

**Bulletin No 2**

**of the**

**Society of Friends of Otorhinolaryngology**

**(February 2003 – February 2004)**



Course in FESS by Professor H. Stammberger in Graz, Austria, 9th of August 2003

**ORL** Basel  
**BA** Aarau  
Liestal  
Olten  
**Förderverein**

Submitted by  
Prof. Dr. Mihael Podvinec  
President of the Society  
Chefarzt der Klinik für  
HNO-Krankheiten,  
Hals-und Gesichtschirurgie  
Kantonsspital  
CH-5000 Aarau  
Phone: +41 (0)62 838 5102  
e-mail: mihael.podvinec@ksa.ch

## **1. Membership in „Medicus Mundi, the Swiss Network of Organisations for International Cooperation in Health Care“ ...**

**Medicus Mundi Switzerland – Network Health for All** has accepted the membership of our society in their organisation. This membership links us to other Swiss organisations affording medical foreign aid. The exchange of information is especially valuable and gives us the opportunity to grasp dimensions of foreign aid outside our special field, which would otherwise have remained arcane. The majority of organisations in this network apply themselves to the highly visible, weighty present problems of health, primarily fighting the AIDS epidemic.

### **... and some associated thoughts**

Our intentions, concerned with the co-operation of medical specialists and the questions of their education and training would seem to be further removed from public health in the narrower sense of the word, in contrast to the high profile projects outlined above. Accordingly, financing is much more difficult to achieve for our type of project. However, it is easy to overlook that such projects as „Early detection of hearing deficiency in the new-born“, „Screening studies for early detection of otitis media with effusion (OME) in pre-school children“ and „Early diagnosis and prevention of atopy in children and adolescents“ are an integral part of public health improvement. However, only a part of these projects could be implemented to date, due to difficulties in local financing. We are continuing to seek support for these projects.

## **2. State-of-the-Art lectures**

### ***in Serbia and Montenegro:***

- as part of the Continuing Education Event of the ORL-Association at the ENT Department of the University Hospital Centre „Zvezdara“:
  - **Prof. Rudolf Häusler**, Director of the ORL University Clinic Inselspital Bern, gave a speech on “Surgery of congenital Malformations of the Ear”. The broad experience of R. Häusler in this field, paired with his engaging lecturing style resulted in a discussion lasting three quarters of an hour.
  - At the same meeting **Prof. M. Podvinec** spoke on “Cranio-Facial Pain in Otorhinolaryngology”. This presentation with a interdisciplinary approach (ORL-Neurology-Dental Medicine) was repeated at the University Department of Neurology.

- on the occasion of the Autumn Meeting of the ORL-Society in November at the ORL Institute of the Medical Faculty in Belgrade:
  - **PD Dr. Francis Marchal** of Geneva, on “Sialendoscopy in Diagnosis and Therapy of Diseases of the Salivary Glands” This is a very modern topic as the endoscopic technique may decisively influence the algorithm of treatment in certain diseases of the salivary glands.
  - **PD Dr. Orlando Guntinas-Lichius**, ORL University Department in Cologne, delivered a paper on “Tumours of the Salivary Glands”. In addition to the scientific value and outstanding documentation of the surgical activity in this paper, its high didactic value emanated from the exemplary statistical and systematic presentation of the material.
  - **Prof. Henrik Kingma**, Head of the Otoneurological Department of the University of Maastricht, gave a lecture on “Recent Developments and Insights in Diagnosis and Management of the Dizzy Patient” at the Department of Otoneurology of the Neurology University Department in Belgrade. This visit resulted from our contact during his course in Maastricht in 2002, to which we were able to send **Professors Ribaric** and **Dergenc**. The paper involved neurologists as well as otologists in an intensive discussion. An ongoing collaboration with Maastricht in this field is under consideration at present. Our society will campaign the Dutch and European authorities to participate in the financing of these projects.

***in Poland:***

**Prof. Rudolf Probst**, Director of the Basle ORL University Department, delivered a lecture on “Stapes Surgery in Otosclerosis” in December 2003. On this occasion Prof. Probst was honoured a „Friend forever“ by the Miedzynarodowe Centrum Sluchi i Mowi (International Centre of Hearing and Speech) in Warsaw.

The prospects for a permanent co-operation in training and education with institutions in Warsaw are under consideration at present.

