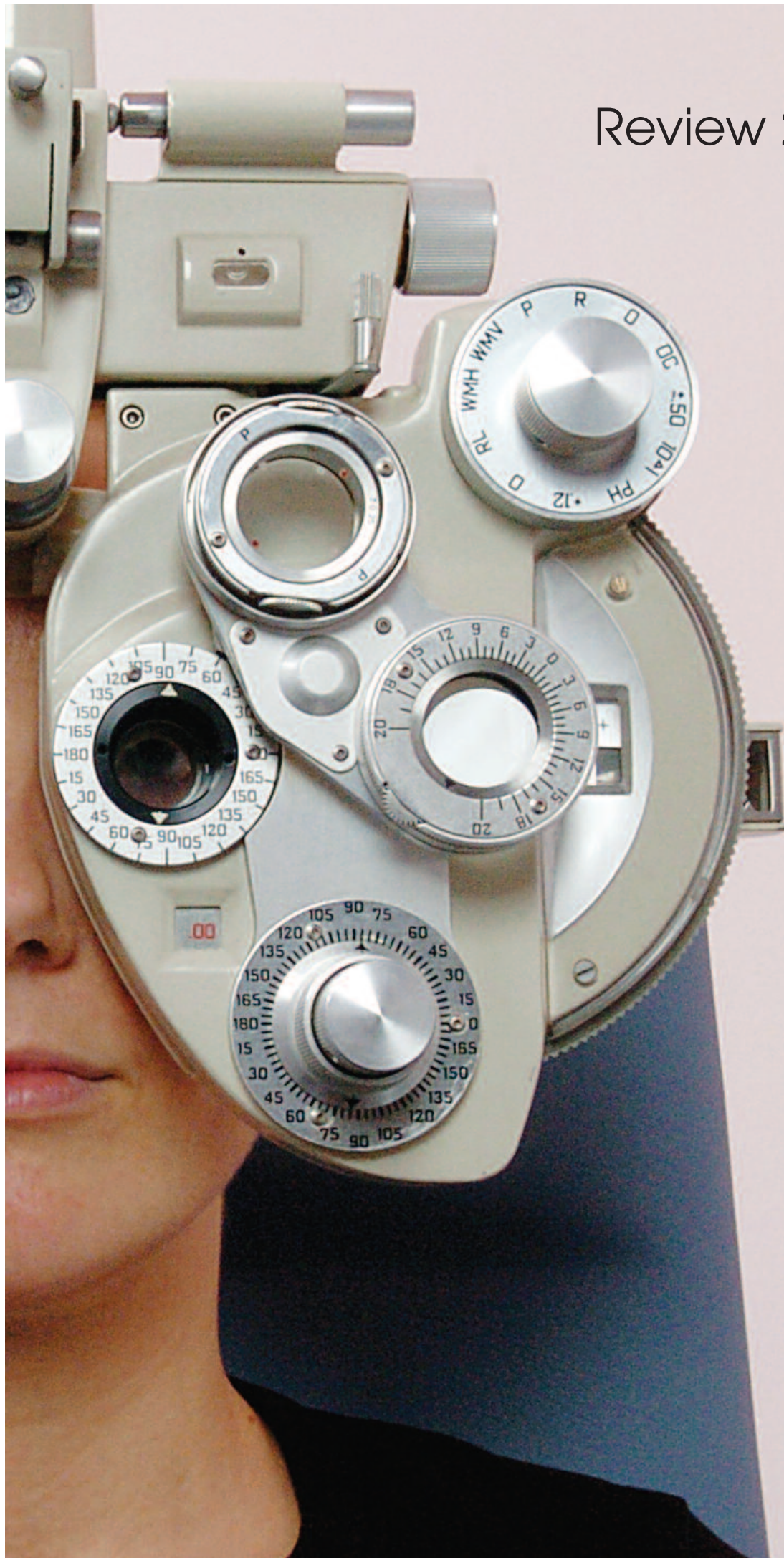


# Review 2007-2009



The WCO is an international optometric association representing over 200,000 optometrists from 75 member organisations in 40 countries. It is the worldwide organisation for professionals working in the field of optometry, their associations and institutions.

Our mission is to facilitate the enhancement and development of eye and vision care worldwide via education, humanitarian outreach and policy development.

Our goals are to:

- Promote high standards of optometric education and practice worldwide
- Unify the profession and be its voice in the international community
- Support programmes that expand access to eye and vision care and aid in the prevention of blindness
- Advance the science of optometry for the benefit of mankind
- Collaborate with other organisations that share these goals

# President's Review



**Robert Chappell**  
President

On taking office at the General Delegates Meeting two years ago, the task of a change of our administration and home was not on my agenda.

