

APS Conference Goes to School

Attendees at the first APS Conference, "From Channels to Cross Bridges," had to go to school to participate in the meeting. Boarding yellow school buses, the attendees were transported back in time from the hotel to the Mount Desert Island High School, which served as the conference center with the symposia presented in the auditorium, posters in the library, and box lunches in the cafeteria.

While the meeting site might have been a high school, the science presented was nowhere near the secondary school level. The 289 scientists from throughout the world discussed the latest work in the fields of membrane channels, receptor-effector coupling, and cell motility.

The APS Conference was organized by a committee chaired by Martin Morad of the University of Pennsylvania. Assisting in coordinating the meeting was the staff of the Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory (MDIBL), which sits nestled in the rocky Maine coastline at Salisbury Cove.

The meeting opened on Sunday, July 14, with greetings from Stanley G. Schultz, APS President-Elect, Frank Epstein, MDIBL President, and Morad. The scientific sessions started with a plenary lecture by Shosaku Numa, Kyoto University, who recently cloned the calcium and sodium channels that regulate heart and brain function. During the course of the 3-day conference, 40 internationally recognized speakers presented the results of their studies on membrane channel structure and function and on cell motility. In addition, attendees contributed 104 abstracts for presentation in poster format.

The culmination of the meeting was a presentation by Sir Andrew Huxley. The grandson of English biologist Sir Thomas Huxley and a brother of novelist Aldous Huxley, Andrew Huxley won the Nobel Prize with Alan Hodgkin in 1964 for their work describing how channels in membranes

transmit electric signals. Huxley provided the attendees with a summary of the work presented at the APS Conference and provided the attendees with some insights into his career and the outstanding scientists he has had the pleasure to know and to work with.

Mount Desert Island and the Acadia National Park proved to be an outstanding venue for the first APS Conference. The high school, which sits in the shadow of Cadillac Mountain, provided the attendees with secluded areas for the discussion of their work and the work of their colleagues. MDIBL opened its research laboratories for a welcome reception, and attendees also had the opportunity to sample local cuisine during a clam and lobster bake.

The contributions of students to the meeting also were recognized by the presentation of two APS Student Awards supported by the generosity of AXON Instruments and



Lobster and Clam Bake