I have been serving this Journal since its inception in 1987, and occasionally wonder if I am the longest-lasting Editor-in-Chief of a medical journal in the world!

As such, now that I am finishing my current three-year term as Editor-in-Chief with the publication of the last issue of this year, I feel this is the right moment to bring my service to the journal to a close and pass the mantle to the younger generation. Portuguese nephrology has several well-known colleagues ready, willing and able to carry the torch and help the journal thrive and prosper.

So, if you’ll permit me, at this moment of farewell, I would like to highlight some memories which might be helpful for future generations to understand the first twenty-six years of our journal.

The journal was created in 1987, born of a dream Prof. Serafim Guimarães† (Porto) and I shared of a Portuguese journal devoted to nephrology and hypertension. This dream became flesh, and its first incarnation was the Revista Portuguesa de Nefrologia e Hipertensão, providing a forum for national and international nephrologists in that it carried articles in English, French and Spanish while its first language was obviously Portuguese.

So long, and thanks for all the fish. Farewell from the Editor-in-Chief

Fernando Carrera
Editor-in-Chief
on the support and enthusiasm of Prof. Fernando
Valderrábano† (Madrid), a good friend to Portuguese
nephrology and a fan of the journal in particular. He
remains in my memory and is still much missed
today, eleven long years after his passing.

During our first twenty years of existence, we
enjoyed an uninterrupted publication, becoming
popular and well accepted nationally and beyond
these shores.

Our first aim met, we realised another: the switch
to an English-only format. Six years ago this dream
was brought to life thanks to the then-President of
the Portuguese Society of Nephrology, Dr José Vinhas
(Setúbal). Together we evaluated the risks and ben-
efits of this daring move and decided to make it
happen, making 2007 the year of the English. The
Portuguese Journal of Nephrology and Hypertension
was born!!!

The result surpassed our wildest expectations.
Over this last six years of English-only publication,
the number of manuscripts submitted increased each
year, as did the articles coming from abroad. This
new structure permitted us to regularly use reviewers
from overseas, and since then all articles submitted
to us have been reviewed by three or four experts,
and always a combination of both national and non-
national physicians.

This increasing number of manuscripts submitted
plus the highest standards demanded by this com-
bination of international and domestic reviewers led
to both a better quality of the manuscripts published
and a higher rejection rate of manuscripts. Just to
mention this year, 2012, we rejected 50% of original
articles and 45% of case reports. Further to this, our
editorial policy is one of strict adherence to the
Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to
Biomedical Journals produced by the ICMJE (Interna-
tional Committee of Medical Journal Editors). Con-
sequently, and with the efforts of our Deputy-Editor,
Prof. Rui Alves (Coimbra), our journal is now indexed
on the SciELO platform and included in Google
Scholar.

My ten years of service (1994-2004) to the ERA-
EDTA gave me the opportunity to forge excellent
contacts and friendships with all NDT editors-in-chief,
from whom I learnt several ideas which I tried to
adapt to the reality of our journal. As a matter of
fact NDT has been the gold standard for which I’ve
striven during my term of office as Editor-in-Chief of
this Portuguese journal.

A staunch friend I was privileged to make during
my years on the ERA-EDTA council and who has
given me unceasing support ever since is Prof. Jürgen
Floege (Aachen). This excellent scientist has pub-
lished in and reviewed articles for our journal and
is a loyal friend to Portuguese nephrology. I mention
particularly his work as Chairman of the Scientific
Committee for the 2004 Lisbon ERA-EDTA Congress:
I will never forget the support he gave to Portuguese
nephrologists’ visibility during that congress, appoint-
ing so many of them as chairs of sessions or speak-
ers. It was a moment of glory, of being in the spot-
light, which never happened before or after this
congress.

My thought was always that the journal’s contin-
uity depended on both the full support of Portuguese
nephrologists and international visibility. As such,
the journal always had an International Editorial
Board which, along these twenty-six years, always
included presidents of foreign national and interna-
tional societies of nephrology as well as editors of
international journals of our speciality.

By way of an example and an expression of my
gratitude, all Editors-in-Chief of NDT have been a
part of our International Editorial Board, have pub-
lished in our pages and have reviewed articles in
our journal. Prominent nephrologists from Canada,
the US, Latin-America, Africa, Australia, and many
European countries have graced this International
Editorial Board and have published and reviewed
articles submitted for publication in our journal.

At the turning point to an English-only journal six
years ago, a good friend of mine from the time of
the outstanding 2006 ERA-EDTA Glasgow Congress,
its president, Prof. Jonathan G Fox (Glasgow), offered
his priceless expertise and has worked alongside me
ever since, not only in reviewing and editing manu-
scripts, but more crucially in establishing the journal’s
medical English house style. I am indebted to his
fine-tooth comb!

Within our national shores, grateful thanks are
due to the journal’s dedicated team of Portuguese
reviewers, and in particular Drs José Vinhas (Setúbal), José Luís Reimão Pinto (Lisbon) and Pedro Ponce (Lisbon) for the sheer volume of their promptly delivered and scientifically rigorous reviews.

A huge thank-you goes also to Ms Rebecca Baker, our English text editor, who has been a loyal and dedicated aider and abettor of my work for the Portuguese journal. I have benefited from her intelligence, culture and professionalism for over a decade, since my time at the ERA-EDTA, and her background in the arts has been a great complement to the world of medicine.

I thank also our publishers, Ciência e Vida for their professionalism and ‘can-do’ attitude. Here I’d like to mention that I’m now working with the second generation of this publisher: my work began with Mr Jeronimo Simões and now continues with his son, António. This illustrates well how long I have been in the role of Editor-in-Chief!

A heartfelt acknowledgement is made of the journal’s sponsors in the pharmaceutical industry. Without the generous support of these companies over the years, there would have been no journal and Portuguese nephrology all the poorer for it.

I also give personal thanks to our authors, and mention especially the junior authors, the main reason for the existence of our journal. Their fine work is a constant challenge to me to remain up-to-date and read widely. The child is indeed father to the man…

Finally, just to say that leading a medical journal like this has been a labour of love which I’ve dedicated myself to for too many years now. The Portuguese Society of Nephrology generously recognised my dedication in 2006 when they awarded me Honorary Membership of this society which I am happy to add to similar awards I have received before this one: Honorary Member of the Ibero-American Community of Nephrology, Honorary Member of the Cuban Society of Nephrology, Honorary Member of the Spanish Society of Nephrology, Honorary Member of the Romanian Society of Nephrology and Honorary Member of the Hungarian Society of Nephrology. To these I was extremely happy to add a very recent award I received in October 2011: Fellow of the ERA-EDTA.

If I may leave on a note of advice to my successor, Prof. Rui Alves (Coimbra), I would say that being in charge of this journal means serving it as its custodian, not owning it but being its privileged caretaker for the next generation. And to return to Douglas Adams, the writer whose quote is this farewell’s title:

“To give real service you must add something which cannot be bought or measured with money, and that is sincerity and integrity.”