

BDA PRESIDENTIAL VALEDICTION

Nairn Wilson

Colleagues, friends, ladies and gentlemen:

I have had a fantastic year as President of the Association – a kaleidoscope of experiences, insights and memories. If only time had allowed me to do more, but there is only so much that time permits. That said I very much hope that I will be credited with having fulfilled the expectation of my presidency and generated something of a legacy. Whatever that legacy may be, I have been greatly honoured to have had the singular honour of serving my profession as President of its professional body.

Notwithstanding my attendance at the 2015 FDI World Dental Federation in Bangkok – a truly international celebration of dentistry's contribution to general health and wellbeing, and interactions with national dental associations in Denmark, India, Japan, Korea and the USA, I was delighted to attend and, in most cases contribute to, events of all the active branches and many of the sections of the Association during my term of office as national President. In addition, I realised the goal of promoting the Association to dental students in all the dental schools in the UK with an undergraduate dental degree programme, and had opportunity to make presentations to a large number of colleagues in Foundation Training.

Further activities included representing the Association at many different events and celebrations, both dental and pertaining to allied professions. All of these events and

celebrations were special and memorable; however, the opening of the new Birmingham Dental School and Hospital by Her Majesty the Queen must be singled out for its recognition of the importance of oral and dental health and sciences in the twenty-first century. Overall, a busy and most enjoyable year as President of the Association; but all good things must come to an end.

In demitting office, I very much hope that the Association, which I hope to continue to find opportunity to serve, will be able to look forward to UK-wide support from all sectors of dentistry, including the student body as the future lifeblood of the profession. We will not only be stronger together, but more effective in meeting the future needs and expectations of patients, hopefully including all those individuals who, for whatever reason do not presently avail themselves of the benefits of oral healthcare provision – come the day when the dental profession is able to support the entire population in being dentally aware and motivated through the provision of evidence-based, preventatively orientated, minimum intervention oral healthcare, capable of supporting general health and wellbeing from cradle to grave.

In delivering such service to society, the Association will play a pivotal role, hopefully complemented by modern, right touch regulation, which regrettably remains an aspiration. Indeed, the present regulation of the profession remains unfit for purpose and, from what I have gleaned from my travels around the UK, is widely considered to be aggressively 'policing' the profession, leading to the protection of the public being compromised.

In expressing my sincere thanks to the countless people who individually and collectively have made my year as President of the Association so enjoyable and memorable, I am deeply indebted to scores of colleagues, friends and others for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to me wherever I visited. Special, heartfelt thanks must go to Mick Armstrong and the

members of the Principal Executive Committee, Peter Ward and the entire staff of the Association, notably Alison Magee and the library, museum and reception staff who have given me tremendous support, all the way through to branch and section presidents, chairs, secretaries and treasurers, not to forget the deans, heads, staff and student representatives of our dental schools who to a person could not have been more helpful, welcoming and encouraging. Above all else, and against her wishes, I wish to thank my wife, Margaret, for her unswerving support and understanding during my year as President of the Association.

Finally, I must congratulate my successor, Stuart Johnston on becoming the 130th President of the Association and wish him every success and enjoyment during his term of office. I anticipate Stuart's year in office being as busy, interesting and enjoyable as the one that I have experienced and, as such, he may look forward to a tremendous year as President of the Association. As Immediate Past President, I look forward to the possibility of new opportunities to volunteer my services to the Association.

Renewed thanks for the great honour and privilege bestowed on me in being elected President of the Association and for all the tremendous help, support and encouragement, let alone generous hospitality I have enjoyed during my term of office.

May the Association look forward to strong, sustained support across the profession and continuing success in years to come. With the prospect of many, different innovations and new challenges anticipated in the foreseeable future, the Association will, as ever, be critical to the further development and success of the profession, through supporting and representing the interests of its members. Together we are stronger and best able to enable dentistry to realise its considerable future potential in general healthcare provision.

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