

# Preface

The 1999 Annual Meeting of the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science (AALAS) in Indianapolis, Indiana is the fiftieth AALAS Annual Meeting. Remarkable changes have occurred in the field of laboratory animal science since that first meeting in 1950 when the group was called the Animal Care Panel. Some of the major changes are:

- From wooden cages to technically sophisticated polymer cages on ventilated racks
- From screens on windows to HEPA filtered ventilation systems
- From diseased animals to germfree and adventitious agent free animals
- From zero organizations devoted to laboratory animal science to over a dozen nationally recognized speciality groups
- From no one with special training in laboratory animal science to trained and certified technicians and veterinary medical specialists
- From “random-source” animals to inbred, transgenic and targeted mutant animals

It is the hope of those of us involved in this publication that it will provide insight and background to those who follow in the field. Accomplishments of the first fifty years will be the basis for even more remarkable progress in the next half century.

This publication is principally a history of the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science, but related organizations and activities which have had important influence on the field of lab animal science are included. There is an uncommon degree of interrelatedness among organizations and activities in this field. In the early days many of the same people had an important role in each of the organizations. This was a necessity because of the small number of people in the field. It is to this talented group of pioneers that we owe a debt of gratitude for establishing an organizational framework upon which the field of laboratory animal science could advance. The authors have attempted to make each chapter in this publication complete with respect to its subject. Because of the interrelatedness of organizations and activities there will be some repetition among the chapters.

These chapters will only give the reader highlights about what has occurred during the past fifty years. We encourage everyone to take time to read previous AALAS publications to obtain additional details about improvements in the care and use of laboratory animals and organizations in this field.

Throughout this publication we attempted to delete references to specific commercial organizations. However, we do recognize that the Allied Trade Association members have made very significant contributions to the many improvements in laboratory animal science.

This history would not be possible without the support and assistance of many people. The editors wish to thank the outstanding group of chapter authors and those who reviewed the chapters. Many of them were pioneers in laboratory animal science and all of them are leaders in the field. Some of the chapters were based on presentations made at a National Capital Area Branch Seminar on “Perspectives: Foundations of Laboratory Animal Science.” We thank the organizers of this seminar for their initiatives which lead to the inclusion of this core group of chapters.

We appreciate the sponsorship of AALAS for this work. Special recognition is extended to Dr. Lynn Anderson for vision and leadership during her tenure as President of AALAS in recognizing that a history should be prepared for the fiftieth annual meeting. Publication Committee chairs, Dr. Dennis Kohn and Dr. Sanford Feldman, provided oversight with the launching and progress of this project. Mr. Chris Lyons, Director of Communications for AALAS, and all of the AALAS staff have been most helpful; this publication would not be possible without such assistance.

A special thanks is extended to our wives, Betty Mattingly and Lillian McPherson, for their tolerance of the time we devoted to this book when they might have wanted us to be doing other things.