In 1963, research on pancreatic disease gradually started to increase in Japan. Investigators in the field of pancreatic disease wanted a place to exchange their opinions, and, one night at a meeting of the Japanese Society of Gastroenterology, they formed their own group called the “Pancreas Research Study Group of Young Investigators.” In 1969, Dr. Kaneo Ishi proposed the establishment of a Pancreas Research Group and founded the Pancreatic Research Study Group as a society. The first meeting of this society was held in Osaka in March 1970 with Dr. Shiro Hosoda (Shiga University) as chairman. The meetings of this society were initially held twice a year, before the meetings of the Japanese Society of Gastroenterology. Beginning in 1971, the text of the presentation was published in the Proceedings by Dr. Seiji Naitoh (Juntendo University). The first volume of the Proceedings included 1) “Reevaluation of the Pancreozymin-Secretin Test,” 2) “Pancreatolithiasis: Functional Disturbance and Treatment,” 3) “Digestive Hormone and Pancreatic Function,” and 4) “How to Interpret the Bile Duct Findings in the Pancreatic Head as Demonstrated by Various Imagings.”

Since then, membership in this group has steadily increased. Dr. Shingo Aoyama became the first president of the Pancreas Research Study Group in 1969 and served as president until 1973 (Fig. 1). From 1973 to 1981, Dr. Shouichi Yamagata served as the second president, and, in 1981, Dr. Ichio Honjo became the third president. During Dr. Honjo’s presidency, upper gastrointestinal specialists became interested in the pancreas, and the number of members increased to more than 2,000. In 1985, the Pancreas Research Study Group became independent of the Japanese Society of Gastroenterology, and the Japan Pancreas Society was officially established. The first issue of the journal

FIG. 1. Past and present presidents of the Japan Pancreas Society. Dr. Shingo Aoyama (upper left), Dr. Shouichi Yamagata (upper middle), Dr. Ichio Honjo (upper right), Dr. Tochio Sato (lower left), Dr. Tadashi Takeuchi (lower middle), and Dr. Seiki Matsuno (lower right).
of the Japan Pancreas Society, *Suizou*, was published in Japanese, with English summaries appearing in June 1986. Initially, it was a quarterly publication, but it has appeared bimonthly since 1991. Dr. Ichio Honjo died of lung cancer in December 1987 (see *Pancreas* 1989;4:390–1). Dr. Ryotichi Tsuchiya (Nagasaki University) assumed his position as acting president until 1988. When the 15th Meeting of the European Pancreas Club was held in Verona, Italy, in 1983, Dr. Honjo asked Dr. Satake to deliver an official letter from the Japan Pancreas Society to the European Pancreas Club and to the International Association of Pancreatology. This letter was written to establish a collaborative relationship with each society. This was a successful endeavor, and Dr. Tsuchiya in Nagasaki hosted the Fourth International Association of Pancreatology in 1990.

In 1988, Dr. Toshio Sato (Tohoku University) became the fourth president of the society, serving until 1993 and hosting the International Symposium "Pancreatitis" in Sendai in 1994. This was the first time that investigators from all over the world assembled in Japan to exchange opinions on pancreatitis. The University of Tokyo Press published the proceedings of this meeting as a book entitled *Pancreatitis: Its Pathophysiology and Clinical Aspects*. In 1993, *Pancreas* became the official English-language publication of the Japan Pancreas Society. This joint sponsorship of *Pancreas*

by the Japan Pancreas Society and the American Pancreatic Association continues to represent an important and felicitous phenomenon in this era of increasing international exchange of information.

In 1993, Dr. Tadashi Takeuchi (Tokyo Women’s Medical College) became the fifth president of the Japan Pancreas Society and hosted the Eighth Meeting of the International Association of Pancreatologists held in Tokyo in 1998. In 1999, Dr. Seiki Matsuno (Tohoku University) became president of the Japan Pancreas Society; he will host the combined meeting of the International Association of Pancreatology and the Japan Pancreas Society to be held in Sendai in 2004.

Membership in the Japan Pancreas Society has now reached 2,900, and a 2-day meeting of the Japan Pancreas Society is held every year.

On behalf of the Japan Pancreas Society, we express our sincere gratitude to the following physicians who contributed to the development of pancreatic research in Japan and the establishment of the Japan Pancreas Society: Dr. Ryuji Mizumoto (Mie University), Dr. Itsuo Miyazaki (Kanazawa University), Dr. Takashi Suzuki (Yamaguchi University), Dr. Fujio Hanyu (Tokyo Women’s Medical College), Dr. Masayuki Oda (Shinshu University), and Dr. Takaaki Takebe (Tohoku University).