

From the International Society of Dermatopathology

Report From the President (V)

1992-1994



Günter Burg, M.D.

In continuation of former reports on the growth, development, accomplishment of our Society, and the persons who have had active leadership roles in it (1-4), this is an update of the activities of our Society during the period of my presidentship and Daniel Su's secretaryship from 1992 through 1994.

The purposes of the Society as given in the by-laws and published in a previous report (4), in short, are to foster on a worldwide international basis exchange of knowledge and information in the field of dermatopathology and to promote scientific research in this field. The Board of Directors (BD) and the Executive Committee (Table 1) together with all members of the Society have done its very best during the past 3 years to meet these goals.

Looking for the origin of Executive Committee (EC) members (Table 2) it is obvious that during the 15-year period from 1983 to 1997 there always has been and still is a significant number of members from non-U.S./non-European countries, indicating the spirit of internationality of the International Society of Dermatopathology (ISDP).

MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCIAL SITUATION

By June 1994 there were 848 active members and 44 senior members. Due to an alteration of Belgian law the ISDP has to move the office out of Belgium and establish professional management of the finance aspect of the ISDP elsewhere. The balance is stable but tight because new responsibilities (ISDP fellowship, awards) have been initiated.

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NEW ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

Several new ideas have been introduced especially by the secretary Daniel Su. Through *consultation letters* problems are discussed and recommendations prepared by the BD, and through *communication letters* information is provided to the members of the EC and final decisions made. By this the Society has gained flexibility, and decisions are made in a much better and a much faster way than what was possible before.

Guidelines of "responsibilities and job descriptions of various positions in the Society" have been elaborated by Dan Su and were approved by the EC at the session in December 1993 (Washington, DC).

This is an extremely valuable adjunct to the by-laws giving more detailed information on the functions and activities of Executive Officers (President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary), Board of Directors (all Past Presidents and current Executive Officers), Executive Committee (all elected members of Executive Committee, current Executive Officers, and immediate Past President), and the various committees (on membership, fellowship, finances, awards, teaching slides, scientific programs, and historians), and describing the goals and organization of regional clinicopathologic colloquia (RCPCs) as well as the general principles of the appointment of the committee chairpersons and members.

NEW ACTIVITIES

Regional Clinicopathological Colloquia

The RCPCs are organized outside Europe and the United States in order to foster activities in dermatopathology and the link to the ISDP.

The local organizers can be volunteered by an ISDP member and must be in close contact with a member of the EC. The scientific program is ar-

TABLE 1. Board of Directors and Executive Committee members, 1992–1994

Board of Directors		
President	Günter Burg	Switzerland
Vice President	Clay J. Cockerell	U.S.A.
Treasurer	Claudine Piérard-Franchimont	Belgium
Secretary	W.P. Daniel Su	U.S.A.
Past Presidents	John C. Maize	U.S.A.
	Helmut Kerl	Austria
	Gérald Piérard	Belgium
	A. Bernard Ackerman	U.S.A.
Executive Committee		
Edward Abel		U.S.A.
Jag Bhawan		U.S.A.
Rino Cerio		Great Britain
Lorenzo Cerroni		Italy
Sergio Chimenti		Italy
Su Il Chun		South Korea
Stefan Hoedl		Austria
Robert E. Jones, Jr.		U.S.A.
Robin Russell Jones		Great Britain
Edward Wilson Jones		Great Britain
Hideo Kamino		U.S.A.
Philip E. LeBoit		U.S.A.
Mario Magagna-Garcia		Mexico
John S. Metcalf		U.S.A.
Masaaki Morohashi		Japan
Brian J. Nickoloff		U.S.A.
Renato G. Panizzon		Switzerland
Jorge Sanchez		Puerto Rico
Evaristo Sanchez-Yus		Spain
Daniel J. Santa-Cruz		U.S.A.
Gundula Schaumburg-Lever		Germany
Henri Trau		Israel
David Weedon		Australia
Clifton R. White, Jr.		U.S.A.
Helmut H. Wolff		Germany

ranged and managed by 2–5 speakers from the ISDP in collaboration with the Secretary General of the RCPC from the host country. The speakers arrange their own transportation expenses; however, the host country covers hotel accommodations for the foreign speakers.

RCPCs have been organized so far under the supervision of the coordinator, Dr. Su, in Cairo, Egypt (1990); Patna, India (1992); Cairo, Egypt (1992); Hong Kong (1993); New Dehli, India (1994); Buenos Aires, Argentina (1994); and Mexico City, Mexico (1994); and will be in Reykjavik, Iceland (1995); and Ankara, Turkey (1995).

Regional Dermatopathology Workshops (RDWs)

They have been held in Graz, Austria (1992); Friedrichshafen, Germany (1993); Giessen, Germany (1994); and Graz, Austria (1994). Future RDWs will be held in Lübeck, Germany (1995); and Graz, Austria (1995).

Accompanying Meetings with Pathology Societies

Dr. Su coordinated the accompanying meeting with the International Academy of Pathology (Hong Kong, 1994). There also have been accompanying meetings with the American Society of Clinical Pathology in the U.S.A., organized by Dr. John Metcalf, on a regular basis.

