Editorial: special issue introduction

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This special issue marks several important milestones for the Metastasis Research Society (MRS) and its journal *Clinical & Experimental Metastasis*. First, the special issue is dedicated to Prof. Sue Eccles, long-serving Editor-in-Chief of the journal who retired at the end of 2016. On behalf of the society and the journal, we wish to express our gratitude to Sue for her hard work for the journal over the years, and hope that she can now enjoy a well-earned retirement. Sue looks back over her career and offers advice to the next generation of metastasis researchers in an interview with Kate Bankaitis in this issue [1].

In addition to the retirement of Prof. Eccles, there has been a further generation change in the editorial line up, as two other Editor-in-Chiefs also stepped down during 2016. We want to take this opportunity to thank Prof. Robin Anderson who rotated off as Editor-in-Chief at the end of 2016 for her outstanding efforts on behalf of *Clinical & Experimental Metastasis* over many years, and wish her well for the additional responsibilities she has taken on board at her home institute. We also recognize the valuable contribution of Prof. Tatsuro Irimura who retired from his Editor-in-Chief position mid 2016.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Editorial Board of *Clinical & Experimental Metastasis* who have provided invaluable support for

the journal through their voluntary efforts, particularly those who will be rotating off the board in 2016. Several Editorial Board members have also supported *Clinical & Experimental Metastasis* by publishing excellent research in the journal during the last couple of years. For example, Ingunn Holen's research interests lie in understanding how the bone marrow microenvironment regulates the survival and outgrowth of tumor cells that disseminate to the bone [2, 3]. To study tumor cell interactions with the bone microenvironment, she has recently developed a novel humanized model of bone metastases, in which tumor cells are seeded in viable subchondral bone discs from humans [4]. These discs can be cultivated in vitro for several weeks, or implanted into experimental animals, allowing tumor cell-bone interactions to be investigated. She has also developed other in vivo models of bone metastasis, that have allowed the effects of Zolendronic acid and oestrogen on tumour cell dissemination and growth to be determined [5]. Andrea Mastro, another Editorial Board member, also investigates metastasis to the bone, in particular regulation by the immune system and nutrition, and the interaction of disseminated tumor cells with osteoblasts [6, 7]. She recently used a novel three-dimensional co-culture system to investigate mechanisms leading to release of dormancy in the bone marrow microenvironment, and found evidence that inflammatory cytokines involved in bone repair and turnover can activate latent disseminated breast cancer cells [8]. CEM Board Member Barbara Fingleton investigates how MMPs and the Th2 cytokines IL4 and IL13 and their receptors regulate malignant progression of breast and colon cancers [9, 10]. Her recent review on IL4/IL4R as a target for metastasis disease provides a valuable resource for colleagues in the field [11].

This special issue focuses on the 16th Biennial International Conference of the MRS that took place in Chengdu,

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China, in September 2016. Accordingly, a meeting report [12] and list of abstracts can be found within this volume [13]. Organized by Prof Yibin Kang (President of the MRS) and Prof. Qinghua Zhou (President of the Chinese Society of Tumor Metastasis), the conference attracted experts from across the world, and proved to be an excellent forum for exchange and networking. The conference was covered extensively in the Chinese national press. A television report in English can be found under the following link: <http://english.cctv.com/2016/09/18/VIDEEF-7baMCT4wc9uEOtWIWu160918.shtml>. The multilateral nature of the conference reflects the growing international relationships between MRS and regional cancer and metastasis research societies. For example, in November 2017 MRS is holding a joint conference in Berlin, Germany, together with the European Association of Cancer Research (EACR). Organized by Prof. Janine Erler, member of the MRS executive board, the conference is entitled “Seed and Soil: In Vivo Models of Metastasis”. More details can be found on the conference web site (<https://www.eacr.org/meeting/-seed-and-soil-in-vivo-models-of-metastasis>). On behalf of the MRS executive board, we look forward to meeting you there.

Jonathan Sleeman.

Editor-in-Chief, *Clinical & Experimental Metastasis*.

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