Light and Life: Light and Time

With this issue of *Laser Therapy* we have come to the end of Volume 3: three years down the line, many lessons have been learned, and the journal is at last back on track, for which I really would like to congratulate the Wiley Production team. A new journal is always a nerve-racking venture, equally for the publishing, production and editorial teams, and *Laser Therapy* was no exception. However, I think that we can all now give a well-earned collective sigh of relief, and look forward to Volume 4 which I am certain will continue in the tradition of scientific excellence established by the first three volumes. I would like to thank in particular Mary Lawrence, of John Wiley's Production department, and also the International Editorial Coordinator, Dr R. Glen Calderhead: on their shoulders especially has the burden of getting the journal back up to speed rested. It has not been easy, but throughout the three-year history of *Laser Therapy*, I can say without fear of contradiction that at no time have we ever compromised the scientific quality of the journal by publishing papers simply because they were there, and space had to be filled. I am committed as Editor-in-Chief to continuing that tradition, and all I can ask is that those of you who read this will think long and hard about sitting down and putting your clinical and scientific experiences onto paper, and contributing to what has become **the** prime journal in the fast-growing field of laser therapy and photobioactivation.

At the time of writing, the hard-cover Proceedings, *Progress in Laser Therapy*, a selection of the invited papers at the successful 1990 Okinawa congress of the International Laser Therapy Association, ILTA, has just appeared hot off the Wiley presses. This volume once again shows Wiley's commitment to the idea of laser therapy, and also to the cause of the ILTA, which is to champion the field of low reactive-level laser therapy (LLLT) and photobioactivation. The selection of papers represents a balance between the clinical and experimental aspects of LLLT, and in addition gives an international LLLT update from the four corners of the globe. Edited by myself and Glen Calderhead, the handsomely turned-out book complements and supplements the first book Glen and I wrote: *Low Level Laser Therapy: A Practical Introduction*, and the forthcoming second volume, due out later this year, *Low Reactive-Level Laser Therapy: Practical Application*, which is a detailed 'how-to' book, also published by Wiley. For information on ordering *Progress in Laser Therapy* please write directly to John Wiley & Sons, Limited, Book Orders, Baffins Lane, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1UD, United Kingdom.

The ILTA continues from strength to strength. Its main mission is to educate the medicoscientific community in LLLT and everything that encompasses. The word 'educate' comes from the Latin *educere*, meaning 'to lead out', and that is exactly what the ILTA would like to do: to 'lead out' the community from the darkness of ignorance and misunderstanding into the pure light (laser light of course) of low reactive-level laser therapy and photobioactivation. The ILTA would like to see workshops established on an international basis so that the correct concepts of laser therapy can be universally and consistently taught: knowledge, technology and practice are the three key points of any such educational programmes. Acupoint, pressure point and trigger point techniques are all perfectly acceptable and valid methods in LLLT, but they are individually only part of the whole total treatment concept, which also includes the tenets of Oriental and Western medicine, and the anatomically-based three systems considerations, of blood, nerve and lymphatic networks. Only by taking that concept and applying it in each patient as an individual will the laser therapist reach a consistent and repeatable level of therapeutic excellence.

Laser is after all only a form of light energy, albeit a very pure one. The purity of laser light contains an inherent 'message' in the waveform of the light. In addition, light has not only a good side, but also a bad one: positive and negative aspects of light must be understood and applied. Darkness is simply absence of light, and so is in itself not inherently bad, despite the age-long association of light with good and darkness with evil. Light is itself both good and evil: this dichotomy is seen especially when we look at the positive benefits and negative of sunlight, for example: warmth, light, life, vitamin D synthesis, photosynthesis in plants and the production of oxygen are balanced by carcinogenic ultraviolet radiation, the aging of skin, solar dermatoses, sunstroke, sunburn and other solar-caused skin damage. We must consider light as both particle-carried and waveform propagated. If the pure sine curve of light is combined with a cosine curve, the result is nothingness, blackness, perhaps even the black hole beloved of science fiction writers. The body consists of several 'computer' groups each working to its own 'clock': the cellular, tissue and whole body computers combine in a complex network, governed by the brain as our 'mother computer'. If they all work in unison, then the result is a harmonious blend of action and reaction. If however they work out of phase, or if the two-way positive feedback

between each individual computer and the mother computer is disrupted, then disorder and disease are the result. By applying the healing power of LLLT that balance and communication can be restored, and the patient cured. In order to bring that about, the positive or 'good' side of light must be understood and applied. By also understanding the negative side, however, the treatment methodology can be arranged to contain only the positive aspects of laser energy necessary to bring about the desired therapeutic effect.

The ILTA will hold its second international congress, '**London Laser 1992**' in London under the Presidency of Dr Mary Dyson, of Guy's Hospital, on 18-20, September, 1992. The meeting promises to be scientifically rewarding and culturally unique, so please make a note of these dates now. Fuller details of the 1992 meeting appear elsewhere in this issue. In 1994 the meeting will travel to Spain, under the Presidency of Dr Mario Trelles of the Medical Institute of Vilafortuny, with Australia and North America as possible venues in 1996 and 1998.

The year 2000 will see the meeting in Mexico, so as the reader will quickly note, not only is the ILTA here now, but it plans to be here well into the future. If you are not yet a member, but would like to join the only association dedicated completely to Low reactive-Level Laser Therapy and photobioactivation, please write in the first instance for an application form to Dr Lloyd McKibbin, ILTA Hon Treasurer, Acupuncture Institute, PO Box 28, Wheatley, Ontario NOP 2PO, Canada. Membership of the ILTA entitles the member in good standing to receive *Laser Therapy* as one of the benefits, included in the Membership Fees for each year. This journal is the officially-recognized organ of the ILTA, and we are very proud to have that association with *Laser Therapy* and with John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., publishers of distinction in the medical and scientific fields since 1807.

Toshio Ohshiro
Editor-in-Chief