For the previous eleven years Tony di Stefano and Melissa Padilla had taken the World Council of Optometry from strength to strength. However, the demands on both Pennsylvania College of Optometry (PCO) in becoming Salus University and the growth of World Council of Optometry (WCO) activities made an amicable decision to part company inevitable.

**'Communication is key to the success of any organisation...'**

A rigorous tender process brought in several high quality offers of a new home, which resulted in the acceptance of the bid from

the UK College of Optometrists. They took over our administration on 1 August 2008 and with Bryony Pawinska, College CEO, as acting Executive Director and Laura Prieto as Executive Assistant, an enormous amount has been achieved in planning the future structure of WCO. The appointment of a new Executive Director has taken some time but in Caroline Hyde-Price we have an excellent health care professional with wide international experience.

**'promote the development and recognition of the profession...'**

World Health Organisation (WHO), International Agency for Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) and Vision 2020 are high profile activities for WCO. Optometry has become an accepted member of the eye care team and in particular its role in the elimination of visual disability due to refractive error is now well established. In 2008 we were asked to re-apply for recognition by WHO which was approved by the WHO Executive Board in January this year. In 2007 the VISION 2020 Action Plan for 2006-2011 was published and for the first time there was formal recognition of Optometry as a profession. WCO continues as a member of IAPB and with three members on the Board of Trustees, optometry is making a significant contribution to this international forum, which has succeeded in promoting greater WHO recognition of the need for a higher profile prevention of blindness programme.

Communication is key to the success of any organisation, particularly with members spread around the world and plans have

been made to improve our interface with Country and Regional members both through the structure of committees and the exchange of written and electronic information. WCO receives many requests for assistance with advocacy to promote the development and recognition of the profession. Many of these have been at very short notice, which makes life very difficult for the administration.

Membership has continued to grow and in 2008, the Governing Board agreed an amnesty for members in arrears with subscriptions to enable them to re-join without back payments. A very successful World Conference on Optometric Globalisation was held in London in April 2008, expertly organised by the UK's College of Optometrists.

While the Education, Legislation and Public Health Committees have continued their work, much of the Secretariat activity has been devoted to the establishment of WCO as a Charity in the UK, the restructuring of the committees, the Governing Board and World Optometric Foundation, which will both widen participation by members and increase the transparency of the organisation.

**'Membership has continued to grow...'**

Thanks are due to both PCO and the UK College for their support – without which WCO could not function – and to the many volunteers on the Governing Board and committees for their work and support.

## Public Health and Development Committee – Activity Summary

Public health was the main focus of last year's Second World Conference on Optometric Globalisation, where many international speakers gave an excellent insight into the challenges implicit in providing eye care to all, both in the developing and the developed world. The conference provided an insight into worldwide public health initiatives and helped the WCO committee to focus on its future direction and strategy.

The main focus of the committee for the past few years has been the development of the Public Health Toolkit and subsequently its introduction to the profession as a whole. The main aim of the Toolkit has been to encourage and help optometrists to understand and

consequently drive or support Vision 2020 initiatives in their own countries.

To ensure that it will be utilised to its full potential, the aim is to run as many regional workshops as possible to give a full understanding of the important role optometry can play in the elimination of preventable blindness, particularly regarding refractive error. Workshops have already been held in India, Africa and Scandinavia and one takes place at the end of the General Delegates Meeting in Melaka. It is hoped that one will be held for Latin America at the ALDOO meeting (Asociación Latinoamericana de Optometría y Óptica) later in the year. The reception following each workshop so far has been very positive.

Another ongoing programme for the committee is to actively encourage all schools of optometry world wide to include a public health curriculum in their courses. Dr. Sandy Block and Dr. Tim Wingert have already carried out a research project to establish the public health content of the curricula of the Optometry Schools in the USA as part of their research for an upcoming book. WCO through the Public Health and Development Committee have requested they extend this research to cover all schools worldwide. This will give them an excellent opportunity to correlate what is being done now and to come up with some recommendations for the future.

# Overview



**Bryony Pawinska**  
Acting WCO Executive Director &  
CEO of the College of Optometrists

## Acting WCO Executive Director Bryony Pawinska Looks Back Over the Past Year

Transferring the WCO secretariat to the UK's College of Optometrists in July 2008 brought with it an array of unforeseen challenges, which to some extent diverted College resources away from the wholly proactive service we had hoped to provide from day one.

