

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 1996-1997

The Council of the Nova Scotian Institute of Science initiates the following main activities:

- regular lectures;
- publication of the Proceedings;
- maintaining its library;
- providing a collective voice for scientists in Nova Scotia;
- providing services related to science to scientists and the community in general.

LECTURES

The following lectures and panel discussions were presented:

- October: How we communicate by smell?
Dr. Richard Brown, Psychology Dept., Dalhousie University.
- November: panel discussion: "Entrepreneurs in the University".
Dr. Abdulah K. Kirumira, President "Octopus Diagnostics Research" (medical biotechnology),
Dr. Marlon R. Lewis, President "Satlantic Inc.", Halifax
Dr. Andrew C. Peacock, "BDI: Business Development Information Inc.", Halifax
Dr. Doug Pincock, President "Applied Microelectronics Inc. (AMI)", Halifax.
Moderator: **Dr. Rollie MacInnis**, Deputy minister, Technology and Science Secretariat.
- December: New dates for old things: radiation dosimetry, megafaunal extinctions, and archaeology.
Dr. Dorothy Godfrey-Smith, Earth Sciences, Dalhousie Univ.
- January: panel discussion: "Aquaculture Science in Nova Scotia: are we heading in the right direction?"
Dr. John Loch - Regional Director of Science, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Dr. Roger Foxall - Director General, Institute for Marine Biosciences, National Research Council of Canada
Dr. Roland Cusack - Veterinarian, Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries
Dr. Tom Gill - Director, Canadian Institute of Fisheries Technology, TUNS
Ms. Marli MacNeil - Executive Director, Aquaculture Association of Nova Scotia
Mr. Peter Darnell - Indian Point Mussel Farms
Mr. Louis Deveau - President, Acadian Seaplants Limited
Mr. John Batt - Research Director, Sambro Fisheries Limited
Mr. Philip Drinnan - Loch Bras d'Or Salmon Farms
Moderator: **Dr. Rene Lavoie**, Assistant Director, Science Branch, Fisheries and Oceans Canada.
- February: On the road to electrical vehicles with long driving range.
Dr. Jeffrey Dahn, Physics Department, Dalhousie University.

- March: New insights into Artic Ocean circulation revealed by the transport of radioactive waste.
Dr. John Smith, Marine Environmental Science Division, BIO.
- April: panel discussion: "Science curriculum at the high school"
Bob Leblanc - Director English Programme Services, NS Department of Education.
Brian Cochran - Science Consultant, NS Department of Education.
John Haysom - Professor, Department of Education, Mount Saint Vincent University.
Bob Braedley - Consultant with Chignecto Regional School Board; member NSTU.
Jim Sutherland - Physics teacher Queen Elisabeth High School.
Moderator: **Dr. Lucy Canary**, Chair of the Discovery Centre Board; Director Advanced Material Engineering Centre (AMEC)
- May: Gene cloning: methodology and applications.
Dr. Jonathan Wright, Biology Department, Dalhousie University
From genes to humans: some ethical implications of cloning".
Dr. Susan Sherwin, Philosophy Department, Dalhousie University

As is apparent from the above, we introduced this year more panel discussions. They were extremely well attended, regularly exceeding the capacity of the lecture room at the NS Museum, despite the extra chairs. It is clear that there is a need within the scientific community to discuss pertinent issues. Despite the fact that organising such panels requires a large time commitment, organizing such panels on "hot topics" should remain a major responsibility of Council. I thank the different members of Council who organized or helped organize these events and the speakers for their willingness to participate.

PROCEEDINGS:

After reorganising the responsibilities for publishing the Proceedings, one issue (consisting of two parts) of the Proceedings was published and a second issue is well on its way. It is essential to us that the Proceedings are published regularly, becomes more readable to a larger audience and focuses on a broad range of issues relevant to scientists in NS. The new editor Dr. R.P. Gupta, has made major steps in this direction, and we thank him for his directness and energy with which he accepted the responsibility as editor. For the next issues he will be assisted by Dr. Stephen Payne as managing editor.

LIBRARY:

Maintaining the library is an important function of Council. This year the library was moved to another room of the DAL Killam Library. With the help of a summer student the holdings were reassessed; duplications with other regional institutions prevented. The Proceedings are sent out to our members and about 200 sister organisations across the world; in return we receive a similar amount of journals. These journals are listed on our Web page. They are catalogued and stored by our librarian Sharon Longard. We thank her sincerely for her hard work to maintain this valuable collection.

REPRESENTING SCIENTISTS.

You might remember that last years speaker at the annual meeting was Rolly MacInnes, Deputy minister of Science and Technology Secretariat. We have kept contact with him and he was the moderator on our panel of Scientists as Entrepreneurs.

Several political issues came up that required our input. We wrote letters and had discussions with MP's and MLA's to support of Science funding to this region. With elections coming up we will again draw attention to these issues as well as employment opportunities for young scientists in this region.

SERVICES TO SCIENTISTS:

We have made more extensive use of e-mail to alert members and other scientists to science activities in this area in general and that of the Institute in particular. A monthly e-mail newsletter was introduced.

The NSIS web-site now includes:

- history and activities;
- details about our meetings;
- information about the Proceedings, including its table of content;
- titles of the periodicals held by the Institute;
- directory of research facilities in this region.

We also introduced a page describing the research activity of its members. I encourage members to publicise their activity to the general public and to attract potential graduate students this way.

We thank Dr. Stan Heaps for taking charge of the Web-site and maintaining it so professionally.

SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY:

On the initiative of R.P.Gupta we started last year a science workshop for grade 5 and 6 students. This was repeated this year. Both times the workshop was led by Surjeet Verma, now member of Council. We thank him as well as Dr. Sherry Niven, Peter Lockard and Dr. R. P. Gupta for organising this event this year. 32 students and parents were invited. It was a great and successful event.

MEMBERSHIP:

Although still sizable, an area of concern is its decline. It is not clear to many scientists why one should become a member of the NSIS. Despite this we will continue our membership drive spearheaded by our membership committee of Drs. Heaps, Niven and Loucks. Among other initiatives, they advocate more involvement of the membership in NSIS activities. It is clear that we need to be more visible and explain more clearly our role. With this in mind we have publicized our activities more widely through e-mail and fliers. This way we hope to make the community more aware of what "they get for their \$15.-".

I like to take this opportunity to thank the Nova Scotia Museum for its financial contribution towards the Proceedings and for providing space and facilities for our

meetings and lectures. By doing so it demonstrates its support to the Institute which is greatly appreciated.

In conclusion, it has been an active and productive year, which would not have been possible without the hard work of all members of Council; I thank them for their commitment to the Institute.

Submitted by:

Gerhard Stroink,
May 5th, 1997.