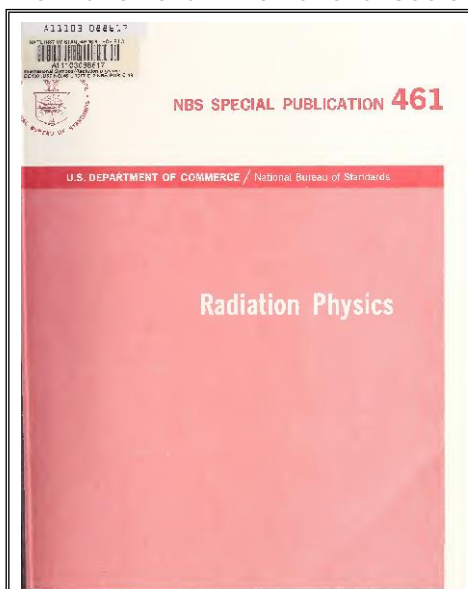


## The International Radiation Physics Society (IRPS): A Reflective History of the Formative Years

*David Bradley and Dudley Creagh*

If one were to trace the formation of IRPS then, in that respect, the history of the IRPS goes back to well beyond the present 40 years of existence of the Society, indeed it would seem its origins can be traced back to at least 1974. As things stand, it would seem rather difficult, perhaps even close to impossible, to recount the names of all of those who played a contributory role in the early developments of what we now refer to as the International Radiation Physics Society. Perhaps the only person who might be best positioned to shed light into those key developments of the early 1970s would be Suprakash Roy, acknowledging the Kolkata scientific fraternity to have been central to all of this. Seeking to give as much information as we can, we recognize the challenge posed in providing an accurate record, memories now beginning to fail. Indeed, our mission here has been to put together a history of the Society during its most formative years, potentially to be corrected by those who might still retain a better memory of matters. The only living members of the Society who can claim to have a longer association with the IRPS than we the authors are Professors Pratt and Roy (erstwhile Head of Physics, the Bose Institute).

Prime among those involved in creation of the Society were: Ananda Mohan Ghose (Bose Institute, Kolkata), Anu to his closest associates, John Hubbell (NBS, later evolving into NIST), and Richard Pratt (University of Pittsburgh). At a meeting at the Bose Institute in Kolkata (November 30-December 4, 1974), in a conference now referred to as ISRP-1 (the first International Symposium on Radiation Physics), discussions were held concerning the formation of an International Society for Radiation Physics, this being an initiative lead by



*Fig 1. The initiating event - the 1<sup>st</sup> International Symposium on Radiation Physics, recorded in NBS Special Publication 461*

Ananda Mohan Ghose and John Hubbell. With acknowledgement to the late John Hubbell and to the National Bureau of Standards (now NIST), the Proceedings of that conference are now available world-wide, appearing in NBS Special Publication 461 (Fig 1) [Ghose et al., 1977]. Moreover, let it not escape the attention of the reader that on-screen, availability is just a few key-strokes away, yielding an immediate and detailed view of the various presentations. Certainly, one can marvel at the range of interests showcased in the NBS publication, the issues dealt with being of a manifestly fundamental nature, something the now flagship IRPS symposia have continued to provide coverage of, with applications only later making prominent appearance. One could also reflect on the challenges of the time in creating printed copy of a conference, matters we are now largely blind to given present digital capabilities. NBS Special Publication 461 undoubtedly represents the efforts of a great many scientists of considerable

authority, several of whom went on to assume notable roles in the Society (not least among these, Suprakash Roy and D V Gopinath).

In early 1982, ISRP-2, the second of what was to become a series of meetings was held along the *Strait of Malacca*, on the island of Penang, the venue being the Minden Heights campus of USM (Universiti Sains Malaysia), A M Ghose once again taking the lead role, partnering with Chong Chon Sing (USM). As an aside this former British army barracks was named after the *1st August 1759* Battle of Minden, a major engagement of the Seven Years' War. Among the attendees at ISRP-2 were Daphne Jackson (University of Surrey and the first female Professor of Physics in the UK), Dick Pratt (University of Pittsburgh), Didier Isabelle (Director of CERL, the CNRS Laboratory for Irradiation Studies), Ante Ljubicic (Ruđer Bošković Institute) and Walter Gilboy (University of Surrey). The involvement of Bradley extends back to that time, participating in a junior role in organization of ISRP-2. At ISRP-2 a Protem Committee was also set-up, charged with steering the birth of the Society (members of whom included Joseph Rotblat, later to be a Nobel Laureate, and Daphne Jackson).

