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of the

Society of Friends of Otorhinolaryngology

Activity Report 2004



Prof. van Cauwenberge speaks to the ORL-Society, Beograd, March 6, 2004

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Submitted Feb. 05 by
Prof. 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

Overview of the past year

The Society looks back at an eventful year. Colleagues and institutions in numerous countries are, in the mean while, acquainted with our activities. We receive very frequent inquiries concerning all fields of our activity.

There are requests for literature, questions concerning various new studies and requests for support of visits to congresses in Europe. There are calls for advice in professional matters. One has to fear that in the foreseeable future certain requests will have to be rejected because of the risk, that some promises might not be met. We must not allow this to happen, as the dependability, sustainability and accuracy of our action is held highly in regard, especially in south-east Europe, and it would be undesirable to lose this asset.

We are especially pleased by the fact that several internationally renowned colleagues from other countries have, of their own accord, committed themselves to collaborate with us in our projects after visits to Serbia and Montenegro and after becoming familiar with our project „Training Center for ORL“. Although this project is still in the preparatory stage, well-known like-minded friends from Great Britain, France, Austria, Belgium and Germany signalled their willingness to participate, some being actively involved already. Furthermore, an association from Great Britain has taken up a mutual project with us, which has found an enthusiastic response with all persons concerned.

Our annual review shows that the number of Continuing Medical Education events and lectures in 2004 was greater than planned – a very good sign to us .

State-of-the-Art lectures of our Members abroad

R. Probst: Possibilities and limits of clinical use of AOAЕ's. Workshop in Debrecen, Hungary, 4 September 2004, on „Influence of basic research on otological practice“

Comments: The accelerated development in Hungary has intensified the scientific interchange. By virtue of previously established relations and the intensive research activity of the Basel Department, R. Probst is a regularly invited guest there.

R. Probst: New-born hearing screening.

R. Probst : Complications of Cochlear Implant Surgery

both papers presented at the „International Symposium on Cochlear implants“, December 9 and 10, in Beograd, Serbia and Montenegro.

Comments: This symposium, originally initiated and organised by our Serbian colleagues, was very useful from several aspects, apart from renewing friendly relationships to the local colleagues who entered the complex field of cochlear implants under difficult circumstances in 2001 after our lecture series on this matter. This time they were supported by our well-known experienced British colleagues **Professors Gerard O'Donoghue** of Nottingham and **Richard Ramsden** of Manchester. Their commitment, accompanied by a liberal dose of British humour, were complemented by the precisely summarised and statistically elaborately processed results of the Basel experiences.

Mrs. Sue Archbold, who described herself as a teacher of teachers for the deaf, and belongs to the British National Foundation for the Rehabilitation of the Deaf, lectured before the Serbian speech therapists for the deaf. In the framework of the symposium she held a mini-workshop with the support of **Mrs. Dagmar Herrmanova** from Prague. Mrs. Herrmanova has been providing the Serbian speech therapists and audiopedagogues with organisational and professional support for a number of years, thus becoming the driving force behind all innovations in the field of cochlear implants. The **undersigned** had the honour and pleasure of moderating the seminar. **Prof. Ranko Dergenc, Univ-Doz. Dr. Dragan Dankuc** and **Univ-Ass. Dr. Rade Kosanović**, who are responsible for the introduction of the implants in the country and the audiologists **Dr. Zoran Komazec** and **Ing. Tibor Mendrei** had every reason to be satisfied with the symposium. The contributions from the host country were evidence of the firm intention to accept current international standards.

M. Podvinec: Innovations in the organisation of the Swiss Society of Otorhinolaryngology – a view into a future which has already begun.

N. Gürtler: Genetics of congenital ear diseases

were presentations at the Annual Meeting of the Serbian Society of Otorhinolaryngology, November 12-15, 2004

Comments: The lecture by Nicolas Gürtler, senior specialist of the ORL Department in Aarau, who has done research in the field of genetics in the US and is continuing to do so in Switzerland, opened new vistas for his listeners. Regrettably, fundamental research is accessible to clinicians in Serbia and Montenegro only in exceptional cases. This gave Nicolas's lecture a special importance. The information was on the highest scientific level, and was appreciated accordingly.

