

A Tribute to Dr. George Zarb

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On June 30, 2004, Dr. George A. Zarb retired from the discipline of prosthodontics in the faculty of dentistry at the University of Toronto. This concluded a 38-year appointment, representing a major portion of his career. It also signalled the end of an era in Canadian prosthodontics. George has been a major contributor to the advancement of the discipline in Canada and the world, making his retirement a significant milestone in Canadian dentistry.

George has a prodigious capacity for work and the volume and quality of his output speaks for itself. He has written or edited no less than 13 textbooks and contributed chapters to 16 others. He has authored or co-authored 137 other scientific publications, was an editorial board member of 7 dental journals and is currently editor-in-chief of the *International Journal of Prosthodontics*.

Early in his career, George had a vision of the rightful place of prosthodontics within organized dentistry. He was instrumental in the establishment of prosthodontics as a recognized specialty in Ontario. He was also a co-founder of the Association of Prosthodontists of Canada and later served as its president. Internationally, he was co-president of the International College of Prosthodontists and president of the Academy of Prosthodontics. His involvement with these organizations led to many fond friendships around the world, along with numerous invitations to participate in international events.

The respect that George has earned amongst his colleagues resulted in invitations of over 80 visiting professorships in nearly every province of Canada, a dozen U.S. states and 19 countries around the world. He has sometimes been called an impresario and I believe this is a fitting description. He has organized 11 international conferences including his first, and arguably most important, the 1982 conference in Toronto that introduced osseointegration to North America. The rest, as they say, is history.

Taken together, these activities provide an understanding of George's profound influence and recognition around the world. His activities have enabled the discipline of prosthodontics, the faculty and the university to be associated with the highest international standards of teaching, research and clinical service.

To mark George's retirement, a symposium and formal dinner were held as a celebration of his career. The symposium was entitled "Prosthodontics 1966–2042: The near future based on the recent past." It was a look back over the span of George's career and forward an equal length of time, to see how the discipline (and indeed the entire profession) has been and will be affected. Seven internationally recognized speakers also looked at how conditions have changed and will change over time.

Dr. Michael MacEntee looked at the changing needs of our patients and Dr. Doug Chaytor did an assessment of the evolution of prosthodontic education. Dr. Christian Stohler, dean at the University of Maryland, assessed the development of prosthodontic research, while Dr. Gunnar Carlsson, former editor of the *Journal of the International College of Prosthodontics*, traced the changes in the prosthodontic literature. Professor emeritus Philip Worthington, former chair of the department of oral and maxillofacial surgery at the University of Washington, spoke about the evolution of the relationships between prosthodontics and its allied disciplines. Professor John Hobkirk from the Eastman Dental Institute for Oral Health Care Services in London, U.K., looked at how the developments in prosthodontics will affect the entire profession of dentistry. Finally, Professor Tomas Albrektsson from Göteborg, Sweden, looked at the impact of implants on the discipline.

The papers presented by these eminent colleagues are reproduced in their entirety in the electronic version of *JCDA*. The following pages include brief summaries of each presentation. Collectively, they represent a fitting tribute to Dr. Zarb. They also combined to produce a remarkable symposium that celebrated the discipline of prosthodontics and the profound influence George had upon it. Dr. Zarb's retirement is a landmark in prosthodontics and his lasting impact is a source of much pride in Canadian dentistry. ♦



Dr. Anderson is a member of the University of Toronto's faculty of dentistry. He was chair of the symposium "Prosthodontics 1966-2042".