



Dalhousie University, Faculty of Dentistry



Dental Research News

1987 - 1995

Introduction to the Dental Research News collection

I had a thought during the 100 Anniversary celebrations (May 2012) regarding the preservation of historical Dental Faculty records on research. During my time as Assistant Dean for Research (1987-1995) I produced the "Dental Research News" (DRN) from September 1987 to July 1995. The DRN was published monthly from January 1988. An early issue possibly October or November 1987 is unfortunately missing. The purpose of the DRN was to inform faculty members about on-going research to provide research information and to try to stimulate and encourage research within the Faculty of Dentistry.

During the ten-year period 1968-1978 dental faculty members presented a total of 18 papers at international meetings. The record 42 research papers presented at international meetings during 1992 and the fact that a total of 181 research papers from the Dental Faculty were presented at IADR/AADR meetings in the six years (an average of over 30 per year) between 1988 and 1993 demonstrated the very significant rise in research activity within the faculty over a short period of time. This achievement is all the more impressive considering the small size of the faculty. Bruce Moxley and Marylyn Kline of the Audio Visual unit provided wonderful support during the mad rush to produce slides and posters for presentation at the annual research meetings. This was at a time when the old fashioned slides had to be produced no computerized graphics and PowerPoint presentations.

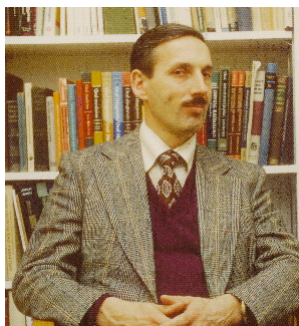
These 89 copies of the DRN provide an historical record of the research activity of the members of the Dental Faculty over a period of seven and a half years. This was a period when the Faculty of Dentistry at Dalhousie made significant strides in the development of research.

Aside from the pretyped abstracts of papers submitted to me, I painstakingly typed the balance of the 400,000 or so words on the 715 or so pages, burning the midnight oil to meet my own deadline each month. Some of the words I wrote may still be relevant today. Any errors amongst the 700 or so pages and there are some are all my own. For example on page 2 of the August 1994 issue

it states that 604 pages of the DRN had been written since September 1987 in fact it was at least 679 pages. On page 3 of the last issue of the DRN June 1995 it was stated that this was the 87th issue of the DRN however, it was at least the 89th and possibly the 90th issue. The simple message that the DRN aimed to deliver each month was that research is important. Our research improves the quality of dental care; enhances the knowledge base and improves the messages that we impart to our dental students.

The number of papers presented at international meetings does not tell the complete story about the level and quality of research, any more than the number of research dollars, which have been brought in. However, the number of papers presented each year and the level of research dollars do provide a very crude measure of the health of the research in our dental school. Clearly as documented in the DRN from 1987 to 1995 the health of dental research in the Dental Faculty at Dalhousie was vigorous and beating with a strong heart, laying the foundation for future success.

I joined Dalhousie University Faculty of Dentistry in 1975. At my interview for a faculty position with Dean Jim McLean and Dr. John MacConnachie in February 1974, I was given the mandate of stimulating and promoting research and significantly improving the level and quantity of scholarly activity within the Dental Faculty, I was informed that this would be a major challenge for the "Little Collage by the Sea". Twenty-five years after the publication of the first Dental Research News in 1987, the Faculty of Dentistry now has a very efficient Dr. Martha Brilliant, Research Development Officer using the Dalhousie University website and Internet to promote and initiate research within our Faculty. The items recorded in the copies of the DRN can possibly still provide ideas for research projects for clinical faculty members even today, after all the definition of re-search is to search-again. Blood sweat and tears were often involved in achieving the historic recorded details of the research activity in the faculty. The nostalgic look back at the documented details contained within the pages of the DRN reminded me that it was in fact a labour of love.



Derek W. Jones
Derek W. Jones,
Dental Research News
July 12th 2012



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