
EDITORIAL



Timothy J. Bennett, CRA, OCT-C, FOPS

*Milton S. Hershey Medical Center
Penn State Eye Center
500 University Drive, Suite 800
Hershey, PA 17033
717/531-5516
tbennett1@pennstatehealth.psu.edu*

Through the Lens of Time

As 2019 marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Ophthalmic Photographers' Society, this issue of the *Journal of Ophthalmic Photography* is dedicated to exploring the historical events that led to the birth of our profession. The historical articles in this issue represent snapshots in time, documenting several major milestones in ophthalmic imaging that collectively provided the foundation for the profession we celebrate today. In preparing to write this editorial it seemed appropriate to review the thoughts of previous *JOP* authors and editors to build on their perspectives. Their comments were often both insightful and prescient. In the 1978 inaugural issue of the *Journal*, Editor and OPS Founding Member Don Wong, RBP, FOPS stated: "It is inevitable that, at such a moment as this, we should pause in retrospect, to recall that day in the spring of 1969, when Johnny Justice Jr. approached a group of photographers who were attending the ARVO meeting in Sarasota, Florida, and discussed the feasibility of a new society. It is also natural for us to reminisce about the "early days" of the OPS, and to wonder about the future."¹

Those words still resonate several decades later. Looking back in time gives us some perspective not only on where we've been, but where we may be headed. In taking a closer look at the inaugural journal and its historical impact, I noticed for the first time that the front and back cover images were not only striking examples of fluorescein angiography, but that they seemed cleverly selected. The front cover was a conjunctival angiogram by Csaba Martonyi, CRA, FOPS, and the back cover a retinal angiogram by Johnny Justice Jr., CRA, FOPS. Knowing how thoughtful and meticulous Don was, it couldn't be a coincidence that views of the front and back of eyes were placed on the respective front and back covers (see cover image). I believe it was a symbolic gesture acknowledging the juxtaposition of the past and the future of the OPS.

As an organization, it seems like we've always maintained a strong connection to our past and recognized the contributions of those pioneers that shaped our profession.

Several historical articles that focused on the early days of the OPS appeared in the Fall 1994 *JOP* issue that celebrated our 25th Anniversary. Many of them can also be found on the OPS website. In the 25th Anniversary issue, Larry Merin, RBP, FOPS, published the results of a membership survey that looked at the state of the profession after a quarter of a century. In discussion of the results, Larry stated: "Although the charter members of this organization were primarily medical photographers who specialized in ophthalmic subjects, it seems that today's members have expanded their repertoire to include a variety of other tasks, many of which do not fall within the traditional sphere of pure photography. As technology continues its rapid advance in the field of ophthalmology, OPS members may increasingly take on new and innovative forms of documenting the eye."²

Even 25 years later those thoughts ring true. It's amazing that although technology may have changed dramatically over time, some of the trends that were noted back then continue today. It also reinforces the idea that there is value in revisiting our past as we consider the future. In the same 1994 issue of the *JOP*, Pat Saine, CRA, FOPS added: "The history of the OPS can be interpreted in two different ways. After reading this reminiscence, you may be focused backwards in time: recalling the experiences you have had with the Society and its members. Another option is to look forward. This article should challenge you to build on the success of past members. It is an open invitation for you to make the next 25 years of the Ophthalmic Photographers Society even better."³

With those thoughts in mind, I hope you will enjoy reading about several important milestones that are included in the collection we've gathered here. Featured in this current issue are historical articles such as Jim Gilman's incredible personal journey to create a video documentary chronicling the origins of fluorescein angiography. The article includes first-hand accounts by both Harold Novotny and David Alvis, the two Indiana University medical students who performed the first

successful fluorescein angiograms in human subjects. I've always been fascinated by this amazing story and its profound impact on our profession. In 2003, I received a pleasant surprise while conducting an OPS Board of Certification survey designed to identify the current skills needed in our profession.⁴ As Honorary Life Members of the OPS, both Harold Novotny, MD, and David Alvis, MD, had been on our member mailing list since the seventies, but we rarely heard from them. In the stack of over 600 surveys returned from our members, I came across one that caught my attention. Harold Novotny responded to the survey! He only answered two of the more than fifty questions on current imaging tasks and procedures but included the comment that he "created fluorescein angiography" (Figure 2).

