Preface

The papers in this issue of *Molecular Neurobiology* on "Axonal Transport and the Cytoskeleton" were presented at a satellite symposium of the 13th biennial meeting of the International Society for Neurochemistry, July 20–22, 1991, in Cairns, Queensland, Australia.

Until the past few years, axonal transport has been understood mainly at a descriptive level, in terms of the components, rates, and pharmacological sensitivities of the transport processes. In contrast, the present papers reflect the rapid advances in the field, spurred in large part by elucidation of the molecular mechanisms that underlie the intraaxonal movements detected by radioactive tracers and by video microscopy. The dynamic interactions between cytoskeletal components, the force-generating proteins that serve as transport motors, and the molecules that ensure the correct sorting, directionality, and delivery of transported materials are being clarified and characterized. Such studies are providing new insights into fundamental neurobiological questions regarding neuronal development, regeneration, and pathology. They are also contributing to the broader cell biological understanding of contractile and intracellular transport phenomena.

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