Evolving from the efforts of the Protem Committee, as well as of others, the formation of the Society was announced on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1985 at ISRP-3 in Ferrara, the Society being founded to promote the global exchange of scientific information pertaining to radiation physics, including experimental research and education in radiation physics. Richard Pratt, John Hubbell, and David Bradley composed the constitution of the Society (Fig. 2), doing so at the Rocking Horse Road home of John, in Rockville, Maryland. To this day, the Constitution remains largely unscathed, undoubtedly due to the amazing efforts of Richard and John. Bradley was to immediately become Assistant Editor to Dick Pratt (the founding Secretary of IRPS), subsequently assuming the role of Editor of the majority of the editions of IRPS-NEWS, doing so for close to a decade. Indeed, the first article to appear in IRPS-News, 1(1), p7, Summer 1986, was written by Bradley, reporting on the radionuclide releases and global reach of the releases arising from the



**Daphne Jackson**

## **Two members of the IRPS Pro-Tem Committee, 1982**



**Joseph Rotblat (Nobel  
Laureate)**

Chernobyl accident of 26 April 1986. In volume 2 this was followed-up by an article by Servo Kasi (retired from Aalto University), detailing snow depth analyses availed by virtue of the associated  $^{137}\text{Cs}$  depositions. Mention is made of this not least because it would certainly seem that Servo has since been one of the most regular attendees to IRPS meetings. For a good number of years IRPS-News, the forerunner of the present Bulletin, was mailed individually to some three to four hundred members of IRPS, with the printing and postage sponsored by the Radiation Consultancy Asia Lab Sdn Bhd. (now Alypz Sdn Bhd). Management of the Bulletin has since for many years been under the careful guidance of Dudley Creagh (whom David first met at the time of ISRP-4).

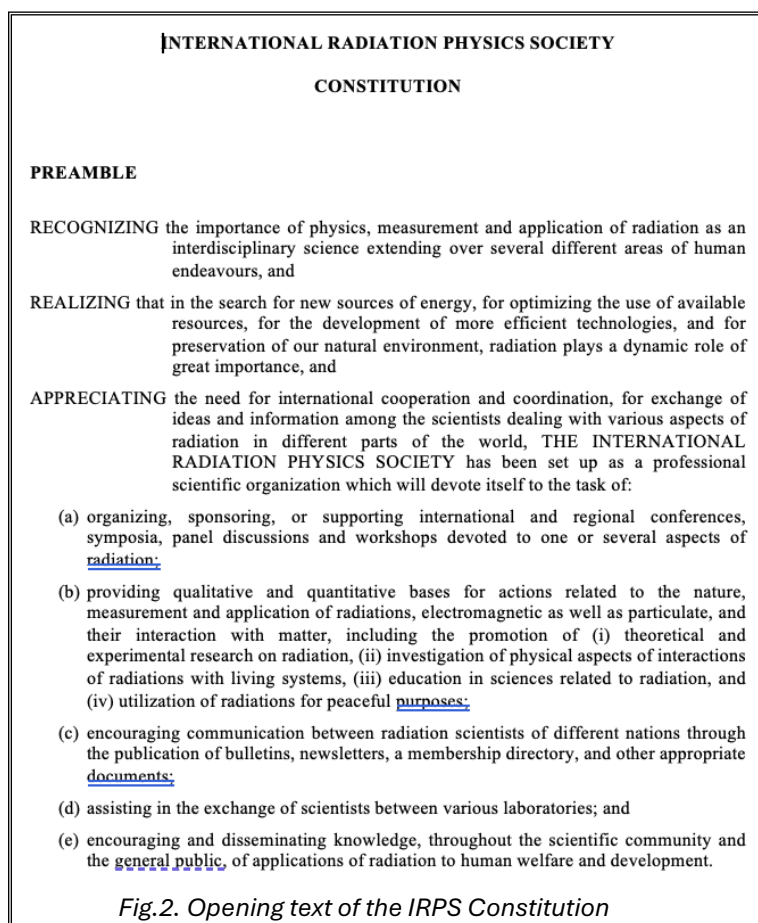
Several of the first officer-bearers of the Society can be seen in Figure 3. Announcement of the formation of IRPS appeared in various newsletters, including that of the European Physical Society (EPS) (Fig 4). As evidence of the many developments that lead to the world-wide reach of the Society, numerous ISRP meetings have since been held (as listed below) with each continuing the tradition of offering a multidisciplinary forum for the exchange of scientific knowledge in radiation physics. It is also pertinent to record here that it was a key mission of the Founders of IRPS to set-up and promote a fees structure for membership of the Society that would ensure the lowest possible barrier to global participation, a matter further underlining the claim of the

