

EDITORIAL

With the publication of this issue, *Origins of Life* becomes the official organ of the International Society for the Study of the Origin of Life. *Origins of Life* saw the light of day in February 1968 as *Space Life Sciences*. The critical need for a journal which could bring together the exciting developments in space biology resulted in the launching of the journal.

As time went on, it became very clear that the study of exobiology has developed into a subject in its own right, encompassing such diverse disciplines as astronomy and microbiology. While the search for life beyond the Earth was of paramount importance for exobiology, the scientifically broader question was the study of the origin of life. It appeared reasonable to divest the journal of those contributions which had strictly to do with space medicine, and in 1974 *Space Life Sciences* began to appear as *Origins of Life*, An International Journal devoted to the Scientific Study of the Origin of Life. This change provided a much needed vehicle for astronomers, geologists, chemists, and biologists to publish their contributions which had a special bearing on the whole question of life's beginning.

About this time, the International Society for the Study of the Origin of Life was first mooted at Cortina d'Ampezzo. A few enthusiasts met with Alexander Ivanovich Oparin and suggested the possibility of forming a society to bring together scientists in different disciplines interested in the origin of life. Slowly but surely, support for such a movement grew in the scientific community, and the international society was launched at a meeting at Pont-à-Mousson, France, in 1970.

In 1980, at the international conference of ISSOL held in Jerusalem, a resolution by the society resulted in choosing *Origins of Life* as its official publication vehicle. A committee consisting of Cyril Ponnampereuma, Richard Young, William Schopf, and Donald DeVincenzi nominated James P. Ferris of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York, U.S.A., to become the new editor of the journal. The present editor agreed to continue until such an arrangement was completed.

The journal has served a purpose so far, and will continue its interdisciplinary tradition under the influence of the society. As editor of *Origins of Life* since 1974, I take the opportunity of thanking my associate editors, the illustrious editorial board, the editorial staff of the Reidel Publishing Company, and the many editorial assistants for the cooperation and the assistance rendered to me during my editorship. I look forward to many future glorious years for *Origins of Life*.

CYRIL PONNAMPERUMA