Welcome from the Program and Local Organizing Committee

At the OARSI Board meeting held in Barcelona in September 2000, Sydney was voted as the site for the 2002 OARSI Congress on osteoarthritis. Subsequent to this resolution, major world events have made the decision to undertake air travel more onerous than ever before. Nevertheless, all the Invited Speakers who were approached to participate in the Sydney meeting were most enthusiastic and accepted without hesitation. Moreover, we have now received a record number of abstracts for this meeting, from all parts of the world, confirming the over-riding interest in osteoarthritis research, irrespective of the potential problems associated with international travel.

The 2002 Scientific Program Committee have organized a meeting which will discuss recent discoveries and provide updates on the progress made in the epidemiology, the underlying symptomatology and pathobiology of osteoarthritis, as well as examine both current and new strategies of treatments for this disabling disease. The program format includes plenary and review lectures from international authorities but also provides a forum for young clinical investigators and basic scientists to air their recent findings and exchange ideas in this expanding, multi-disciplinary field. This is the first OARSI Congress to be held in the Southern Hemisphere and we were fortunate to have at our disposal the superlative facilities and natural beauty of Sydney with its harbour inlets, ocean beaches and outstanding conference facilities in Darling Harbour. The Program Committee, in conjunction with the Local Organizing Committee and the Sydney Conference Managers, have put together a meeting which promises to provide both stimulation and knowledge, not only at the scientific level, but socially as well. Whether this is your first visit to our island continent or your first OARSI congress we hope it will not be your last!

Peter Ghosh
for
The OARSI 2002 Scientific Program Committee
and
The Local Organizing Committee