Society to be International. With this being a matter of central importance to the Society, there has been a need for IRPS officers to take-on and commit to a role that through to the present day entails an entirely unpaid arrangement.

Planning of the various scientific meetings since ISRP-2 have typically included prior inspection of the conference site and facilities. Council meetings have often been conducted in conjunction with Local Conference organization, making possible the greater attendance of IRPS Office-bearers. In addition to the Council meetings each of which have taken place at the Conference locations, many memorable meetings have also been organized elsewhere,

including in Buenos Aires, Bologna,

Budapest, Chengdu, Cordoba, Debrecen (thanks to Denes Berenyi), Kenilworth, Jaipur, Mumbai and St Petersburg, not to the exclusion of the many other meeting locations. Until recent times,



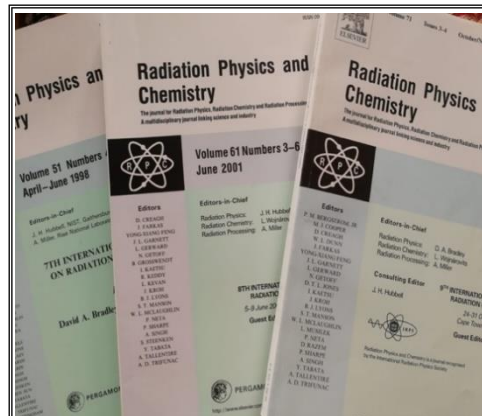


*The photo, taken at ISRP-4, shows (L to R): Suprakash Roy, A.M. Ghose (the PhD supervisor of both Suprakash Roy and Bradley), Abdul Aziz Tajuddin (USM, Penang), David Bradley and Ivan Nascimento, organizer of ISRP-4.*

around the globe, immense gratitude needs to be paid to the organizers of the meetings and their ability to overcome an assortment of challenges. First and foremost among these challenges was that at the Dubrovnik ISRP-5 of 1991. Rapidly developing issues lead soon after to the onset of the Balkan conflict, just a few weeks or less after the end of the meeting (with a good many return flights apparently cancelled mid-week of the meeting), handled with some calm by Ante Ljubicic. To give some clue as to the looming danger, the ISRP-5 venue was subsequently destroyed, partly as a result of naval bombardment. Subsequent organizers have also had to contend with challenges, admittedly much less arduous, albeit in their own way problematic, including reduced access to the ISRP-4 venue, disrupted by student protests (handled once again with some calm by Ivan Nascimento and colleagues), while at the ISRP-9 hotel-venue staff mounted a pay and conditions protest (handled once again with some aplomb by Dan Jones and colleagues), matters that could well have put in jeopardy the continuity of both meetings. As an aside, among the memories of the Cape Town ISRP-9 was the humorous closing speech of IRPS President Malcom Cooper, including the wryly delivered statement 'You have made a happy man very old' in place of 'You have made an old man very happy'. In more recent years we have also faced other challenges, none more extreme than that arising from the advent of SAR-CoV-2. As elsewhere around the world, the IRPS 2018-2021 team were haunted by the effect this was having upon the conduct of affairs. Until that time face-to-face Council meetings had strongly aided the detailed planning of IRPS events. Moreover, the Society had until that time held ISRP events on a triennial basis, absent of online presentations, all without interruption or delay. While it

the expectation of attendance at the bi-annual meetings of Council weighed heavily on budgets and time. One such memorable occasion for Bradley was attendance at a meeting in Jaipur, preceded by a delay of 24 hours in Bangkok from fog in Delhi, a missed non-daily connection resulting an overnight seven-hour taxi ride to Jaipur and a greeting from Council of 'You're late'. It will not come as a surprise to know that the on-site meetings of Council have now largely given way to online meetings.

