

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

And thus it comes to an end. My involvement with the *International Society of Olympic Historians* (ISOH) began in the early 1980s with multiple letters exchanged between myself and Ture WIDLUND (SWE). Ture was really the driving force behind the idea of a society of Olympic historians. He wrote several letters to the IOC attempting to obtain their support. This was not forthcoming and eventually we decided to proceed on our own, although the IOC would later lend their support. We met in December 1991 at the *Duke of Clarence* in London, England, and over a lunch, formed the ISOH.

For the first few years I served as Secretary-General and editor of the journal, then called *Citius, Altius, Fortius*. I remember the first few years of the journal well. We had no money as an organization, and I usually Xeroxed the printed pages and bound them myself. My wife and I worked together, collating the pages and the journal issues, preparing to mail them to the members in many different nations. Our dogs, notably our Chocolate Lab, *Kamper*, named after Erich KAMPER, sat nearby watching. He occasionally wandered over the pages and covers of the issues, so if your old issues have pawprints on them, now you know why.

In 2000 at Sydney, I succeeded Ian BUCHANAN as President of the ISOH. The next year, our Executive Committee met in Lausanne with IOC President Juan Antonio SAMARANCH, our final meeting with him, who was a big supporter of our efforts. At that time, we set several goals for my Presidency.

One was to obtain legal and tax exempt status for the ISOH. This has been done, with legal status in the state of North Carolina in the United States, and tax exempt status was granted in mid-2003 by the United States' Internal Revenue Service (IRS). This allows the ISOH to operate as a legally tax exempt organization into the near future, and helps assure our financial survival.

The second goal was to upgrade and fully implement the ISOH Website. This has only just been realized, with the work of ISOH Member Brandon SANDERS. We had great difficulty getting our web site released from the previous server, to allow Brandon to function as the webmaster, but eventually succeeded. The site allows membership registration over the web, contains a Member's Forum, allowing e-mail interaction and research to be done over the website, and has links to multiple other Olympic sites. It is completely new and you can check it out at www.isoh.org. To assist you, the

UserName and Password to help login is currently the same – *coubertin* in both cases.

We have also recently established, via the Executive Committee, that ISOH will begin sponsoring an annual ISOH Scholarship and annual ISOH Awards for the best book and best journal article on Olympic history. Karl LENNARTZ will serve as the chairman of the awards committees. Full details of the ISOH Scholarship and Awards are being worked out, but we hope to award these later in the year. The scholarship will be given to a worthy graduate student or other level student, to assist them in performing research into Olympic history.

Finally, we hoped to establish a method by which members could pay membership dues via credit card, most likely VISA. At this time, we have not succeeded in this effort, but over the last few months of my Presidency, it will be a priority, and hopefully, will become a reality. Tony BIJKERK has told us that several members have dropped out because of difficulty paying dues secondary to currency exchange problems. A credit card payment would solve this problem, but to date, has not been feasible because the small size of our group currently would make it far too expensive.

I have decided not to seek re-election as President, although our constitution would allow me to do so. I think Ian BUCHANAN was correct in serving two terms as President, as he shepherded us through ISOH's formidable years. But we have many qualified members, and I think that for the most part, four years is an adequate time to serve as President, allowing others equally qualified to hold the office. Further, I have a lot on my plate at this time with my professional career as an orthopaedic surgeon.

I would like to thank Ian BUCHANAN, who has been a close friend now for over 20 years. ISOH owes him a lot, and I do also. Tony BIJKERK has been probably the hardest working member of ISOH over the years, and I wonder how we would ever replace him, should he choose not to continue as Secretary-General. At this time we would also like to offer our condolences to Tony, who recently lost his wife of over 40 years.

I also thank Karl LENNARTZ for his work on the academic side of ISOH and especially agreeing to work in the future with the ISOH Scholarship and Awards. Finally, David WALLECHINSKY has been a dear friend, not just with ISOH, but for his support for my books, which have been competitive with his, but that has never stopped his endorsing them. And also I thank you all, the members of

ISOH who have helped me with research many times, and continue to do so. I expect all of you will make ISOH a strong organization well into the 21st century.

My wife, Karen, has put up with this crazy hobby of mine since the early 1980s, which has long since gone beyond being a mere hobby. I owe her a lot, not the least her work in help with the mailings on the original journals. And *Kamper*, who we lost in 2003, *Kelly*, *Mickey Mantle*, and

Kaci have never stopped wanting to play, while I worked on some arcane aspect of research into the early Olympics. We'll go for a few more walks now.

As they sang in *The Sound of Music*, "So long, farewell, auf Wiedersehen, good-bye."

Bill Mallon
President ISOH
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