription rate to the paper version of the journal. Lately, these journals have undergone considerable editorial and electronic development, whilst continuing to disseminate high-quality, original research within their respective scientific communities.

**Physics in Medicine & Biology**

*Phys. Med. Biol.* is a monthly title and is currently in its 44th year of publication. Over 270 research articles were published in 1998. The scope of the journal focuses on the application of theoretical and practical physics to medicine, physiology and biology. Photon and particle radiotherapy, treatment planning, nuclear medicine, SPECT, PET, MRI, ultrasound imaging, X-ray, radiography, tissue spectroscopy and biomagnetism are all covered extensively. Publication times and author service standards are extremely competitive. On average, authors can expect to receive initial comments from the reviewers within about 70 days. After formal acceptance, articles appear in the electronic version of the journal within two months. Citation of material in the journal continues an upward trend, with its impact factor rising from 1.401 in 1996 to 1.542 in 1997 (according to the Institute for Scientific Information).

**Physiological Measurement**

*Physiol. Meas.* is published four times a year as a journal for seniors, instrumentation, measurement techniques and signal processing in physiology and medicine, and is now in its 20th year of publication. Articles cover the quantitative assessment and visualisation of physiological function in clinical research and practice, with an emphasis on the development of new methods of measurement and their validation. Subject coverage includes clinical engineering, patient monitoring, life support systems, flow and pressure measurement, instrumentation and data analysis. The journal has particularly strong traditions in electrical impedance imaging and cardiovascular research. The journal typically returns initial referees comments to its authors within 60 days on average, and submission-to-acceptance times are of the order of 140 days.

**Electronic Publishing**

All journals published by Institute of Physics Publishing are available in electronic format on the World Wide Web to full-rate subscribers. However, non-subscribers to *Physics in Medicine and Biology and Physiological Measurement* may still browse the journals' homepages, access table of contents for previous issues, and preview lists of forthcoming articles. Also available to casual browsers is a selected number of recent Featured Articles from each journal. In 1999, full-rate subscribers to either journal receive two additional benefits as part of their subscription package. The first of these is a six-year online archive of material (1993-1998 inclusive) with all articles available to download as PDF files. The second is HyperCite™ technology, enabling users to link from references in each paper to other articles, abstracts and resources in the wider physics community.

Institute of Physics and Institute of Physics Publishing

The institute of Physics is a learned society and a professional body for physicists, based in London. It is charged by Royal Charter to “promote the advancement and dissemination of a knowledge of and education in the science of physics, pure and applied.” Membership of the Institute exceeds 20,000 throughout the world. Institute of Physics Publishing currently published 32 academic journals in paper and electronic form, as well as numerous books and magazines. A recommended starting point for further information is the Institute of Physics' welcome page at [http://www.iop.org](http://www.iop.org). *Physics in Medicine and Biology and Physiological Measurement* have dedicated homepages at [http://www.iop.org/Journals/pb](http://www.iop.org/Journals/pb) and [http://www.iop.org/Journals/pm](http://www.iop.org/Journals/pm) respectively.

Dr. Paul A. Craven

Publishing Editor

Institute of Physics Publishing

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**Donations of Used Equipment — A PRC Report**

During the month of February 1999 the Professional Relations Committee (PRC) shipped a Theratron Treatment Planning Computer (TPC) 500 including two monitors, scanner, and plotter to the Institute of Radiotherapy & Nuclear Medicine (IRNUM), Peshawar University, Peshawar, Pakistan. The TPC was very kindly donated by Monmouth Medical Center, Long Beach, NJ. IOMP PRC is thankful to the hospital administration for the donation of the equipment. The TPC will be used for patient care and training of personnel in a developing country. Dr. Jack Yang, Medical Physicist at the hospital, helped us to get the equipment donated to IOMP and made the necessary arrangements for handling and shipping.

**Used Equipment Needed:**

- Co-60 machine, Film Dosimetry, Radiation Field Analyzer, Rectal Monitor, Cavity Chamber, Gamma Camera operating in a Spect mode.