As perhaps is to be appreciated from the various ISRP locations and the share the Society has had in taking the meetings



*Fig 3a. Special Issues of all ISRPs other than the budget restricted ISRP-2 have appeared in Elsevier publications, first in NIM and subsequently since the mid 1990s in RPC. Note the logo of IRPS on the cover of all RPC print copies to-date, appearing together with the wording 'Radiation Physics and Chemistry is a journal recognized by the International Radiation Physics Society'. It is opportune to mention here that RPC has a current Clarivate Impact Factor of 3.3 and first quartile (Q1) ranking for Nuclear Science and Technology and Atomic Physics.*



appeared that the 2021 ISRP-15 might have provided the opportunity to be fully live, international travel beginning to open-up, for most international attendees the travel restrictions were to prove too formidable. Nevertheless, a highly successful mixed-mode scientific meeting was held, albeit testing the capability of Sunway University to plan for this and to ensure a programme sensitive to global presentations. Challenges apart, undeterred we have until now continued to host our IRPS meetings on a triennial basis, as listed below.

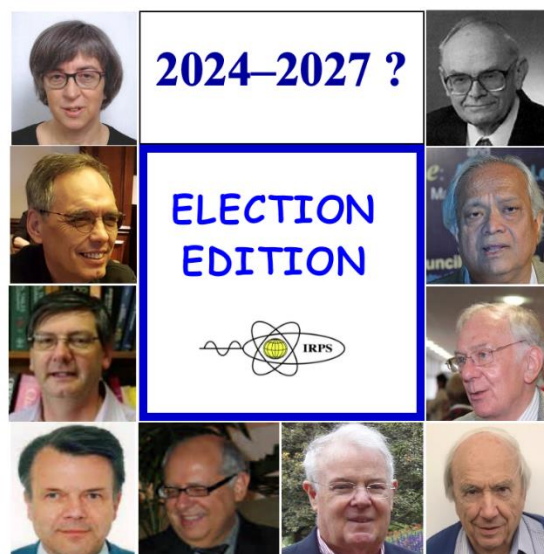
- Sao Paulo, Brazil - ISRP-4, 1988
- Dubrovnik, Croatia - ISRP-5, 1991
- Rabat, Morocco - ISRP-6, 1994
- Jaipur, India - ISRP-7, 1997
- Prague, Czech Republic - ISRP-8, 2000
- Cape Town, South Africa - ISRP-9, 2003
- Coimbra, Portugal - ISRP-10, 2006
- Melbourne, Australia - ISRP-11, 2009
- Rio de Janeiro, Brazil - ISRP-12, 2012
- Beijing, China - ISRP-13, 2015
- Cordoba, Argentina - ISRP-14, 2018
- Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia - ISRP-15, 2021
- Lisbon, Portugal - ISRP-16, 2024

Below is a complete list of IRPS Presidents to-date. Next to which is a photo-montage from the cover of a previous IRPS bulletin, before Jorge was elected in late 2024.

- P.K. Iyenar 1985 -1991
- Dan Benninson 1991-1994
- John Hubbell 1994-1997
- Bikash Sinha 1997-2000
- Malcolm Cooper 2000-2003
- Richard Pratt 2003-2006
- Dudley Creagh 2006-2009
- Odair Goncalves 2009-2012
- Ladislav Musilek 2012-2015
- Chris Chantler 2015-2018
- David Bradley 2018-2021
- Isabel Lopes 2021-2024
- Jorge Fernandez 2024



*Fig 3b. Taken at ISRP-4, Professor P.K (Padmanabha Krishnagopala) Iyengar (seated front row) first President of IRPS (director of BARC at the time, later becoming chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission of India). P.K. was the only IRPS President to hold two terms. Immediately behind P.K. are A M Ghose and Richard Pratt, Secretary of IRPS (noting that A.M.Ghose declined to be an Office Bearer of IRPS). Standing to the right is Didier Isabelle, first Treasurer of the Society.*



**33 Years of IRPS Presidents. Clockwise from the top right: John Hubbell, Bikash Sinha, Malcolm Cooper, Richard Pratt, Dudley Creagh, Odair Goncalves, Ladislav Musilek, Christopher Chantler, David Bradley, Isabel Lopes**

**Information about earlier Presidents is given on page 2.**

*Fig 3c. Presidents of IRPS, prior to the Election of Jorge Fernandez (University of Bologna) in late 2024,*

Fig 4. Announcement of the birth of IRPS, appearing in the newsletter of the European Physical Society

## INTERNATIONAL RADIATION PHYSICS SOCIETY

The International Radiation Physics Society (IRPS) which was founded on 29 September 1985 at the Third International Symposium on Radiation Physics is enrolling individual members.