***in the Czech Republic:***

During the reporting year, **Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Joseph Sopko** delivered two lectures to the Czech ORL-Society. The first with the title „The Eye and the Ear – twins in Diagnosis and Therapy of Voice Disorders“ in June (in Pardubice) and a second titled „Diagnosis and Therapy of the Paralysis of Vocal Cords“ in Prague, in October.

***In summary***, all persons taking part in this year’s activities believe that the discussions and exchange of experience in informal talks during our visits proffered abundant additional information, useful to both sides of the exchange. Furthermore, we find our conviction confirmed, that knowledge transfer is a valuable form of foreign aid and that our support of foreign colleagues willing to learn, may rapidly and surprisingly directly influence the treatment of patients in everyday practice. We are at present collecting data on this matter and expect to evaluate it in two years time.

### 3. Visits to Swiss institutions organised by the Society

- **Prof. Ljiljana Janosevic**, Head of Rhinology/Allergology at the Institute for ORL of the Medical Faculty, Belgrade attended the European Rhinology Congress (IEEACI) in Paris and visited subsequently the ORL institutions in Aarau and Basel with a lecture at an ORL-BAL meeting on the subject of "Testing for Nasal Allergies". The presentation was a very instructive overview of the more recent developments in allergology.
- **Dr. Borislav Babic**, Head of Audiology and Neurotology of the same institute, stayed in Switzerland during two weeks in June 2003. He was highly interested in speech audiometry, specifically the recently introduced Basel Sentence Test, which effectively measures the signal-to-noise difference in speech audiometry. Such tests, as yet not practised in many countries, are of significance in modern hearing-aid fitting. Dr. Babic strives to introduce these methods in his language area.
- **Dr. med. dent. Marija Divac**, of the Prijepolje General Hospital, spent a month's tutorial on „Preventive dental medicine“ at the Basel Centre for Dental Medicine. We would like to thank **Prof. Dr. Dr. med. dent. J. Thomas Lambrecht** for the accommodation of this special interest of a young dentist. This was a further proof of the excellent co-operation between our working group BAL and the Centre for Dental Medicine
- **Dr. med. Elvir Zvrko**, ENT specialist at the University Department in Podgorica (Montenegro), is at present undergoing training at the ORL University Department in Basel. On a 12 months fellowship of the Swiss Federal Grant Commission, he will stay at further Departments of the ORL-BAL in the near future. After his return to Montenegro Dr. Zvrko will act as contact person for our Society in his country.

### 4. Education and Training organised by the Society in other European Countries

The interest for continuing training and education is very great in the Departments we support in the West Balkans. The needs often exceed our organisational and financial capacity. Luckily, many of our colleagues in Europe share our ideas of the necessity of co-operation and knowledge transfer. They are also prepared to do the extra work this commitment demands. For this, our Society is very grateful.

Due to a request we had sent to the Imperial College in London this year, **Dr. Solomon Abramovich** accepted **Dr. S. Jesic** as an attendee of his „Temporal Bone Course“ free of charge (October 2003). Dr. Jesic is a fully trained ear surgeon at the University ENT Institute in Belgrade and it is foreseen, that she will act as tutor in similar courses in her country at a later date. This is part of our recruitment programme for the project „Training Center for Otorhinolaryngology“ (see chapter 5).

We found an akin mind in **Prof. A. Sultan** who offers similar courses in Paris. Not only did he accept **Dr. Nenad Arsovic**, another ear surgeon from Belgrade, to his course in February of 2004 free of charge, he offered to conduct his course in Belgrade at cost price. Unfortunately, the extremely cumbersome customs regulations and difficulties to transport the quantities of material necessary for such a course prevent the acceptance of this magnanimous offer at present.

**Professor Patrice Tran Ba Huy**, Chairman of Otorhinolaryngology at the Paris Universities and a scientist of renown in the field of inner ear physiology, plans to host Dr. Nenad Arsovic for a week in the Lariboisière Hospital with special attention to cochlear implants. These are being gradually introduced in the Balkan countries – a significant impulse came from Prof. Rudolf Probst on the occasion of our course of lectures in November 2001 in Belgrade. In Serbia, Vojvodina and Bosnia, two teams have implanted 11 patients since.

Now to the „pièce de résistance“: **Prof. Heinz Stammberger**, director of the ORL University Department in Graz, Austria, and an authoritative founder of minimally invasive surgery of the sinuses, gave a talk on this surgical technique in Belgrade as early as November 2002 and provoked enormous interest, holding the audience spellbound for many hours.

