

History of the Florida Section, AACC¹

America's changing face is well illustrated in the history of AACC's Florida Section. There were major population shifts in Florida because of several factors. Among these were tourism, agricultural and industrial development during the fifties and sixties, and, more recently, after Castro's revolution in Cuba, the immigration of hundreds of thousands of Cubans, mostly to southern Florida. These unsettling changes contributed to an unusually rapid increase in the numbers of, and "turnover" among, clinical chemists, making records difficult to uncover.

A major influence in the birth of the Florida Section was the opening of the University of Miami Medical School in 1952. With it came Professor George T. Lewis (1901-), in 1953, to head the biochemistry department. He had been chief of the division of biochemistry, Medical Research Foundation, Dade County, from 1951 to 1953; and prior to that, professor and chairman (1945) of the department of biochemistry at Emory University, Atlanta (1927 to 1951). Dr. Lewis had joined the AACC in 1949, the year after its creation. He served as the catalyst in founding the new Section.

By 1958, there were 10 members of the AACC in all of Florida. Early meetings were held at Dade Reagents, thanks to Patrick V. Ferro; and a nucleus of members formed to apply for a charter, obtained in 1961. Particularly active in this effort were, besides Lewis and Ferro, Lottie B. Locke (Goldsmith), who had come from the laboratory of an AACC founder, Albert E. Sobel, Brooklyn Jewish Hospital; Estelle R. Hausman (Lench); Jon V. Straumfjord, from Jackson Memorial Hospital, Miami; and Bernadette B. Bourne, University of Miami. Others of the 20 charter members included Edgar Landry, Alfred P. Rosenberg, Solomon Carl Werch, Anna Louise Rundell, Samuel L. Ettman, Lida Lee Dahlberg, E. E. Boehm, Edgardo A. Cruz, Peggy R. Pearl, Joseph J. Miller, Joseph A. Mitchell, Reid H. Leonard, Anita L. Jacobs, and J. K. Colehour. Kurt Dubowski was then at the University of Florida, Gainesville.

Having attained a grand membership of nearly 30 by 1962, the Section boldly offered to host the 1966 (18th) national meeting of the AACC. This meeting was held at the Americana Hotel, Bal Harbour (Miami Beach), August 15-19, 1966, with George Lewis (then associate dean, University of Miami School of Medicine) as general chairman. George's duties at the medical school became so demanding, however, that he turned over the lion's share of the chairman's work to his capable young colleague in research, Dr. Bourne. This was a staggering task, because at that time there was no help from a convention services agency—a policy that changed the following year. The committee chairmen are shown in Figure 1. Dr. Bourne, incidentally, made her laboratory in the medical-research building the seat of the section's almost monthly activities in the mid-sixties.

¹ Submitted at the request of the Subcommittee on Archives, AACC. The last Section history appeared in the May 1981 issue of this journal (pp 762-764). Histories have now appeared for all but five Sections: Texas, Northern California, Southern California, New York Metropolitan, and San Diego.



Fig. 1. Organizing committee for the AACC national meeting of 1966: Standing left to right: Lewis Cohen; Alfred P. Rosenberg, Treasurer; Edgar Landry; Bernard Schreiber. Sitting, left to right: Lottie Locke Goldsmith; Bernadette B. Bourne, Program Chairman; George T. Lewis, General Chairman; Estelle Lench

Despite an airline strike, the meeting was attended by 829 people, small by today's standard, but a record high at that time. There were 48 exhibitor booths. The professional program was superb, with the clinical chemists treated to four days (Wednesday, open) of outstanding symposia and papers. The hospitality offered by the host group was unforgettable, coupled as it was to sightseeing, good cuisine, and water-related recreation.

The steady growth of membership in the Section is shown in Figure 2, with the greatest spurt between 1973 and 1980. Most of these members are located in South Florida. A major factor in this growth is attributed to the creation of a central planning committee for developing scientific programs and future leadership, as conceived by Dr. Gordon Edwards. The monthly meeting of this group led to the inauguration of meetings with statewide appeal, the first occurring in 1974 in the Tampa/St. Petersburg area. As many as 150 people attended these meetings. Outstanding scientific programs were held. Many prominent speakers, in the forefront of clinical chemistry, have addressed the Section. Special ef-