The constitution of the IRPS defines Radiation Physics as "the branch of science which deals with the physical aspects of interactions of ionizing radiations (both electromagnetic and particulate) with matter".

"The primary objective of the Society is to promote the global exchange and integration of scientific information pertaining to the interdisciplinary subject of radiation physics", including "the promotion of (i) theoretical and experimental research in radiation physics, (ii) investigation of physical aspects of interactions of radiations with living systems, (iii) education in radiation physics, (iv) utilization of radiations for peaceful purposes". The Society, is publishing a Newsletter and will continue to sponsor the series of International Symposia on Radiation Physics.

The first President of the IRPS is Dr. P.K. Iyengar, Director of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Bombay, India. Information regarding individual membership in the Society may be obtained from its Secretary:

Professor R.H. Pratt,  
Dept. of Physics and Astronomy,  
Univ. of Pittsburgh,  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

Tel. (412) 624 43 04, Tx 812 466 (within the U.S.) and 199 126 (outside).

Treasurer is D.B. Isabelle (Aubière, France). Information regarding the Society may also be obtained from its five regional vice-presidents: G. Knoll (U.S.), M.A. Gomaa (Egypt/Saudi Arabia), A. Ljubcic (Yugoslavia), D.F. Jackson (U.K.) and A.M. Ghose (Malaysia).



IAEA

International Centre for Theoretical Physics

UNESCO



Conference on

### Perspectives in Computational Physics

Miramara, Trieste, 29-31 Oct. 1986

The International Centre for Theoretical Physics Physics, Trieste, Italy will hold a Conference on Perspectives in Computational Physics from 29 to 31 October, 1986. Directors are F. James (CERN, Geneva, Switzerland), A. Nobile (SISSA, Trieste, Italy) and C. Rebbi (Brookhaven National Lab., Upton, N.Y., USA).

The purpose of the Conference is to put computational physics into proper perspective, defining its present rôle in research and trying to foresee its future domains of application. Scientists interested in taking part in the Conference should write to the:

International Centre for Theoretical Physics  
Conference on Perspectives in Computational Physics,  
P.O. Box 586, I-34100 Italy

### Europhysics Letters

As subscribers to *Europhysics Letters* will already have remarked, the 64-page issue is now regularly established and an extra large issue has even been published to avoid creating a back-log. Contributions while still less even geographically and by subject than is planned in the long-term are arriving at a highly satisfactory rate, and it has been necessary to build up more rapidly than expected the panel of referees. Some teething troubles in follow-up procedures which introduced undesirable delays in a few cases have now been largely resolved and the Journal can be said to be running smoothly.

Because of the increase in the number of pages to be published this year (vols. I and II) over and above those foreseen — 1696 as against 1536 — and in the expectancy that the level will be maintained next year in vols. III and IV, the subscription rates for 1987 are:

Libraries: Sw.Fr. 595.— (cf 550.— 1986)

EPS Individual Members: Sw.Fr. 60.— (cf 55.— 1986) plus Sw.Fr. 10.— contribution to mailing expenses.

Subscriptions in 1986 have been steadily rising, but there are still many institutes that are not on the list. Readers of *Europhysics News* are urged to check that their own library subscribes even if they themselves receive it as individuals.

### Invitation from Japan

Members of the European Physical Society are invited to present their original papers at the 1987 Annual Meeting of the Physical Society of Japan which will be held at the Nagoya Institute of Technology from Friday 27 to Monday 30 March 1987. In accordance with the agreement made with EPS by the Physical Society of Japan when it became a Collaborating Society, EPS Individual Members are accorded the same status at the Annual Meeting (this is the 42nd) as members of the home society. Closing date for applications to present papers is 12 December 1986.

