

Dear Colleagues,

Herbert Resh has passed the baton to me, and I will try to carry it as well as he has over this past three years. As he did an extensive review of his tenure in his last Presidential letter, it is not necessary to point out again the work he accomplished as a President. I would like to congratulate him on the great input he has given to the society and to thank him for handing over a society that is scientifically and economically well established.

We have just finished our second closed meeting, which took place in Salzburg from September 23 to 26. Ralph Hertel organized several nice scientific sessions, and a lot of time was devoted to the discussion. We had almost eighty associate or ordinary members participating, and everyone appreciated the familial and friendly atmosphere that encouraged lively discussions. We all agree that the format of this meeting should be maintained in its present form.

During the general assembly few decisions were taken. For those of you who were not able to attend the meeting, I thought it would be helpful to review the main decisions for the entire membership.

As Herbert Resh and Peter Habermeyer stepped down from the executive committee, we welcomed two new members : Frank Göhlke from Würzburg – Germany who is going to be our new treasurer and Jenó Kiss from Budapest who organised a wonderful SECEC meeting in 2002 together with Peter Balványossi. The nomination of Jenó as a member of the executive committee points out the importance the Society wants to give to the countries of Eastern Europe. We hope that he will be a bridge between Eastern and Western Europe.

Next year Jens O. Söbjerg will step down and we will have to choose a candidate from either Scandinavia or Iberia. There will be a secret vote at the next general assembly in Rome.

Stefano Gumina presented to the members the venue of our next meeting in Rome from September 20 to 24, 2005. This meeting will take place at the Cavallieri Hilton and the Social program Franco Postacchini is preparing should be as spectacular as the scientific program that Ralph Hertel as Chairman of the educational committee is putting together. We expect to have an outstanding meeting in this spectacular city.

Ian Kelly passed away in the beginning of August. I would like first to express our deep condolences to his wife Mrs. Kelly, in the name of the Society and to thank Ian for the tremendous work he did as a Chief Editor of the JSES in Europe.

Taking his place is going to be a difficult task. Three candidates, Roger Emery from London, Frank Göhlke from Germany, Jens Ole Söbjerg from Denmark, proposed to work together as a European Editorial Board. This solution was accepted by the Executive Committee and presented to the Board of Trustees which should accept this proposal. In the mean time, Angus Wallace has been confirmed as an "Interim European Editor" and we thank him for accepting this task.

Angus Wallace presented to the members the new SECEC's website (www.secec.org) which has been re-organized and restructured by the Website Committee. It is our aim that it will contain all the relevant information about our society. Please do visit our home page. All the information that you need is just a mouse click away from you !

The Executive Committee welcomes the input of the membership on all activities of the society. We all agree that it would be best for the SECEC to maintain "continuity" from one President to the next ; this will allow important initiatives to be continued from one term to another. My first task will be to maintain a high level of friendship as well as scientific level for the society.

If you have any comments or wishes, please send them to the email address of the society (secec@wanadoo.fr) or do not hesitate to go on the forum of our website (www.secec.org).

Sincerely Yours,

Gilles Walch
SECEC President