**Used Equipment Available:**

- Siemans Mevatron
- Kellket Superficial X-ray machine
- Beam Monitors Keithley 35060
- Treatment Planning Computers, ROCS, Theratron 300 and 400
- 1 x year old Siemens Orbiter Digitrac ZLC 7500 but no formater or computer to go with it. LEHR LEHS LEGP and MEGP collimators. It will be available in May. It is under service contract and has had all worn and damaged parts relaced (e.g. new couch top recently).

The equipment mentioned above are in good working condition. The recipient has to pay for shipping and handling. For more information, please contact Mohammad K. Zaidi, member of PRC at 208-526-2132, fax 208-526-2548, or e-mail zaidimk@id.doe.gov.

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**6th International Conference on Medical Physics Patras Medical Physics 99**

The European Federation of Organizations for Medical Physics - EFOMP and the Hellenic Association of Medical Physics - HAMP are organizing this conference with a central theme: "New Methods and Advanced Technology in Medical Diagnosis and Therapy," from 1 to 4 of September 1999, at the Centre of the University of Patras, Patras, Hellas (GR). For further details please use our web-site: [http://patras99.med.upatras.gr](http://patras99.med.upatras.gr).
IPEM Journals from IOP Publishing: Recent Developments & Innovations

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Dr. Paul A. Craven
Publishing Editor
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Used Equipment Needed

- Co-60 machine, Film Dosimeter, Radiation Field Analyzer, Rectal Monitor, Catheter Chamber, Gamma Camera operating in a Spect mode.

Used Equipment Available:

- Siemens Megavolt
- Kelkit Superficial X-ray machine
- 25 x 25 cm Collimator
- Beam Monitor in Kathy 5000
- Treatment Planning Computers, ROCS, Theratrac 300 and 400
- 10 year old Siemens Orbiter Digitace ZLC 7500 but no formator or computer to go with it. LEHR LEHS LIEP and MIEP collimators. It will be available in May. It is under service contract and has had all worn and damaged parts replaced (e.g. saw couch top recently).

The equipment mentioned above is in good working condition. The recipient has to pay for shipping and handling. For more information, contact Prof. K. Zaidi, member of PRC at 208-526-2133, fax 208-526-2548, or e-mail zaidikl@id doe.gov.

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The Impact of the Year 2000 Problem in Clinical Environment

Introduction — Origin and Nature of the Problem

At its core, a simple statement of the problem is that many computers will not, at some time in the future, recognize the date correctly, as date data in the form "dd/mm/yy" goes from the year "99" to "00." Date in the form "dd/mm/yy" will, however, appropriately change from 1999 to 2000. Thus two digit year date data is the origin of the problem.

Healthcare Specific Problems

The healthcare industry (large and small hospitals, private clinics, Health Maintenance Organizations, HMOs, Health Care Financial Administration, HCFA) are particularly at risk. The last three, due to the enormous volume of claims processing (HCFA processes 1.7 million transactions/day, 1 billion claims/year), of which is very date sensitive, from a business (billing), clinical (appropriate clinical data, lab tests, accurate medical records), standpoint.

Providers are critically dependent upon the accurate processing of these data in a timely manner, for their very existence. Yet Medicare are recently informed Congress they were unable to implement congressionally mandated changes in the law, due to their Y2K remediation efforts.

The hospitals and clinics, in addition to their perilous dependencies upon prompt reimbursement, have their own internal problems. Much life saving equipment is computer controlled, including the bottom of this iceberg, i.e. embedded systems!

Also, much equipment is old (e.g. GE 9800 Hi-Speed Advantage CT), and will not be made compliant by the vendor, despite still being used widely. This example uses a computer (DG S-230) not manufactured since about 1984. Many other vendors are no longer in business, or have changed hands multiple times.

More critical examples include HDR. In addition to patient considerations, consider the bureaucratic chaos in explaining incorrect date to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, NRC!

Record and Verify in the Radiation Oncology Department is intimately dependent upon dates. Total dose prescribed (over time), dose delivered, previous courses of treatment, as well as billing, scheduling, and electronic charts! The above include only commercial applications. End-User applications (e.g. Excel spreadsheets and Access programs) must also be investigated and fixed.

Vendor Roles

Some systems (Operating systems, COTS, i.e. commercial, off-the-shelf) systems may only be remediated by the vendor. Assessment is required, however, as is follow-up in installing service packs. Good record keeping is essential! End-User written applications can be remediated with software tools, such as Visual DataScope 2000. This includes Excel, Access, and any database accessible via ODBC.

