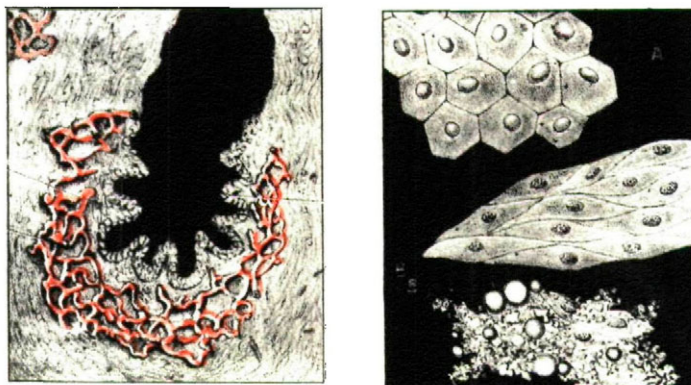


Cell biology as the centuries change

It was in an article at the turn of the millennium that former Editor of JCS Rick Horwitz first cautioned about the short memories of modern cell biologists (Horwitz, 2000). Indeed it is all too easy to dismiss early hypotheses of cell function as naïve and assume that, without the arsenal of modern techniques at their disposal, the cell biologists of decades ago did not make the great leaps forward that they do today.

To ensure that the sands of time do not obscure early advances in cell biology and the prescience of some of its first protagonists, we make the entire scanned *Journal of Cell Science* archive freely available online. *Journal of Cell Science*, as it is now, first appeared in 1967. Prior to this, however, the journal went by another name, *Quarterly Journal of Microscopical Science*. Launched because the editors felt that “recent improvements in the Microscope...rendered that instrument increasingly available for scientific research”, *Quarterly Journal of Microscopical Science** was first published in 1853. We are delighted to announce that we have digitized every article that appeared in it, and these are all accessible within the *Journal of Cell Science* archive at <http://jcs.biologists.org/contents-by-date.0.shtml>, which now spans more than 150 years of cell biology.



A figure from an early paper in *Quarterly Journal of Microscopical Science*, showing the cutaneous follicles of the toad at different magnification (Rainey, 1855).

With the advent of modern cell biology, it was felt that the microscope was merely one of many tools of the trade and the name of *Quarterly Journal of Microscopical Science* was changed to reflect this. So *Journal of Cell Science* was born. One of the first Editors was Henry Harris, whose new translation of Theodor Boveri's seminal monograph *Concerning The Origin of Malignant Tumours* accompanies this issue (Harris, 2008). Incidentally, *Journal of Cell Science* was not the only title considered at the time. One eminent director of The Company of Biologists suggested we should simply call the new incarnation *Cell* – rightly, this was deemed an inappropriate title for a serious academic journal.

Two retrospectives in this issue highlight studies published in the early days of *Journal of Cell Science* that illustrate how relevant much of the research from that period still is today. On p. 5,

one of our current Editors, Francis Barr, discusses work that 40 years ago provided a remarkably detailed picture of cilium formation and pre-empted many later debates on the nature of organelle duplication (Barr, 2008). On p. 7, Art Forer examines the contributions of several papers that revealed the diversity of microtubules and were among the first to suggest that these have different structural roles (Forer, 2008). In both cases, the work provided fundamental new insights into cell function that we now take for granted and raised questions that remain unanswered to this day. Studies like these illustrate the benefits of looking back. And if we look forward and see further, it is, as Henry Harris says in his introduction to Boveri's work, indeed because we stand on the shoulders of giants.

Fiona M. Watt (Editor-in-Chief) and Richard Sever (Executive Editor)

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