The lecture by M. Podvinec was meant as an introduction into a field which is somewhat neglected in the host country: management by quality standards. Quality Management, Quality Control and Outcome Measurement are current management tools in the health care system. Although these three terms are often used as buzzwords, they describe indispensable processes for all modern hospitals in western Europe, and it is necessary to elucidate their meaning for our specialty. A further goal of the presentation was to encourage more initiative and independence within the professional organisation. The advantages of the autonomy of professional medical organisations, as practised in Switzerland, could be plausibly presented. We hope that modern leadership, personal initiative and sensibly implemented management will gain understanding and acceptance. This process of acceptance and implementation advanced incrementally in all countries, in Serbia and Montenegro it might well be a long journey. However, a small team of colleagues volunteered to occupy themselves with this matter. Our Society will advise and provide the necessary literature. **Dr. V. Šubarević** will serve as our contact.

On invitation of the Medical Faculty in Novi Sad, **Dr. André Arnoux** held two lectures. One was the regular student lecture on "Tumours of the larynx", held in English. The other, on "Partial laryngectomies", was presented at the monthly meeting of the ORL-Society. Dr. Arnoux wishes to concentrate his efforts of knowledge transfer in Novi Sad, because he has established a good partnership with the local oncologic surgeon, **Professor Rajko Jović**. Obviously, Novi Sad has a strong attraction (see **Philippe Monnier** on page 4).

Further lectures in Serbia and Montenegro organised by the Society

We were able to win **Prof. Paul van Cauwenberge**, Director of the ORL Department in Gent, Belgium, and President of the European Rhinologic Society, as a lecturer. He spoke on March 6, 2004, as guest of the ORL-Society, on “New aspects in the ethiology, pathogenesis and therapy of nasal polyposis”. As a guest of the Medical Faculty, he spoke on “Allergic rhinitis”. As one of the initiators of the well known international ARIAS study in this field, he was especially qualified to report on the most recent scientific and therapeutic concepts.

On the occasion of his visit, an interesting discussion with the Dean of the Medical Faculty, **Prof. Vladimir Kostić**, took place. As Prof. van Cauwenberge was Dean of the Medical Faculty in Gent during that year, there was a lively exchange of experiences. The Belgian Embassy was represented by **Mr. B. Schoofs**, who will sound out the possibilities of supporting visitors to Gent with potential grants. Paul van Cauwenberge was a valued visitor, his youthful energy and his sense of humour captured all his hosts. **Prof. Ljiljana Janošević**, president of the Rhinology Work Group of the ORL-Society will keep up the contact, with the aim of organising the exchange of junior staff members. The Society is extraordinarily grateful to Paul van Cauwenberge for his willingness to come to Beograd for the lectures, and for carrying the costs of his visit himself.

Prof. Philippe Monnier, Director of the ORL-University Department in Lausanne, was a guest lecturer in Beograd and Novi Sad as well. He spoke on May 11th before the members of the Serbian ORL-Society on “Surgery of tracheal stenosis in grownups and children”. This overview, presented with his usual winning charm and outstanding graphic documentation, obviously based on a vast experience, was a great success. A month later, the first crico-tracheal resection was carried out in the ORL Department in Niš, which speaks distinctly on behalf of the motivational powers of our guest.

Philippe Monnier also spoke at the Children’s Hospital in Novi Beograd on “Endoscopy and Laryngotracheal Surgery in Children”. He stressed the importance of the co-operation of the anaesthesiology department in these cases. Therefore, a training session for anaesthesiologists is planned in Lausanne.

Philippe spoke before the Medical Society of Vojvodina in Novi Sad on „Stenosis of the Larynx and the Trachea“. The lecture had a very positive response. Philippe himself was impressed by this ancient city, which lies in the Panonian plain on a bow of the Danube, and is dominated by the ancient fortress of Petovaradin.

The Course on Functional Endoscopic Sinus Surgery (FESS) in Graz is becoming a tradition!

In 2004 **Prof. Heinz Stammberger**, Director of the ORL University Department in Graz, once more held a two-day free-of-charge course for 30 colleagues from Serbia, and promised a further one for 2005. This extremely generous offer thus becomes a tradition. Superfluous to say that such generosity is a source of great gratitude on part of the participants. Especially younger colleagues, who in recent years had no opportunity to travel abroad, find it invaluable to be instructed on the most recent developments on sinus diseases and endoscopic surgery in a first-rate international centre. In this context they are confronted with brilliant didactic, technical perfection and a scientific approach to the matter and absorb high standards of reporting. This is, based on our experiences in the country, eminently important. Our sincere thanks to Prof. Stammberger and his team, especially to **Mrs. Claire Zwerina**, who puts as much heart and soul into this project as her chief does, and sacrifices a free Saturday for it as well.

