

EDITORIAL

Following a hectic few months, here is the next (slightly delayed) issue of the Journal. Once again a very large thank you to those reviewers that have assisted me over the last six months; your valuable time and positive comments are much appreciated by me and our authors (whether published or declined). Giving constructive feedback to those who have worked for long hours on manuscripts helps to maintain standards and raise motivation. It has also been extremely pleasant to chat online with various reviewers across the world. The new website is also up and running thanks to Herman and Zephne Bernitz and colleagues.

Over the last few months mass fatality incidents have claimed our attention and caused chaos and destruction around the world. Over here, in the southern hemisphere, we have had our share of incidents to include; flooding in Queensland, the Pike River mining explosion and the series of earthquakes that destroyed much of Christchurch with the loss of 182 lives. The aftershocks continue to distress the residents and cause further damage to buildings, land and livelihoods. Whilst deployed with the New Zealand dental DVI team, we received the shocking news of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan. The disaster response and identification teams can and do make a difference to these incidents and being prepared is essential. Errors in identification cause additional distress to relatives and friends of the deceased and accuracy and quality assurance is essential. Turbulent times need effective teams.

The recent New Zealand Society of Forensic Odontology meeting in early May focused on the Christchurch disaster response and the subsequent dental debrief was most worthwhile to discuss lessons learned, standard operating procedure updates and future responses. The friendships gained from working within the disaster teams are always rewarding; a particular bond is felt by all with the hope that we have assisted in some small way.

The 19th IAFS meeting is to be hosted in Funchal, Madeira (12-17 September). This promises to be a most interesting meeting with a dedicated forensic odontology section and workshop. Is there a better place to learn, exchange ideas, update your continuing professional development, renew old friendships and make new friends? Book a few extra days to enjoy the history, levada walks and fortified Portuguese wine. Unfortunately, I may have to miss this opportunity and stay on this side of the world for the Australian Society of Forensic Odontology Symposium in Darwin in October. We are fortunate that forensic odontology has such amazing international conference opportunities and members prepared to put in the effort to ensure that the meetings are organised and information is shared.

The Journal is receiving a steady influx of manuscripts to be considered for publication, however, some member countries are not contributing yet! I am sure that someone in each country has a fascinating case that they would like to share with us? Our December issue is not too far away – please start work immediately! We are now finally back with PubMed/ Medline which has taken a surprising amount of work this year; thank you to Charles Maybury, our assistant editor, for all his technical skills with this matter.

I look forward to hearing from you and send kind regards for the summer or winter wherever you are.

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Editor