

History of the European Pancreatic Club: The First 40 Years 1965–2005

The Development of the European Pancreatic Club as a Scientific Society

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Abstract

The European Pancreatic Club (EPC) was founded during a first symposium on December 9 and 10, 1965 in London (President H.T. Howat). The nine founding members were one biochemist (Jean Christophe, Belgium), one physiologist (Alfred A. Harper, UK), two surgeons (André Delcourt, Belgium, Yngve Edlund, Norway) and five physicians with special interest in the pancreas (Werner Creutzfeldt, Germany, Oliver Fitzgerald, Ireland, Karel Herfort, Czechoslovakia, Henry T. Howat, UK, Henri Sarles, France). It was the first scientific society worldwide which was concerned with the study of the pancreas. The idea was to bring basic scientists and clinicians together in an informal atmosphere to promote friendship and communication on research between them. The 2nd symposium was held in Marseilles in 1967 (President H. Sarles). Until now there have nearly always been annual meetings, the one in 2005 is the 37th. In 1973 the EPC decided to lay down 'Internal Rules' and in 1992 new statutes were introduced. It became a member of the United European Gastroenterology Federation (UEGF) and is coorganizer of the United European Gastroenterology Week (UEGW). The official journal has been *Pancreatology* since 2001; previously the abstracts had been printed in *Digestion* since 1982. The officers of the EPC are the President, the Past President, the President Elect, the Secretary, the Treasurer and six Councillors from different European countries, three from basic and three from clinical science. A selection committee (4 basic and

4 clinical scientists) decides on the acceptance of papers. Officers and Presidents are elected by the General Assembly. At the meetings on average 150 contributions are accepted for presentation; the abstracts are printed in *Pancreatology*. Papers came from nearly all European countries and from overseas. In numbers Germany, France, the UK, Italy and Sweden are at the top. In total 4,837 scientific presentations were made from 1971 to 2004. Fifty-nine symposia and 245 invited lectures informed about the state of the art. Since 1991 a Young Researchers Corner given by international experts is especially designed to give information on new techniques of research. The European Study Group of Pancreatic Cancer (ESPAC) and the European Registry of Hereditary Pancreatitis and Familial Pancreatic Cancer (EUROPAC) are affiliated with the EPC. Since 1999 a Newsletter of the EPC has been published. The website of the EPC is www.e-p-c.org.

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Introduction

'Apparently, the first pancreatic society to be organised (world-wide) was the European Pancreatic Club (EPC), its initial meeting being held in London, December 9–10, 1965. It was created to foster communication between basic scientists and clinicians, approximately 50% of its membership and leadership representing each of those

Table 1. List of those participating in or attending the Symposium on Normal and Abnormal Functions of the Exocrine Pancreas, 30 May to 1 June, 1961, in London

V. Becker	Pathologisches Institut der Universität Kiel
J.J. Bernier	Hôpital Bichat, Paris
B. Borgström	Department of Physiological Chemistry, University of Lund
W. Burnett	Department of Surgery, Western Infirmary, Glasgow
W.I. Card	Gastro-Intestinal Unit, Western General Hospital, Edinburgh
A.M. Dawson	Department of Medicine, Royal Free Hospital, London
P. Desnuelle	Laboratoire de Chimie Biologique, Marseilles
D.A. Dreiling	Mount Sinai Hospital, New York, N.Y.
R. Ekholm	Department of Anatomy, University of Gothenburg
J.B. Gross	Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn.
M.I. Grossman	Section of Gastroenterology, Veterans Administration Hospital, Los Angeles, Calif.
A.A. Harper	Department of Physiology, King's College, Newcastle upon Tyne
L.E. Hokin	Department of Physiological Chemistry, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisc.
Mabel E. Hokin	Department of Physiological Chemistry, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisc.
H.T. Howat	Manchester Royal Infirmary, Manchester
J.N. Hunt	Physiological Laboratory, Guy's Hospital, London
H.D. Janowitz	Mount Sinai Hospital, New York, N.Y.
J.E. Jorpes	Kemiska Institutionen, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm
H. Lagerlöf	Karolinska Sjukhuset, Stockholm
V. Mutt	Kemiska Institutionen, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm
H. Neurath	Department of Biochemistry, University of Washington, D.C.
G.E. Palade	Rockefeller Institute, New York, N.Y.
H. Sarles	Faculty of Medicine, Marseilles
Sheila Sherlock	Department of Medicine, Royal Free Hospital, London
S.S. Sjöstrand	Department of Zoology, University of California, Los Angeles, Calif.
R.E. Turnbridge	Department of Medicine, General Infirmary, University of Leeds
P.V. Veghelyi	Department of Pediatrics No. 1, University Medicine School, Budapest
C.L. Vink	St. Josef Ziekenhuis, Eindhoven

two categories' [1]. In the last 4 decades at least 15 national and international organizations and 6 national or international journals which provide channels of specific communication in the limited field of pancreatology have been started [see 1]. So this small organ – the pancreas – must in many ways be fascinating to the scientific community.