Naturally, he provoked great interest when he offered a two-day course in Graz for 30 attendees, free of charge. With the aid of sponsors we were able to keep the participants' expenses limited to the travel cost. This was instrumental in making participation possible for young colleagues as well. Not only were the contents of the course of highest didactic value, the same also goes for the organisation, technical implementation, the iconography and the statistical presentation of the material. The attendees were highly motivated by the course and the exceedingly friendly reception. They left Austria with a feeling of having wrought new bonds to western Europe after many years of isolation, embargo and recession. Prof. Stammberger is prepared to repeat the course and to host individual guest surgeons in the meantime. Our heartfelt thanks go to him for this generous offer.

## **5. Training Center for Otorhinolaryngology (TCO); progress report**

Completed plans for a small training center for otorhinolaryngology were discussed with the board of directors of the University Institute for ORL in Belgrade a year ago. The TCO is to be a spatially defined unit in which microsurgery of the ear, minimally invasive sinus surgery, endoscopy and similar skills could be trained. Courses with 6 to 12 participants are envisioned. Technical equipment such as optical and surgical instruments are to be provided by sponsors. The site, accommodation, infrastructure and maintenance are to be provided by the host institution. Various causes delayed implementation: lack of financial resources in Belgrade, ongoing plans for relocation of the whole Institute and – last but not least – non-existence of legislative regulations for the use of cadaver material for training purposes are put forward. The sponsoring being assured, we are now in discussion with other prospective host institutions.

## **6. Prospects for the coming year**

In our experience, English is the primary foreign language of the present generation in the Balkan countries, practically to the exclusion of all others. This leads to, apart from all obvious advantages, a certain disadvantage in non-English speaking countries. Therefore, we strive to engage the co-operation of the local British Council. Certain possibilities for grants seem to emerge. Our role would be in establishing contact between prospective scholarship holders and host Departments in the UK potentially prepared to accept them. Due to our good connections with our British colleagues this role should be achievable without too much difficulty.

A visit to the Centre Culturel Français also opened certain perspectives for French speaking colleagues, which we will follow up on.

A project on hearing screening in new-born children in Montenegro is being prepared with Dr. Zvrko. In that part of the West Balkans, no such programs exist at all and we very much hope to secure funding for this important contribution to national health.

### ***Scheduled State-of-the-Art-Lectures from Europe:***

- In March 2004, **Prof. Paul Van Cauwenberge**, Director of the University ORL Department in Gent, Belgium and a renowned expert on allergy in ENT, will read on Rhinology / Allergology.
- **Prof. Philippe Monnier**, Director of the Lausanne University ORL Department, on "Stenosis of the upper airways" (May 2004)
- A series of lectures on Genetics in Otorhinolaryngology by a number of lecturers is in preparation for November 2004.

## **Acknowledgements**

The author met many people during this last year who had sincere interest to assist and collaborate with us, have helped us with their advice and their actions or intend to engage themselves in our work in future. These unsolicited offers always elicited a very warm and emotionally stimulating feeling.

I would like to mention and sincerely thank a few particularly dedicated persons:

Mrs. Sybill Storz, who keeps up her personal support, puts the infrastructure of her company at our disposal and determinedly keeps up her sponsoring,

Mr. Rohner, Mr. Maurer and Mr. Jeker from the Belgrade Swiss Cooperation Office,

Mrs. E. Walde, who purchased, transported and donated several PCs,

Mr. Raffael Vonovier, Deputy Head of Mission of the Swiss Embassy in Belgrade, who had an open ear for our requests,

Mrs. Snezana Lekic, Scholarships and Science Manager of the British Council,

Dr. med. Jody Stähelin, senior Resident in Paediatrics at the Kantonsspital Aarau, who gave crucial impulses and advice, based on her experience in world-wide missions,

The members of the „Society for support of medical co-operation“ of the Medical Society in Basel, from whom we learned a great deal,

Mrs. J. Jenny, who attests our work importance,

Ms. Natalia Ognjenovic, of London Imperial College, for investing herself in a very charming way,

Mr. René Kamber, Manager of SWISS airline Beograd, who offered support,

Mr. Roy Podvinec, who adapted our project descriptions to the management point of view, with great attention to detail.

We also thank our sponsors

**Storz Tuttlingen**

**Essex Chemie**

**Takeda Pharma**

**GlaxoSmithKline**