ISDP Dermatopathology Fellowship

To strengthen dermatopathology in least and less developed countries, a dermatopathology fellowship was introduced, and guidelines were elaborated by Daniel Su and Gerald Piérard. Dr. Piérard has served as chairman and Dr. Burg and Dr. Su as members of the Selection Committee of Dermatopathology Fellowship.

The guidelines and criteria have been published in the *American Journal of Dermatopathology* 15:98, 1993. Applicants should be from developing countries in Africa, South America, Asia, and Eastern Europe. The minimum stay in a laboratory should be 6 months (maximum, 1 year), and the fellow is required to return to the home country and to begin work no later than 1 year from the time that the fellowship commences.

The training center should handle at least 10,000 sections per year and must be situated within an institution that possesses other basic or advanced training programs.

The ISDP originally provided a maximum support of \$6,000, but the amount has been \$10,000 since 1994. Additional support has to come from the country of origin or from the host laboratory.

The first fellow was Dr. Moshi from the Institute of Pathology in Moshi, Tanzania, who spent 9 months (June 1993, through March 1995) in the Dermatopathology Laboratory of the Department of Dermatology, University of Zurich, under the supervision of Dr. Burg. Dr. Moshi returned to her country, starting a dermatopathology laboratory in the Institute of Pathology of the University Hospital in Moshi, Tanzania. The second fellow is Dr. Kadu,

TABLE 2. Origin of Executive Committee members, 1983–1987

Term	N	U.S.A.	Europe	Non-U.S./European countries
1983–85	26	6	17	3
1986–88	31	12	11	8
1989–91	29	11	12	6
1992–94	26	9	12	5
1995–97	22	6	9	7

N, total number.

spending 1 year in the Dermatopathology Laboratory of the Department of Dermatology, University of Graz, Graz, Austria.

The third fellow (1995) will be Dr. Cao from China, who will serve his fellowship with Dr. Jag Bhawan in Boston, MA.

Committees

The Membership Committee, chaired by the Vice President (Clay J. Cockerell), has produced the Membership Directory 1992–1994 and designed a new membership renewal notice. Other promotional efforts are being considered.

Finance Committee

Dr. Claudine Piérard-Franchimont handles the budget of the Society in a professional manner.

The Awards Committee, chaired by Dr. Helmut Kerl, selects an outstanding representative in any field of dermatopathology to deliver the “Bernie Ackerman Lecture” at the Annual Colloquium. The first lecture was given by Prof. Edward Wilson Jones, London, at the 15th Annual Colloquium of the Society.

Dr. Claudine Piérard-Franchimont received the “ISDP Honorary Award” for her profound contribution to the Society as its treasurer for many years.

The “ISDP Award for Developing Country Physician” and the “ISDP Award for Young Physician” have not yet been given to any candidate.

Upon request of the International League of Dermatologic Societies, a list of referral facilities will be gathered providing help in reading or processing histopathology specimens for less developed laboratories worldwide.

Dr. Gundula Schaumburg-Lever has agreed to be the teaching slides file coordinator and to collect interesting and informative teaching cases from the members of the Society, and to arrange for viewing of these slides during the annual colloquium or on other occasions.

POINTS OF WEAKNESS AND PROBLEMS

Low-Membership Countries

Among developed countries, France has relatively few members. Less developed countries just do not have the money for the membership fee or

for traveling to the annual meetings of the Society.

The International Committee of Dermatopathology, like the International League of Dermatological Societies, intends to be a link between national and other dermatopathology societies. Its role and relationship to the ISDP, however, have never been clearly defined and are rather on a personal basis than on solid structural grounds.

The ISDP as an international society aims to strengthen dermatopathology activities worldwide and therefore also in less developed countries. However, finances in these countries usually do not allow major activities to take place. Therefore, the regional clinicopathological Colloquia are of major importance, inspiring the intellectual commitment within these countries.

The booth of the ISDP during the American Academy of Dermatology Meeting in the past traditionally has been an issue of representation of the Society during this important meeting. However, the high expenses, and the very low efficacy in terms of recruiting new members, no longer justify this activity every second year, and therefore new, less expensive forms of public relations need to be discussed.

Regarding the fate of dermatopathology in the future, the situation is different in the United States, in Europe, and in less developed countries. In the U.S.A., dermatopathology is a self-standing discipline, affiliated with either clinical dermatology or pathology. In Europe, however, dermatopathology still mostly is a subdivision of clinical dermatology in university settings. Due to the political situation there are strong tendencies to integrate dermatopathology into general pathology. This would affect the quality of both clinical dermatology as well as dermatopathology in most instances.

The question arises as to whether dermatopathology should be affiliated with clinics or institutes, respectively, or be established in private practice. Both concepts are conceivable as long as the optimal quality of processing and interpreting dermatopathology sections based on knowledge of clinical dermatology is guaranteed, and training facilities for students and fellows are provided.

In less developed countries, because of the many severe extracutaneous health problems, dermatopathology still is of minor importance and needs to be developed.

SUMMARY

During the past 3 years, from 1992 to 1994, the Society has accomplished many of its goals of being

an international society. However, activities must continue especially in developing dermatopathology in less and least developed countries.

There is no space here to mention the many scientific, oral, and publication activities of our members who have contributed to the symposia, colloquia, and other events sponsored by the ISDP, and who deserve many thanks for their contributions to the realization of the intellectual mood of our Society. □

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