Correspondence should be addressed to the

Physical Society of Japan  
Room 211, Kikai-Shinko Building  
3-5-8 Shiba-Koen, Minato-Ku  
Tokyo 105, Japan

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*Europhysics News* is the official journal of the European Physical Society which comprises 29 National Societies, Academies and Group, about 4000 Individual Members and 70 Associate Members. Governing bodies of EPS are the General Meeting, Council and an elected Executive Committee responsible for detailed policy. EPS promotes the collaboration of physicists throughout Europe, organising and harmonising conferences and publications, improving physics education, encouraging physics applications, awarding scholarships to sponsored schools in Europe. EPS publishes in addition to *Europhys. News*, *Europhysics Letters* (in partnership with national societies), *European Journal of Physics* (in partnership with The UK Inst. of Phys.), *Europhys. Conf. Abs.*, *Europhys. Ed. News*. Individual Members receive *Europhys. News* free of charge (price to insts.: Sw.Fr. 90.—/a), *Europhys. Lett.* at Sw.Fr. 55.—/a (insts. 550.—), rebates on many other publications and on conference fees. Annual EPS membership fee for individual Members belonging to an EPS member society is: Sw.Fr. 44.—; independent members: Sw.Fr. 132.—; members of a Collaborating Society: Sw.Fr. 55.— (8 26).

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## ARCHIVE EDITION OF IRPS BULLETIN

Volume 18 No 1 August, 2004

### Office Bearers : 2003 - 2006

Editorial	President's Report
Reports from Regional Vice Presidents	Reports from Members
Obituaries	
New Members and Address Changes	

### EDITORIAL Paul Bergstrom

This issue begins our new volume and is blessed with a wealth of contributions. I highly encourage the members of the Society to write and contribute such pieces. It is through these articles that the rest of the society can become familiar with how Radiation Physics is practiced in your neighborhood.

Professor Richard Pratt contributes his first column as President of the Society to us. Additionally, two of our regional Vice Presidents, Dr Suprakash Roy and Professor Anselmo Paschoa have written and forwarded a number of contributions that reflect the intellectual richness of our field in India and in South America.

Regrettably, two influential figures of the IRPS have recently passed away. Professor Ananda Ghose, one of our two Lifetime Honorary Members, and Dr. Dan Beninson, IRPS President from 1991-1994. Their obituaries are given in this issue

Home Page Next

Fig 5a. An online version of the IRPS Bulletin, the Editorial bearing sad news. Listed in the lower panel are office bearers of the Society at the time

### EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor: P.M. Bergstrom (U.S.A.)  
Editorial Committee: D.C. Creagh (Australia) S.A. McKeown (Australia)





*Fig 5b. Printed versions of the IRPS Bulletin. Also shown are several IRPS Ephemera, the journal RPC carrying an example of a number of focused issues produced at the time, managed by IRPS Members, others including the Photoeffect Effect, Elastic and Inelastic Photon Scattering and Bremsstrahlung. We should re-engage with such efforts.*

### Archive of IRPS records, 1979-2008

Held at the American Institute of Physics (AIP) Niels Bohr Library and Archives, this achievement was the culmination of a project driven by Dudley Creagh and Richard Pratt. The IRPS records are from 1979 to 2008 including: IRPS Council meeting minutes; IRPS News and Bulletin newsletters, correspondence, membership lists, and photographs, documenting IRPS activities over the period. In particular, the archive comprises information, until now mainly undigitized and all in English, amounting to 2.25 linear feet (of the order of 0.7m) of material (held in 2 records boxes and 1 half manuscript box). Driven by Dudley, the material is organized into four series, arranged chronologically within each series: Series I, International Radiation Physics (IRPS) general files; Series II, IRPS Council; Series III, IRPS News/Bulletin; Series IV, International Symposium on Radiation Physics (ISRP). The records include: IRPS Council meeting minutes; IRPS New and Bulletin (newsletters), correspondence, membership lists, and photographs documenting IRPS activities. The AIP records that researchers whose applications for access are approved by the Institute may have full

access to materials that are 25 years or older; access to materials less than 25 years old will require the approval of an officer of the IRPS Executive (President, Secretary, Treasurer) to provide for full access to the records. Moreover, to access the archival materials researchers need to have an approved access application on file.