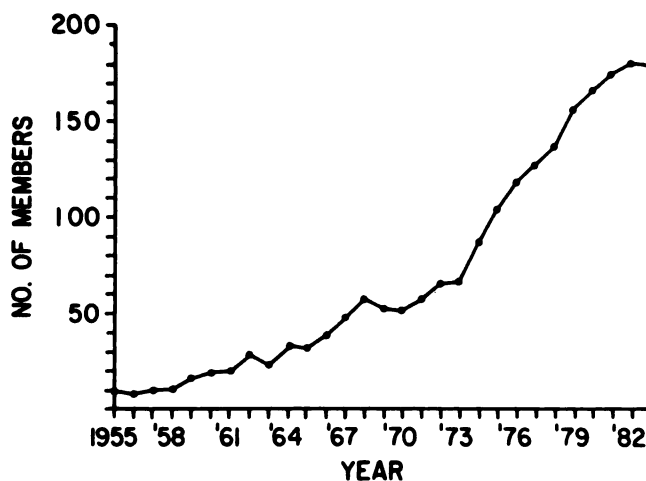


Fig. 2. Growth in membership of the Florida Section, AACC

Table 1. Officers of the Florida Section

Year	Chairman ²	Chairman-elect	Secretary	Treasurer	Councillors
1984	Susan Evans	Richard Kordal	Paulette DeMontier	Patricia Leopold	Susan Evans Ed. Szymanski (alt.)
1983	Ed. Szymanski	Susan Evans	Richard Kordal	Phyllis Rosenthal	Tenny Tse
1982	Tenny Tse	Ed. Szymanski	Susan Evans	Bernard Steele	Ed. Szymanski, Tenny Tse (alt.)
1981	D. A. Vazquez	Tenny Tse	Ed. Szymanski	S. L. Ettman	D. A. Vazquez, Tenny Tse, Pau. M. Tocci (alt.), Richard Kaufman (alt.)
1980	Aida R. Soto	D. A. Vazquez	—	Janet L. Zins	—
1979	George C. Pu	Aida R. Soto	Janet L. Zins	Anna L. Rundell	George C. Pu, Aida R. Soto, Antonio Vasquez (alt.), Janet L. Zins (alt.)
1978	Bernadette Bourne	George C. Pu	Douglas Hutchinson	Gordon C. Edwards	Bernadette Bourne, Herbert Malkus, Jorge Gonzales
1977	Jorge Gonzales	Bernadette Bourne	Gordon C. Edwards	Priscilla Stevens	Jorge Gonzales, Bernadette Bourne, Herbert Malkus
1976	Herbert Malkus	Jorge Gonzales	Priscilla Stevens	Priscilla Stevens	Herbert Malkus
1975	Gordon C. Edwards	Herbert Malkus	Priscilla Stevens	Priscilla Stevens	Gordon C. Edwards
1974	Louis Peters	Gordon C. Edwards	Milton Stern	Milton Stern	Louis Peters
1973	Vincent Rice	Louis Peters	Dorothy C. Grigg	Dorothy C. Grigg	Vincent Rice, Bernadette Bourne
1965	Lottie B. Goldsmith	—	—	—	—
1964	Estelle Lench	Lottie B. Goldsmith	A. P. Rosenberg	A. P. Rosenberg	—
1963	Bernadette Bourne	Estelle Lench	S. L. Ettman	S. L. Ettman	—
1962	Bernadette Bourne Jon V. Straumfjord	—	—	—	B. B. Bourne

² Chairmen whose year of tenure is uncertain: S. L. Ettman, A. P. Rosenberg, Paul Tocci, Anna Louise Rundell, and Dirk Voedman.

forts have been made to meet in different locations in the state, particularly since 1981. These meetings alternate between Orlando and Tampa, in early November. For the past five years, the Section has met monthly in Miami from September to June. Usually this consists of a dinner meeting followed by a presentation by an invited speaker.

Several members of the Section made lasting contributions to the AACC. Among these were Kurt Dubowski, F. W. Sunderman, Jr., and John Savory, all three at the University of Florida in Gainesville for a brief interlude; Bernadette Bourne; and, of course, George Lewis. The turnover rate, coupled with the Section's growth, unfortunately caused an irretrievable loss of records concerning the Section, so that the names and services of its leaders, and the programs presented, have apparently been lost.

From Samuel L. Ettman we find that, "During 1964-65 when Dr. Sunderman was affiliated with the U. of Florida School of Medicine, the Section provided a \$500 scholarship to a graduate student in the Clinical Chemistry Program [established by Sunderman]. Funds were raised from the membership and Coulter Electronics." John Savory, who had come to the university in 1966 when Sunderman was there, in the department of pathology, wrote: "I coordinated this program for several years and trained a number of

clinical chemists at the M.S. and Ph.D. levels. The most noted of these trainees was Dr. Lawrence Killingworth, who presently is in Spokane, Washington. Additionally, the Department of Pathology obtained funding for a training program and I was able to support several post-doctoral trainees."

Because of his contributions at the national level, the singular achievements of George Lewis in behalf of the association will be long appreciated. He was a member of the board of editors of *Clinical Chemistry*; a founder and member of the board of directors, NRCC; vice-pres., ABCC; and president in 1968 of the AACC. In 1972, he was presented the AACC (Fisher) Award for outstanding service to clinical chemistry as a profession.

Table 1 gives a tentative resumé of the known past officers of the Florida Section.

Lottie B. Goldsmith

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