Problems which had to be overcome centred around housekeeping issues – from the physical movement of files from the USA and the time-consuming work involved in sorting through them, re-filing and transferring them into electronic formats – to setting up bank accounts in \$US, Euros and £sterling to best maximise exchange rates for WCO. We also went through the necessary bureaucracy required to register the organisation as a UK charity to utilise the benefits this brings.

It also proved to be more trying than expected. We had to solve a major 'spam' problem which was encountered when emails were forwarded to us from the Pennsylvania College of Optometry (PCO). Forwarding not only eliminated the PCO's anti-spam block but also by-passed our College filtering system. A complex issue with uploading files onto the WCO website has made it difficult for us to keep it as topical as we would have liked.

**However, these difficulties are well and truly behind us and I am pleased to report that despite this enforced delay in some areas, the College has made enormous strides forward. I am proud of our many achievements over the course of the past year for the WCO, including the highlights detailed as follows.**

## Achievements for WCO

### Membership

- As well as cleansing the membership database so that it is now both current and as accurate as possible, we have also addressed the issue of outstanding subscriptions – bringing all membership dues up to date
- The introduction of a new paper-free electronic membership system means that all member information is available at the touch of a key – making future data management thorough and efficient
- In an initial push to maintain and potentially generate membership as well as to benefit cashflow, a leaflet outlining the benefits of WCO membership was produced and issued with a subscriptions mail out early in 2009
- We were also able to successfully process new membership applications from the Iranian Optometric Association; School of Optometry, Chung Shan Medical University, Taiwan and FECORA

### Staffing

- Our initial tranche of advertising worldwide for a new Executive Director failed to provide a candidate with the relevant experience. A different approach targeting experienced charity directors brought a much more positive response. The wait for the right person reaped

rewards and Caroline Hyde-Price joins WCO as Executive Director in July 2009

- We have been extremely fortunate in finding Laura Prieto to act as the WCO's Executive Assistant. With great efficiency, Laura has taken database management and e-systems forward, helping the transition from the US to be as smooth as possible. As the main interface with the WCO membership, an additional benefit is that Laura is bi-lingual, with Spanish as her first language
- The WCO operation has already benefited from the expertise of College managers, who can bring their skills and knowledge to bear as required to solve or manage sometimes quite complex matters. To date, areas as diverse as finance, event management and HR have gained from their input

### Communications

- The appointment of the College of Optometrists in July 2008 coincided with expiry of the annual contract with the WCO website hosts in South Africa. The contract was therefore renewed for a further year. Remote management has not helped with difficulties in uploading information and making website changes. Now that this function has been taken in-house to be driven by College IT experts, these technical difficulties have been overcome. On-line

membership lists have been updated, secure log-ins and passwords activated for members and web access removed for de-activated members

- A new quarterly newsletter has been launched in time for the General Delegates Meeting (GDM) in Malaysia. This regular publication will keep members up-to-date on global optometric news, developing issues and the latest events
- The first of these bi-annual reviews of activity for both WCO and WOF has been produced, to reflect on the progress made by both organisations

### Governance

- Preparation of governance documents for the operation of WCO within a UK regulatory framework, including its incorporation as a charity
- Job descriptions for Officers, Chairmen and Committee members, selection procedures for Committee Chairmen and Terms of Reference for the General Board and Committees have also been written.

### Event management

- The College communications team, led by Director Ian Humphreys has managed the planning for the forthcoming GDM in Malaysia in June. We hope this will be a success and the crowning glory of a busy first year for the College of Optometrists as hosts of the WCO's Secretariat.

## Legislation, Registration and Standards Committee – Activity Summary

The committee has agreed to concentrate on optometric practice, rather than concern itself with practice by other professions, to build on the optometric competence model. It acknowledges however that patients who receive a refraction service from unqualified people will confuse that with an eye examination and that once refraction by non-optometrists is allowed, it is hard to regain the territory lost. In the developing

world, any care is better than no care at all and the committee feels that WCO should clarify its position on this for public health reasons and as the global custodian of professional competence in the developed world where refraction is carried out in the context of examination and diagnosis, rather than as a stand-alone activity.

In another initiative, any country now seeking WCO's help with legislation,

registration or standards will now be required to complete a questionnaire. The resulting information will be available – in private or public areas as appropriate – on the WCO website. This will provide members with the benefit of an information base about current and proposed legislation, scope of practice, education, numbers of practitioners and the accreditation of qualifications.

# The View Ahead



**The WCO's new Executive Director  
Caroline Hyde-Price**

## Taking the World Council of Optometry into 2010 and beyond

Key priorities for the new WCO Executive Director Caroline Hyde-Price, when she takes the helm in July will be membership and fundraising development.