Every industry faces building specific issues (elevators, security), much of it due to embedded systems.

Summary

This article does not address problems on mainframes, e.g. hospital wide payroll, billing, etc. It emphasized department level concerns, such as PC's (including LAN's), and embedded processors, and a large problem, end user written applications (spreadsheets and PC or server based databases, or large databases accessible by the PC). Software tool exist that will scan, locate and remediate two digit year dates. Embedded systems must be identified, tested, and typically the only remediation for problems in this area is replacement. Forms may be obtained that facilitate Inventory and Assessment.

Robert J. Baker, Ph.D.
RJB Consulting LLC, San Diego, CA

Report on the Latin American Medical Physicists (ALFIM) Meeting in Mexico, November 1998

The Association of Latin American Physicians in Medicine - ALFIM together with the National Cancer Institute of Mexico sponsored a Congress of Medical Physics in Latin America and the Caribbean region in Mexico City, Mexico, November 22-25, 1998. There were two pre-congress courses: one on Radiation Therapy, sponsored by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), November 9-20. The second on Radiological Protection and QA for Diagnostic Radiology was organized by ALFIM, under the direction of Radiological Risks of the Secretary of Health of Mexico and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) November 16-20. The IAEA subsidized in full participants in their course. PAHO covered the local expenses of 26 participants to the Congress. The Congress was well organized, down to the smallest detail. The Congress consisted of oral papers, posters, keynote speeches and categorical refresher courses. The papers were published.

It was an excellent opportunity for medical physicists and students in medical physics to exchange ideas and to discuss research projects of mutual interest. The meeting increased the awareness of medical physics in Latin American countries. It was an excellent Congress. The president of the Congress, Enrique Gaona, together with the officers of ALFIM received strong support from Dr. Jaime G. de la Garza Salazar, Director of the National Cancer Institute of Mexico (INCan); Dr. Cari Borras from the Pan American Health Organization; Professor Pedro Andreado of the IAEA; Dr. Gary Fullerton, Secretary-General of IOMP; and Dr. Bartolome Ballester Moll, President of the Spanish Society of Medical Physics.

The meeting of the ALFIM General Assembly held during the Congress included presidents and voting representatives from nine Latin American medical physics societies. The voting representatives were: Graciela Velez, Argentina; Elizabeth Vianello, Brazil; Esperanza Castellanos, Colombia; Jose Luis Rodriguez, Cuba; Luis Schwartzmann, Chile; Nixon Gutierrez, Ecuador; Felipe Florez, Mexico; Rolando Pauar, Peru; and Lila Carrizales, Venezuela.

The General Assembly selected Venezuela as the site of the next ALFIM Congress in 2001. Dr. Federico Gut was chosen as the organizer of the Congress. The Assembly elected the following new officers of ALFIM: President: Fis. Lila Carrizales, Venezuela (lcarriza@ivic.ivic.vc); Vice-President: Fis Nixon Gutierrez, Ecuador; Secretary: Fis. Esperanza Castellanos, Columbia; and Treasurer: Fis. Herman Barriga, Chile.

The retiring officers of ALFIM were: President: Fis. Enrique Gaona, Mexico (gaen1310@cueyati.uam.mx); Vice-President: Fis. Diana Beartiz Feld, Argentina; Secretary: Fis. Victor M. Tovar Munoz, Mexico; and Treasurer: Fis. Jorge L. Morales Lopez, Cuba.

Reported by:
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Report on the Latin American Medical Physicists (ALFIM) Meeting in Mexico, November 1998

The Association of Latin American Physicists in Medicine (ALFIM) is a loose federation of small national and regional societies of medical physicists in Latin America. The organization was founded in 1979, and its meetings have been held biennially. The ALFIM meeting in Mexico City is one of the largest meetings of medical physicists in Latin America.

The meeting took place from November 22nd to 26th, 1998, at the Hotel改革, and was attended by approximately 400 participants from various countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. The meeting featured plenary sessions, workshops, and poster sessions.

Report by Lilia Carrilazes, Physician Assistance Laboratory, Centrales Para Panamericana KM 11 Altos de Puebla, AP 21827, Caracas 1030-A VENEZUELA.

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