### Sustaining the Society and keeping in touch with the IRPS Membership

As well as sponsoring international symposia, including the flagship International Symposium on Radiation Physics (ISRP), the IRPS publishes a semi-annual newsletter. As mentioned earlier, IRPS-News was the forerunner of the present Bulletin. The Bulletin has since been the primary means of communication with the IRPS membership (Fig. 5). Since the early 2000s conference series additional to the ISRP have been developed, to be mentioned briefly in the Summary to this article (so as to not deflect too greatly from coverage of the formative years of IRPS), with ICDA being the brainchild of Ladislav Musilek and IRRMA being brought into the fold by Bill Dunn (Emeritus Kansas State University). Further to this has been the IFARP series, brought into being by Jorge Fernandes with the first of these having the evocative name FORUMBA (Forum in Buenos Aires). Sustaining the Society in the years prior to online attendance to Council meetings brought its own challenges, a matter mentioned earlier. Highlight events have included Isabel Lopes (University of Coimbra) becoming the first female President of the Society. Remaining on the theme of Society progresses one might be forgiven for imagining that developments in nurturing of the Society have been entirely smooth sailing. Nothing

could be further from the truth. To avoid it not becoming a lost memory, let one recount the many frankly direct, robust, well-intentioned, and often humorous exchanges that took place during those face-to-face Council meetings. Among the notable orators have undoubtedly been Dick Pratt (University of Pittsburgh) and Malcom Cooper (University of Warwick), both with an acute ability to run a meeting, Franco Rustichelli (University of Ancona), Didier Isabelle (in whose memory a Didier Isabelle award was given to the best student oral presentation at ISRPs, carried out for many years), Anselmo Paschoa, and Bikash Sinha (VECC and Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics). The presence of many steady hands within the Council is also to be acknowledged. On this theme it would be amiss if we were not to mention Leif Gerward who for many years attending the majority of our Council Meetings, also to Denes Berenyi (member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA) and Head of the Institute of Nuclear Research of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1976 to 1990), also to Richard Hugtenburg (Swansea University). It would also be amiss to not mention the continuing presence of NIST personnel in progressing IRPS, a matter traced all the way back to NBS Special Publication 461 and to John Hubbell, providing for IRPS-NEWS and the Bulletin, as well as participation in Council meetings and the Council Executive. These include Paul Bergstrom, Larry Hudson, Ron Tosh and Eric Shirley (present Membership Officer). Also needing to be mentioned is a continuing presence of members from Kansas State University, in particular Amir Bahadori (present IRPS Treasurer) as well as Bill Dunn. In the absence of such dedication the Society would not have flourished in the way that it has.



*Fig 6. A Meeting in Chengdu in 2004 in association with a Council Meeting, with Suprakash Roy front row, third from left, Ladislav Musilek (fourth from left), Richard Pratt (centre) and Dudley Creagh (fourth from the right).*



**Summary**

This rather brief reflection on the birth and formative years of the Society has sought to give an overview of the various developments that have taken place over a period of some 50 years, all with the benefit of hindsight of having the intention of bringing into being and nurturing a Society developed by its members in a wholly voluntary capacity. Although explicit mention of a great many undeniably important figures within IRPS has not been provided for within the text, details in the figures could be hoped to give some additional coverage, including Fig 6 above, identifying some of the key names involved in creation of our Society. The intention is that this article will be followed-up and revisited in a second chapter, detailing expansion of IRPS undertakings, with two further tri-annual conferences held under the banner names IRRMA (Industrial Radiation and Radioisotope Measurement Applications) and ICDA (International Conferences on Dosimetry and Applications), while IFARP (International Forum on Advances in Radiation Physics) has focused on more regional representation. We all of us sense that digital communication has come to the rescue of very many thousands of conferences around the world, and that there are going to be big changes in the way in which future conferences are to be held. Not least, with many finding the virtual presence option most useful. From the experience in organizing ISRP-15, the hybrid meeting is definitely a harder ask to arrange; the reader is left to imagine the very many hurdles. Nothing is perfect and change is hard to accommodate; face-to-face meetings are a joy, albeit impeded by issues such as movement restrictions, seen right through to present time.

**References:**

Ghose, A., Gopinath, D., Hubbell, J. and Roy, S. (1977), Radiation physics: National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, MD, [online], <https://doi.org/10.6028/NBS.SP.461> (Accessed June 26, 2025).