Training Center for Otolaryngology

The wheels are grinding slowly but they are moving and we hope to be able to begin work on 6 workstations for temporal bone preparations in 2005. **Dr. Bijelić** and **Dr. Milojević** of the ORL Clinic of the Military Hospital in Beograd are particularly active in this important project.

Further activities of the Society

We proposed to the president of the European Laryngological Society, **Prof. Marc Remacle**, who teaches at the University de Mont-Godinne in Belgium, and visited Aarau early in 2004, to schedule an annual meeting of this illustrious society in Beograd. Consequently, he visited the country where he established a good working relationship with the laryngologist **Prof. Vojko Đukić**, Director of the Belgrade University Department. Following a highly observed lecture on "Endoscopic treatment of carcinoma of the larynx" he was appointed the first **Visiting Professor of Otorhinolaryngology** of the Medical Faculty in Beograd.

We were able to facilitate visits of six colleagues abroad, in part with direct financial support. We would like to thank **Prof. Stephan Schmid**, Director of the ORL Department of the Zürich University Hospital for hosting **Dr. Mila Bojanović** of Niš, who has a special interest in audiology. We were also able to arrange a stay of several weeks in 2005 with the renowned rhinologist and scientist **Prof. Valerie Lund** at the Royal National Institute of Laryngology and Otology in London for the rhinologist **Dr. Dušanka Milošević**.

We are obliged to **PD Dr. David Holzmann**, lecturer at the Zürich University Hospital, who allowed two young colleagues with special interest in sinus surgery, **Dr. Ivica Pendjer** and **Dr. Snežana Stanimir-ović**, to participate in his international meeting on sinus diseases, free of charge. On this occasion **Prof. Klaus Bachert** of Gent, an eminent rhinologist, agreed to visit Serbia in the future.

We are continuing our efforts to obtain financing for the project "General Hearing Screening of New-born Children in Montenegro" which is to be implemented under the aegis of **Dr. Elvir Zvrko**. The planning phase is completed, the only remaining issue is the actual financing. Manufacturing firms have been contacted; we hope to be able to report a beginning of screening in Montenegro in 2005. The screening is gaining importance, now that cochlear implants become possible at pre-lingual age, which in turn improves the subsequent results.

The Basel ORL Department has invited **Dr. Z. Komazec**, audiologist at the University Clinic in Novi Sad, and **Dr. Elvir Zvrko** of the University Department in Podgorica, Montenegro, to the "Dreiländer Kurs-Praktikum Objektive Audiometrie, Vestibularisdiagnostik und Therapieindikationen" between April 14 and 16 in St. Anton, Austria. Dr. Zvrko underwent training at the ORL University Department in Basel since 2003 on a 12 months fellowship of the Swiss Federal Grant Commission. It was possible to prolong the grant for another three months, and he visited further congresses and courses e.g. the Spring Meeting of the Swiss ORL Society and a course on head and neck surgery in Zürich.

Teleconference with the "Medicus" society

A chance contact with the London-based Medicus Society developed very auspiciously. This is a group of British doctors, in part of Serbian and Montenegrin extraction, of various professional profiles and specialisation, who have been active since a number of years in Serbia and Montenegro with very similar objectives as our Society. The aim of Medicus is primarily knowledge transfer as well, and they have organised a number of well attended seminars in Serbia in the past (ophthalmology, anaesthesia, respiratory medicine etc.).

Medicus immediately seized our suggestion to organise and partly finance a teleconference between London and Beograd on the occasion of the Symposium on Cochlear Implants mentioned earlier. Thus, at the close of the Symposium on the evening of December 12, the majority of the participants dislocated to the British Council in Beograd where, on the screen, they participated in a very interesting live lecture by **Prof. Jeremy Lavy** of the Royal National Throat, Nose and Ear Hospital on his experiences with CI surgery. A direct exchange of ideas between the speaker and the participants in Beograd developed, and we had the privilege to enjoy a fruitful discussion between Lavy, O'Donoghue and

Ramsden, laced with dry British humour – a delectable affair. Our heartfelt thanks to **Professors Gordana Milavić, Vojin Šljivić, and Ratko Đukanović** of Medicus for this interesting experience. We hope that such teleconferences will take place more often in the future. The undersigned intends to present himself at the 2005 annual meeting of Medicus. We are also grateful to the Director of the British Council, **Mr. Chris Gibson** and his team, consisting of **Mrs. Ivana Vukovojac, Mrs. Brana Lisić** and **Mr. Pedja Kukobat**, for their efforts. We thank **Mrs. Karen Giblin** from the British Council in London for organising the Teleconference within the financial limits of the nominal charge and **Mr. Peter Vasilesku** for the technical support.