The sentiment in Pat Saine's 1994 quote about building on the success of past OPS members is echoed by the feature, *Standing on the Shoulders of Giants*. Compiled by Paula Morris, CRA, FOPS, it is a series of small personal vignettes contributed by several Fellows of the Ophthalmic Photographers' Society describing the mentors and inspiration that most influenced their careers. It's fun to see that even our heroes have heroes!

You will notice that sprinkled throughout many of the articles are historical images from the OPS Photo Archives. The archives are an ongoing project led by Denice Barsness, CRA, FOPS, who took over the role of OPS Historian and archivist at the urging of Don Wong. Denice has contributed a short piece on the archives in this issue. What a valuable resource!

One of the challenges in writing about history is obtaining historical images and securing permission to publish. The OPS archives provided most of the images published here, but some other images proved difficult to find. By happenstance I mentioned to Johnny Justice, Jr. that I was trying, without much success, to track down examples of Arthur Bedell's fundus photography for the article co-written by Terry Tomer, CRA, FOPS. Johnny mentioned that Csaba Martonyi had purchased and restored Bedell's Zeiss Nordenson fundus camera and took some great photos of it before he and his wife generously gifted the



Figure 3: Don Wong, RBP, FOPS

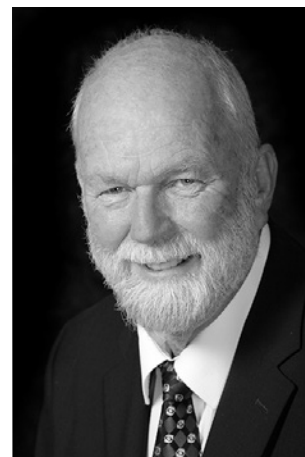


Figure 4: Chris Barry, CRA, FOPS

camera to the AAO Museum of Vision. Csaba kindly shared his images with us for publication.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity on behalf of the OPS to recognize our current Managing Editor, Chris Barry, CRA, FOPS. While editing the article about Arthur Bedell's relentless passion for fundus photography, I couldn't help but think of Chris and his similar passion for this *Journal*. His first tour of duty as Editor ran from 2000 to 2013. After a brief hiatus, he volunteered again in 2018. His influence on this publication has been so profound that in 2015, the OPS Board of Directors changed the Best *JOP* Article Award to the Chris Barry Award. When Chris completed his first run as *JOP* editor, he too echoed the historical observations of prior editors in his 2013 editorial, *As Time Goes By*: "As a professional society we must not forget our foundations, but we must also look to the future and adapt accordingly... Equally, we hope the *Journal* has remained contemporary and kept the readership up to date with the latest advances in both equipment and techniques as initially anticipated by Don Wong in 1978."⁵

As we take a look back through the lens of time, it is my hope that this issue of the *Journal* lives up to the standards established by the first *JOP* Editor, Don Wong and carried forward today by Chris Barry. It is an honor for me to briefly follow in the footsteps of others who have guided the *JOP* over the years. I too am standing on the shoulders of giants.

REFERENCES

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What Does Today's Ophthalmic Photographer Do?

What is your primary employment responsibility? (Check one)

Ophthalmic Photographer	<input type="radio"/>
Ophthalmic Technician	<input type="radio"/>
Medical Photographer	<input type="radio"/>
Manager	<input type="radio"/>
Equipment vendor/service technician	<input type="radio"/>
Information Technology/Systems Specialist	<input type="radio"/>
Orthoptist	<input type="radio"/>
Nurse	<input type="radio"/>
Physician	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Other <u>CREATED FLUORESCIN ANGIOGRAPHY</u>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>HAROLD NOVOTNY MD</u>	

What are your Certifications/Credentials? (Check all that apply)

A. CRA	<input type="radio"/>	G. RN	<input type="radio"/>
B. COA	<input type="radio"/>	H. ROUB	<input type="radio"/>
C. COT	<input type="radio"/>	I. OD	<input type="radio"/>
D. COMT	<input type="radio"/>	J. DO	<input type="radio"/>
E. RBP	<input type="radio"/>	K. MD	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
F. LPN	<input type="radio"/>	L. Other	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 2: Dr. Harold Novotny's OPS Board of Certification survey.