

EDITORIAL

More changes

The first thing that readers of the hard copy of this journal probably see is the front cover. My hope is that the images on the cover of the journal are both scientifically and aesthetically attractive, and that they might encourage new or casual readers to open the journal and look inside. How do we choose the front covers? When papers are accepted, authors are encouraged to submit suitable cover images to the journal, and every two weeks the journal's excellent production editors send me the selection of cover images that are available for a particular issue. In assessing the pictures I do not look at their legends, nor at the authors of the paper in question. Rather, I rely on my (admittedly questionable) aesthetic sense to choose an image that is attractive and that fits the space available.

I try not to favour any particular organism in choosing an image for the front cover, but I notice, nevertheless, a preponderance of fluorescent images of invertebrate embryos. Nothing wrong with that, and indeed it reflects the composition of the images that are submitted for consideration. But let me take this opportunity to encourage our vertebrate, plant and *Dictyostelium* contributors also to submit their images for consideration. *Development* has readers in over 1100 institutions, all of whom will see your prize picture.

I'd also like to draw your attention to this issue's cover, which is a little out of the ordinary. This image, which is by Richard Grose from the Cancer Research UK London Research Institute, shows the epidermis of a mouse tail. It was selected as the winner of a recent image competition that was sponsored by *Development* at the British Society for Developmental Biology meeting in Warwick, UK, this April. We hope to sponsor similar image competitions at this conference in the future so start saving up your most stunning images.

There are three changes to the journal that I'd also like to bring to your attention. First, readers will have noticed the brief summaries of papers that now appear at the front of the journal. I hope these are helpful in drawing people's attention to articles that might be of particular interest or significance to the

community, as highlighted by reviewers and editors. Some people have asked me who writes these pieces, and the answer is Jane Alfred, our Executive Editor. Any thoughts on these summaries can be addressed to her, but do it soon, before she leaves the journal for a few months of maternity leave. (Congratulations, Jane.) The next piece of news is that Andy McMahon, who is taking on increasing responsibility at Harvard, is standing down as an editor after 3 years of sterling work. Indeed, this is the last time you'll see his name on the masthead. I am really sorry to see Andy go, because he is a good friend and a terrific editor. What makes Andy a great editor is not only his encyclopaedic knowledge of developmental biology but also his innate sense of fair play, and the fact that he is incredibly efficient. One of the reasons for submitting your papers to *Development* is that the editors are full-time research biologists, who will often have a strong feel for what is going on in a field, and who can also readily see things from the authors' point of view. A disadvantage of this system, of course, is that *Development* editors also have to give lectures, do experiments, go to meetings, review papers and grants, write grants, run a lab or a department, and even write their own papers. But with editors like Andy this proves to be no disadvantage, because in spite of doing all the above, and more, he still made decisions on papers within 24 hours. We are fortunate that all the editors aspire to this standard, and almost always achieve it.

Andy's departure follows that of Tom Jessell, and both are hard acts to follow, but I am pleased to announce that we will soon be joined by two new editors with established expertise in mammalian development: Ginny Papaioannou from Columbia University and Liz Robertson, who is Andy's neighbour at Harvard. Ginny and Liz need no introduction from me, and I am delighted to welcome them to the team.

Jim Smith