Dr. Olivera Potparić, anaesthesiologist at the Hammersmith Hospital in London and member of Medicus, was present in Beograd at that time. We had a joint meeting with the Dean of the Medical Faculty in Beograd, **Prof. Bogdan Djuričić**, at which we learned interesting details of the future developments and the introduction of systematic Continuing Medical Education. We will make special efforts in future to integrate our activities into this system.

Further activities

During 2004 we shipped over 100 kilograms of up-to-date specialised books to the various departments and hospitals. Our experience here in Switzerland is that manuals are still highly important tools in the training of young specialists.

Mr. Jürg Biancone, a retired administration official and ardent supporter of foreign aid within several Swiss programmes, together with the **undersigned**, transported a ton of operation theatre linen to the University Department in Belgrade. The linen was donated by various Swiss hospitals. Our transport means was a van, put at our disposal by **Swisscom** in Zürich, wherefore we thank this organisation sincerely. It was an extraordinary journey in which a deep friendship was wrought. We shared the experiences of long range truckers on the frontiers of Europe, saw beautiful landscapes and distinctly felt the gratitude of the targeted group of people.

One of the rewards of the trip was meeting again **Mr. Rafael Vonovier**, the deputy ambassador at the Swiss Embassy in Beograd. Whenever help was needed, we could approach him and were never disappointed. The celerity with which he operates is well known. Mr. Vonovier represents Switzerland in the best of classical traditions, with elegance, quiet efficiency and affection. We had the honour – together with some of the eminent local personalities of the medical profession and Philippe Monnier- to be his guests at the Swiss Week in Beograd. The Swiss cuisine, among other attractions, impressively represented our country.

Outlook for the coming year ...

In addition to the projects already mentioned, we are planning to organise a series of lectures on **cerebrospinal fluid leaks**, their diagnosis and treatment. The series will be a co-operative effort with laboratory physicians, neurosurgeons, radiologists and anaesthetists from both countries.

On helping the helpers...

During the past year we have presented our projects (e.g. Screening of New-born Children and Early Detection of Cancer of the Upper Airways) to various humanitarian organisations and funds which are active in south-east Europe on behalf of the EU, the World Bank and certain well known private organisations. We were disappointed to realise that health projects are entirely back-shelved in favour of projects concerning economics and management in these countries, although the former could probably show rapid and early results and would ensure efficient treatment of illnesses. We conclude that aid to helpers – the knowledge transfer to medical caregiver teams – can only be realised in co-operation with the medical industry. Therefore, we are pleased with the encouragement we get from all friends of our Society, and especially our supporters from the medical industry.

... and therefore our thanks and acknowledgements:

The company **Karl Storz GmbH & Co. KG, Tuttlingen**, has continued being our staunchest supporter. We are very grateful for the support of the course in Graz and other projects to **Mrs. Sybill Storz** and her collaborators, foremost **Mrs. Hannelore Griebisch**, as well as the representatives in Serbia and Montenegro and in Austria **Mr. Ranko Nikolić** and **Ing. A. Neumeyer**, who always had an open ear for our requests.

We thank the pharmaceutical companies **AstraZeneca, Abott, Glaxo-SmithKline, Essex** and **Takeda Pharma** for their contributions.

We are obliged to **Mr. Rolf Gloor**, head of the laundry pool in Aarau and **Mr. Rolf Meier** of technical services at the Cantonal Hospital in Aarau. In Basel we thank the **ZEBA** for their collaboration in the collection of linen and the **Centre for Dental Medicine** for donating instruments for our TCO.

Mr. Roy Podvinec lent us his skills again in shaping this bulletin, speech therapist **Dipl. log. Esther Walde** was our faithful treasurer, and also has donated aids for laryngectomised patients, for which we are beholden. Help was given also by a good friend and colleague, our former Senior specialist in Aarau **Dr. Roland Seiler**, who donated a sterilising machine in mint condition.

Thus, we have every reason to pursue our planning on an optimistic note, as recorded in this snapshot from the library in Aarau

