



From the President

Jiri Stejskal

President@atanet.org

American Translators Association 1959-2009: A Professional Journey

In 1959, a gallon of gas cost 25 cents and people were making \$5,000 per year on average. You could buy a loaf of bread for 20 cents and a new house for \$12,000. It was a busy year, too: Alaska and Hawaii were admitted to the Union; Fidel Castro overthrew Fulgencio Batista in Cuba; Soviet Union Premier Nikita Khrushchev visited the U.S. (and was denied access to Disneyland); the Barbie Doll made its debut; and 12 translators in New York founded the American Translators Association.

This year we celebrate the 50th anniversary of our Association. Over the course of the past 50 years, it has grown from a small group of like-minded friends to one of the largest organizations for translators and interpreters in the world, with more than ten thousand members in nearly one hundred countries, a three-million dollar budget, and a headquarters staff of 11. We have 15 divisions and a growing number of ATA chapters and affiliated groups. We have a strong certification program that serves as a model to other associations. And we have amazing annual conferences.

It is only fitting that this year's conference takes place in New York City, the Association's birthplace. Nick Hartmann, president-elect and conference organizer, has done a fabulous job putting together what promises to be our best-ever educational

program. We expect record attendance. Teresa Kelly, our meeting planner and administrative coordinator, is doing an outstanding job making sure that all attendees will have a place to stay and will enjoy the conference from a logistical point of view.

As part of the celebration, a new publication will be introduced at the

founders remains intact. In 1959, the founders stipulated that "The American Translators Association exists as a forum and clearing house to represent and promote the material and intellectual interests of translators and interpreters, and to provide the anonymous collectivity of the profession with an organ of articulate expression."

And that's what we are today — an association that promotes the recognition of the translation and interpreting professions ...

conference: *A Professional Journey*. It is a collection of historical documents and photographs, including stories of Henry Fischbach, Alexander Gode, and other founding members, interviews with current members young and old, and other fascinating accounts of the Association's history compiled by Robert R. Morris, who worked closely with ATA staff and volunteers to produce this *Festschrift*.

This documentation of ATA's first 50 years makes it clear that while much has changed in our industry during this time, the basic mission of the Association as envisioned by its

And that's what we are today—an association that promotes the recognition of the translation and interpreting professions; promotes the communication and dissemination of knowledge for the benefit of translators and interpreters; formulates and maintains standards of professional ethics, practices, and competence; stimulates and supports the education of translators and interpreters; provides a medium for cooperation with persons in allied professions; and promotes professional and social relations among its members. Many happy returns!

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 **American Translators Association**
50th Annual Conference
New York City October 28-31, 2009 New York Marriott Marquis

For complete information and registration forms:
www.atanet.org/conf2009