With her strong background in the health sector, Caroline already has an excellent grounding in relevant international management issues. She joins from the UK's Health Protection Agency where she was Head of International Office for four and a half years, establishing and co-ordinating the international activities of this independent government body.

Her successes included securing a £1.9m (GDP) grant for international development, establishing its strategy and business planning processes and developing collaborative partnerships around the world.

She was previously Head of International Affairs at the Royal College of Nursing. Caroline has both a first degree in International Politics and an MBA and after training as a nurse, moved into health

services management where she focused on developing and leading on health-related initiatives within key UK organisations.

With this wealth of knowledge and experience, she will be perfectly placed to take the WCO forward by developing its network and influence across the globe. She will be helped in her drive to grow the membership and fundraising by various initiatives which are now in hand or planned to help raise the WCO profile across the globe.

These include:

### Improved Communications

Central to the membership and fundraising campaign is the need for improved communication, both with the WCO membership and externally with optometric stakeholders and the wider world at large. As a communications priority, starting this summer, will be a major overhaul of the WCO website – upgrading, re-designing and re-writing as necessary to give it more impact, make its content more immediate and informative and to make it more user-friendly.

We have now published the first of a regular series of quarterly newsletters, to inform members about association activities and international developments. This will be supported by a monthly e-bulletin providing members with regular updates in brief from across the world.

### On-going collaboration with the WHO

With the WCO's official relationship with the World Health Organisation (WHO) now confirmed, we can look forward to WHO endorsement for the next three years for new projects we undertake under the Vision 2020: Right to Sight programme.

This means that until at least 2011, WCO will work with the authority and collaboration of the WHO to enhance and develop eye and vision care worldwide. WCO is one of only 185 organisations worldwide - and the first and only optometric organisation - to have this recognition.

Mutually agreed terms and aims for the next three years are to analyse the provision of services for individuals with refractive errors in Africa; to conduct a presbyopia study in priority geographical areas and to advocate initiatives on refractive error and low vision.

### International relations

The College of Optometrists has recently been appointed to host the Secretariat for European Academy of Optometry and Optics (EAOO), further strengthening its international reach.

The benefits of this new association to WCO and WOF with its obvious synergy for all three organisations is clear and means the College can consolidate its efforts to the advantage of the global optometric community.

An 'international division' is being set up on the fourth floor of the College's London offices, which will be re-modelled to accommodate its new function once the new WCO Executive Director joins.

### World Conference on Optometric Education, Session 6, 2010

Planning is now underway for the WCO E6, held every 4 years, which brings together 300 educators from 40 countries to discuss issues, solutions, and practical advice affecting the delivery and quality of optometric education.

The next session will run alongside the World Congress on Refractive Error and Service Development in Durban, South Africa, from 8th to 12th November 2010. A steering committee has been created to oversee the development of the programme and organisation.

## Education Committee – Activity Summary

Focus for the Education Committee is planning for the World Conference on Optometric Education, Session 6 in 2010. Everything from considering venues to the programme of topics and speakers and even the style of presentations needs to be carefully considered and a steering committee appointed to oversee its organisation.

Suggested conference themes under a general banner of 'Challenges in Education

Competency and Accreditation' includes:

- What has worked – with evidence (e.g. Technology)
- Competency based education in the world
- Competency as educators
- Challenges on accreditation
- Do board exams help with minimal standards

The committee is also looking at encouraging Optometry Twinning Programmes and partnering educational institutions and as a first step will conduct a

survey to establish what institutional needs are. WCO can facilitate by providing a network and support platform.

A pilot programme is planned to get underway in November 2009 in Bamako, Mali. Affiliated to an eye hospital, 8-12 students will initially start the programme with a view to expanding it to 24-32, with teachers from Africa helping and training others. Graduates of the three-year programme could serve in the public sector in community services, work in an optical shop or provide assistance in private practice.

# WOF President's Review



**Scott D. Brisbin O.D., L.L.D., F.A.A.O.**  
**Outgoing President,**  
**World Optometric Foundation**

In my last report to the General Delegates Meeting, held in Mexico City in April 2007, I presented the summary of the strategic planning meeting held in Denver in December 2006. The main headings for that strategy were as follows:

- sort out relationship with OGS
- consider Global Eye Health Council programs
- define roles and responsibilities of the trustees
- build capabilities for fundraising
- match human resources with needs

At the Denver meeting, it was agreed that the prime function of the WOF was to raise funds for WCO projects and consultants were subsequently hired to investigate potential funding sources such as private and government foundations and trusts. The leads they provided have not yet been followed up.

