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The eighth year of publication

We are now well into the year 2001, and well into our eighth year of publishing *Nature Structural Biology*. The journal was founded in 1994 to recognize the importance of structural research for understanding molecular function. Recently, the field has begun to shine particularly brightly — and to change rather dramatically. For example, in the last year, high resolution structures of the ribosome, one of the largest and most complex molecular machines, were solved, and large amounts of funding were allocated to Structural Genomics projects in the USA. Both herald a new era for the field of structural biology — an era in which the more difficult biological problems will be more tractable to structural methods, and the amount of structural data available to biologists will be increasingly vast. Scientists — and journals — around the world are working hard to keep up both with the quickening pace of such research and with the large volume of emerging data. We are proud that some of the best work in this important field is found in the pages of our journal.

In part because of the changing climate in the structural biology field, and in part because of new editorial endeavors, the past year was one of the most eventful for the editorial staff of this journal. We have focused on improving our referee process (for example, by providing a *Guide to referees* on our web site) and on improving the commentary and review sections of the journal. With respect to the latter goal, we wish to supply a greater service to our readers by providing more News and Views and full-length Reviews. Last year, we published more material of this type than ever before — most notably, in September and October, we presented two special focus issues on the topics of Monitoring Molecular Movements and RNA-Protein Machines, and in November, we completed a supplement on Structural Genomics. We plan to continue present-

ing high quality review material, as we see both the need and opportunity arise.

One of most stimulating things about structural biology from an editorial perspective is that the wide variety of results that emerge from the community touch on nearly every biological process. Taking this broad range into account, we have continued to strive to maintain, if not increase, our editorial standards. We invite you to take a look — free of charge — at some of the work published in *Nature Structural Biology* over the past year (see http://www.nature.com/nsb/nsb_evolution). These papers highlight topics as diverse as pore-forming toxins, side chain dynamics in protein complexes, tuberculosis drug targets, regulation of polyadenylation, conformational changes in transcription initiation, proteins involved in apoptosis, conservation of protein folding pathways, structural genomics pilot projects, proteasome regulation, and proteins that interact with DNA in novel ways. The research presented in these papers utilized a wide variety of tools and techniques, illustrating that structural insights can come from many avenues, not just from high resolution NMR spectroscopy and X-ray crystallography results.

During the coming months, we plan to spend more time obtaining feedback directly from our community of readers, referees, and authors. We hope to meet many of you at conferences and in visits to your home institutions, but we also encourage submission of feedback by email (to nsb@natureny.com). We would like to hear your views about the content and editorial policies of the journal. How do you think we are doing? What topics do you think receive little attention or too much coverage? What kinds of reviews would you like to see published? How else do you think the journal could be improved? All comments, positive and negative, would be welcome.