ASSOCIATION AFFAIRS

Report from the Pan-American Regional Wood Anatomy Meeting at Gainesville, Florida, U.S.A.

The IAWA Pan-American Regional meetings in Gainesville were packed with interesting research papers, lively discussions, and plenty of friendly social activities. These meetings were held in conjunction with the Developmental and Structural section of the Botanical Society of America (BSA) at the annual conference of the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS). The conference began on Sunday, August 11 with registration and concluded on Thursday, August 15. Over 2000 scientists registered for the meetings which represented more than ten societies and included specialists from such diverse fields as algology, lichenology, and mycology to paleobotany, ecology, taxonomy, and of course plant and wood anatomy. Various field trips, excursions, breakfasts, lunches, receptions, cocktail parties, and banquets were held before, during, and after the conference. Since the location was near Orlando many participants planned a visit to Disney World and Epcot Center. For those with various tropical interests, the conference provided a sample of tropical weather with hot humid conditions and afternoon rain showers.

The highlight of the conference was the Martin H. Zimmermann memorial symposium entitled 'Ecological and Functional Wood Anatomy'. This symposium shed some light on the question 'How have plants adapted to such a wide variety of environments in terms of xylem anatomy and physiology?' For the first time this symposium brought together two fields of study: the experimental physiological approach and the comparative anatomical approach. The first three speakers, Drs. Arthur Gibson, John Sperry, and Frank Ewers, approached the problem from the experimental physiological side. They quantified hydraulic conductance in tracheid-bearing ferns and conifers and contrasted their results to vessel-bearing plants including ferns, palms, lianas, and other dicots. In addition they discussed the consequences of embolism, the relation of tracheid versus vessel conductance, the effect of ring- versus diffuse-porous growth, and the effect of freezing and thawing on conductance.

Drs. Pieter Baas and Sherwin Carlquist were to lead the discussion on the comparative anatomical approach, but the task was left to Pieter when Sherwin was unable to attend. His

Eastern Airline flight on Sunday evening was one hour out of San Francisco when a warning alarm signalled faulty compression in the right rear door. This is the same flaw which caused the fatal JAL 747 to crash! We were all thankful that his plane returned safely to San Francisco, but were very disappointed that the ensuing delay caused Sherwin to miss the Monday morning symposium. Undaunted by the unfortunate turn of events, Pieter presented his results and theories with respect to the arid flora of Israel and then with part of the time allocated to Sherwin, Pieter attempted to interpret the Israeli data according to published theories of Sherwin. Pieter's valiant attempt was interesting, but it only made the audience more disappointed that Sherwin was unable to attend. All is not lost however, since Sherwin's work on the Southern Californian flora is published in this special issue.

On Monday afternoon, a contributed paper session dedicated to ecological and functional wood anatomy was a natural extension from the morning's symposium. Various papers were presented which further added to the pool of knowledge. As with most symposia and meetings of this type, it became clearer that only a small fraction was known and much more research in this area is needed.

After the contributed paper session, the audience was invited to continue their discussions at the IAWA reception/cocktail party and business meeting. Many new and old members discussed their research, renewed old friendships, and made new acquaintances over their favourite beverage and a few snacks. At the appropriate level of beverage consumption, Pieter Baas called the business meeting to order. Pieter immediately announced that he was not the Executive Secretary, Ben ter Welle, but was only temporarily replacing him. Ben had planned to attend, but cancelled at the last minute due to his father's illness.

Pieter reported that the state of affairs of both the IAWA Bulletin and IAWA Association were 'rosie'. This was in large part due to the tremendous support received from the institute at Utrecht and the Rijksherbarium, especially from the lay-out editor Emmy van Nieuwkoop. In fact no increase in membership dues was expected, and Pieter reminded everyone that dues

had not been raised since 1977. This brought a rousing cheer from the audience.

Since the Pan-American meetings in Brazil in January, 1985, Dr. J.G. Isebrands asked to be relieved of his duties on the Pan-American Regional Committee. After some discussion, the populace at hand nominated and elected Dr. Elisabeth A. Wheeler at North Carolina State University at Raleigh, NC to the committee. The committee now consists of Dr. Regis B. Miller, Prof. Aracely Vidal Gomes, and the newly elected Dr. Wheeler. Suggestions were made to organise future meetings with the Botanical Society of America and the Forest Products Research Society within the next couple of years.

Discussions of forthcoming meetings of IAWA included an Afro-European Regional meeting in conjunction with S 5.01.02 subgroup of IUFRO. These meetings will convene at the 18th IUFRO World Congress in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia in September 1986. There will be two joint sessions: one entitled 'The Effect of Environmental Pollution on Wood Structure and Quality' organised by P. Baas, H. Schulz and J. Bauch and another, 'Natural Variation in Wood Quality' organised by P. Baas and K. Shimaji.

In 1987 IAWA will be involved in sponsoring three symposia at the XIV Botanical Congress in Berlin, Federal Republic of Germany. The first is entitled 'Development and Structure of Xylem Elements' and is organised by P. Baas and J.J. Sauter. The second is 'Modern Approaches to Wood Identification' and is organised by R.B. Miller and H.G. Richter and the third is 'Recent Progress in Wood Anatomy', organised by B.J.H. ter Welle and J. Bauch.

Other subjects brought to the attention of the audience included a call for appealing photos for the front cover of the IAWA Bulletin and a request to someone in the U.S.A. to act as an IAWA banker of dues.

Pieter Baas adjourned which brought to a close the first day of meetings. This was Monday. Tuesday morning there was yet another contributed paper session on wood anatomy crammed full of interesting research. Then there were more banquets and more meetings and more banquets and more meetings and more banquets!!! It is amazing how much you can talk, listen, learn, eat, and drink in four days! I am glad the best was first!

Regis B. Miller

High spirits before and concentrated work during the IAWA Business meeting. Left: Thomas Quirk, Bruce Kirchoff, Barry Tomlinson and Sam Essiamah. Right: Regis Miller and Pieter Baas.