The issue of the governance of WOF was put on hold whilst the Secretariat transferred to the UK, but in October 2008 the Trustees met in Anaheim to consider how to move forward.

Initially the role of WOF was to select fellowships and raise funds. Originally there were three types of fundraising projects – direct approach to the ophthalmic industry for specific projects support; a leadership fund launched in 2000 whereby leaders gave to WOF; and a search for private donations, either via estates or citizen support. There was also a fundraising campaign called "Give One Exam For World Optometry" aimed at the average practitioner. The money raised by this campaign purposely did not go to WOF but directly to WCO so that it could be used for purposes outside the humanitarian and educational mandates of WOF (e.g. persuading a government to legalise or strengthen optometry's existence in a country).

WOF often found itself in competition with the International Centre for Eyecare Education (ICEE) for fundraising and the two bodies eventually agreed to collaborate. International Agency for Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) then said they also wanted to participate and Optometry Giving Sight (OGS) was born as optometry's fund raising vehicle for specific projects linked to correcting refractive error.

The principle is that the funds raised by OGS are split between countries that raise the money and OGS internationally. That international money is split between ICEE, IAPB and WOF. In order to get some high profile campaigns off the ground quickly the three organisations agreed to pool the total and this goes on until 2010.

It is important to note, however, that WOF is not restricted just to OGS type projects and can raise money for projects completely unconnected with Uncorrected Refractive Error (URE). WOF can only fund educational and humanitarian projects initiated by WCO. "Political" projects that involve such things as enabling legislation regarding legalizing optometry fall outside the scope of WOF according to US law.

## Roles and Responsibilities of WOF Trustees

In Anaheim the Board considered skills required by Trustees, and the composition of the Board. WCO's Governing Board has responsibility for selecting the Trustees (with terms varying from one to three years), but the WOF President, Vice President and Treasurer are elected by the Trustees and their term on the executive is two years.

It was agreed that all Trustees have a responsibility to raise funds. The potential for having a crossover between Trustees and the WCO Executive Committee was discussed and it was agreed that it would be a good idea to have WCO officers involved as they understand WCO projects. A 'job description' for Trustees should be developed so that WCO can identify people who have the skills to fulfil the role.

It was agreed that three of the four WCO Officers should be Trustees, plus four other people, excluding the secretary, who do not need to be optometrists. WOF Officers should not also be WCO Officers. (The WOF Byelaws provide for no less than five and no more than nine voting Trustees).

It was acknowledged that WOF probably needs to demonstrate some success in fundraising before it will attract good people.

## Requests for Funding

The WCO President made a formal request for the sum of \$10,000 for the Malawi school which is being co funded by Optometry

Giving Sight, Sight savers International, and WCO. This was approved.

The WCO President made a formal request for funding to cover Kovin Naidoo's flight to Argentina to work on the RESC Project. This was approved.

## Fundraising

In Anaheim, Dr. Stern presented a document outlining ways in which WOF could raise funds. It was agreed that Trustees should use their contacts to make initial approaches, informed by current WCO project details, and that once potential sponsors have agreed in principle to donate funds, the negotiation should be finalised by the Secretariat.

I remain convinced that we must seek funding outside the traditional pool of resources and must include private and public foundations and grants. This will not provide instant dollars, but the longer we delay aggressive pursuit of this funding resource, the farther away our effort's reward will be. Those plans must now be revived.

## Finance and banking arrangements

At the end of 2007 the total assets of WOF amounted to \$1,236,087. At the end of 2008 this had decreased to £780,900. Although a small amount of the decrease can be attributed to losses on investments, in the main the difference results from a legacy received in 2007, and the payment to OGS in 2008 of monies received in 2007.

A full financial report can be obtained from the WCO Secretariat.

## The Future

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our new Executive Director and express my confidence that her impressive background promises to make her a fine fit for international optometry. "Welcome to the team, Caroline!"

I also want to thank Bryony Pawinska for her excellent job in doing double duty and helping steer the "Good Ship WCO" until we found a more permanent Executive Director. Finally, I would be remiss if, in this, my final report as WOF President, I did not express my gratitude and admiration for the years of dedication and "overachieving" given to WCO and WOF during my time with both organisations by the secretariat in Pennsylvania – particularly Tony and Melissa.

It has been a great privilege to serve as WOF President since 2004. Serving international optometry over the past 15 years has been one of the highlights of my professional life. I am grateful for the opportunity and will continue to champion the causes I so strongly believe in – The World Council of Optometry, The World Optometry Foundation, and Optometry Giving Sight.

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WCO and WOF financial statements are available from the Secretariat on request.