

Editorial

Within the last two years we have seen the emergence of three new British organizations related to otorhinolaryngology. They are the British Skull Base Society (BSBS), the British Association for Paediatric Otorhinolaryngology (BAPO) and the British Voice Association (BVA). Each one fulfils a vital need in communicating the activities of their sub-specialist fields which have grown up over the last 10 years and which embrace other associated disciplines, some of which are non-surgical. Although international related organizations exist there has been a demand for national groupings as well. The *Journal of Laryngology and Otology* is pleased to be associated with the publication of the transactions of the British Skull Base Society and the British Association for Paediatric Otorhinolaryngology. The British Voice Association publishes its own journal entitled *Voice*.

The British Skull Base Society (BSBS)

The development of interest in skull base surgery produced a multidisciplinary approach to these complex procedures that has been reflected in the creation of skull base societies in North America and several European countries. Equally keen interest has been evinced in the United Kingdom, and celebrated by the formation of the British Skull Base Society (BSBS). This new venture aspires to draw together the various clinical groups currently working in this area, and envisages an informal mix of ENT surgeons, neurosurgeons maxillofacial surgeons, plastic surgeons, pathologists, radiologists, radiotherapists and anaesthetists.

A new society of this type is an unusual phenomenon as it represents a synthesis, a move towards fusion rather than fission. The ultimate test of the society will be whether a sustained interest in the long term management of these difficult clinical problems will outlast the excitement engendered by the novel surgical approaches, though it is safe to say that the clinical partnership forged in the field will be lasting monuments to this era of close collaboration.

Membership of the society is open to all doctors who share a common interest in dealing with condition affecting the skull base, including congenital defects, trauma, vascular diseases and neoplasms. It is hoped that clinical meetings will be held annually, with an emphasis on informality. The meetings will be held in a different part of the United Kingdom each year.

Junior staff will be encouraged to present papers at the meetings, and a training session will be held. By adopting this format, clearer definition will be given to common problems, and in the case of rare conditions an accelerated audit may be achieved.

It was felt that the meetings should start in the late afternoon with a business session, followed by an informal meal, with the clinical section taking place the next day,

and the abstracts would be published in this journal. In order to harness some of the obvious enthusiasm for the project it was agreed that a meeting should be convened at the Royal Marsden Hospital on the 22nd/23rd October this year to discuss these topics, and hammer out strategy for the future conduct and direction of the society. If the present impetus can be channelled into a steady level of interest the society should be guaranteed an impressive evolution. The support of a committed membership is essential to the survival of any voluntary organization. At this stage the BSBS is fortunate in having widespread encouragement across the United Kingdom which should auger well for its future. Interested colleagues who would like further information can be sure of a warm welcome and more details from me at the address below.

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The British Association for Paediatric Otorhinolaryngology (BAPO)

Paediatrics forms a substantial element of ENT practice in the United Kingdom. The United States of America has a large enough population for paediatric ENT to be a separate subspecialty with two different societies: The American Society of Pediatric Otolaryngology (ASPO) and the Society of ENT Advances in Children (SENTAC). The European working group in paediatric otolaryngology has also been an active force, with regular international meetings. It was at one of these meetings that the British delegates agreed that it was time to form a British paediatric ENT society.

The British Association for Paediatric Otorhinolaryngology (BAPO) was created in 1990/91 and formally founded in June 1991. The purpose of this new Association is to act as a forum for those interested in the paediatric aspects of our specialty, to hold regular academic meetings and to take an overall interest in the development of paediatric ENT in the United Kingdom. We hope that the existence of this Association will be helpful to surgeons in training and may also form both a general pool of information about paediatric ENT and a source of consensus views which may be of use to such organizations as the Royal College of Surgeons, the Department of Health, our colleagues in other specialties and the relevant patients' associations.

Full membership is at present available to those medically qualified in the United Kingdom with an interest in paediatric ENT. There is also an Associate Membership for health care professionals who are medically qualified. We welcome members from overseas.

Enquiries and applications for membership should be

addressed to the Treasurer and Membership Secretary, Mr Ken Pearman FRCS, Children's Hospital, Ladywood, Middleway, Birmingham B16 8ET (Telephone: 021-454-4851-6444).

The next annual academic meeting will be at Pendlebury Children's Hospital, Salford, Manchester in June 1993. The exact date of the meeting will be circulated to members and announced, with a call for papers, in the *Journal of Laryngology and Otology* and the British Association of Otolaryngology newsletter. Abstracts of papers read at the meeting will in future be published in the *Journal of Laryngology and Otology*.

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The British Voice Association (BVA)

The Voice Research Society was set up in 1985 pioneering the multidisciplinary approach to voice in the United Kingdom. In 1991 it merged with The Care of the Professional Voice (UK) to become the British Voice Association.

The BVA is a Registered Charity which exists to promote and encourage research into the early detection and treatment of malignant and non-malignant diseases of the vocal tract presenting a voice disorder; development of technology to enable the objective assessment of vocal function; psychology of stress-related voice disorder in

adults and children; the relationship between personality and voice and the rehabilitation of the injured voice; to disseminate information and advice in the acoustic, physical and physiological principles of voice production by means of conferences, practical seminars and publications and to disseminate information relating to vocal health to those who rely on their voice professionally.

The BVA offers the following to those professionals working in laryngology, speech therapy, phoniatry, phonetics, singing and the teaching of singing and voice, and non-professionals wishing to gain knowledge of voice.

- An annual multidisciplinary symposium covering the widest possible range of topics and involving speakers and lecturers from all over the world at privileged prices for members.
- Special interest workshops and seminars given by a variety of top professionals from many fields of voice work at reduced prices for members.
- Active and financial support for special projects in voice.
- Two issues per year of the BVA Journal *Voice*.
- A quarterly newsletter to membership.
- The Van Lawrence Prize for achievement in the field of voice.
- Support, advice and exchange of information.

For further details of membership write to The British Voice Association, 77b Abbey Road, London NW8 0AE. (Telephone: 071-328-1015).