Progress in the knowledge of pancreatology has developed at a slower rate than in other fields of gastroenterology. This is due in part to the difficult accessibility of the organ in humans and also for physiological studies in animals. In the past there were few scientific centers with special interest in pancreatic physiology, biochemistry and pancreatic diseases and the exchange between them was hampered by the fact that these centers were spread worldwide. With the marked progress within basic science and the rapidly increasing development of new diagnostic tools, the increased need for closer cooperation between centers in Europe and internationally in particu-

lar the exchange of recent interdisciplinary experience between 'bench' and 'bedside' became obvious.

The main purpose of the present study is to summarize the historical evolution of pancreatology based on the history of the EPC over 40 years. This has recently also been done for the Japanese Pancreas Society [2] and the American Pancreas Club [3].

The First Two European Symposia (1961, 1963) Preceding the Foundation of the EPC

In the year 1961 the Ciba Foundation in London organized a symposium on The Exocrine Pancreas: Normal and Abnormal Functions [4] (fig. 1). It followed a suggestion, which had been made by H.D. Janowitz and was under the skillful chairmanship of Sheila Sherlock. Twenty-eight specialists were invited, who represented the main centers of worldwide research on the pancreas at

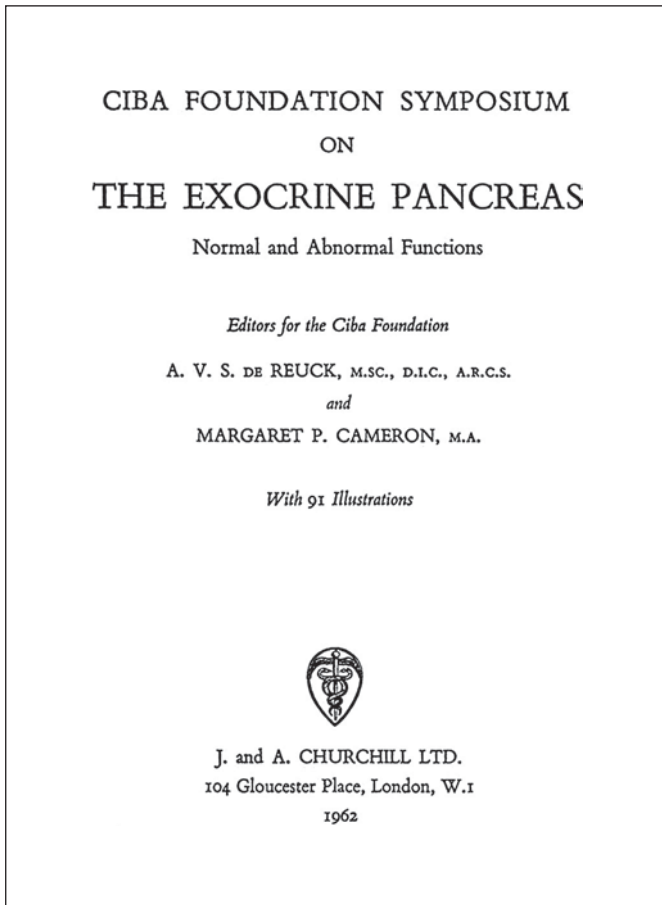


Fig. 1. Title page of the Ciba Foundation Symposium, London, 1961, published 1962.



Fig. 2. Title page of the Marseilles Symposium on Pancreatitis, 1963, published 1965.

that time (table 1). The topics covered ultrastructure and histochemistry of the organ, the nature of pancreatic secretion, the physiological control of pancreatic secretion, the assessment of pancreatic function and the abnormal pancreas with genetic and metabolic aspects. In all these fields important progress was made in the 1950s. The work of George E. Palade had introduced electron microscopy into the study of dynamic secretory processes in the acinar cell, work that finally led to his winning the Nobel Prize in 1974. The isolation and characterization of the gastrointestinal hormones secretin and cholecystokinin/pancreozymin by A.C. Ivy, A.A. Harper, J.E. Jorpes and V. Mutt, the refinements of research in enzymology (H. Neurath, L.E. Hokin, P. Desnuelle) and the studies of the mechanisms of secretion of electrolytes and enzymes and their regulation by hormonal and neural control (M.I. Grossman) gave new impulses to research.

The clinical problems of pancreatic diseases were the topic of another symposium in Marseilles in 1963, which was organized by Henri Sarles [5] (fig. 2). This meeting had 23 invited participants, all clinicians, and led to the formulation of a classification of pancreatitis. The main topic of the symposium was chronic pancreatitis with all its facets from etiology and morbid anatomy to the clinical profile of this disease.

Thus, the interest in the pancreas increased steadily during these years both among basic scientists and clinicians. The pancreas was a model organ for physiologists and biochemists and stimulated clinical research in the field of acute and chronic pancreatitis and pancreatic carcinoma.



Fig. 3. Prof. A. Delcourt.



Fig. 4. Prof. J. Christophe.



Fig. 5. Prof. A.A. Harper.

Table 2. Members of the founding meeting of the EPC in 1965

Jean Christophe	Brussels, Belgium
Werner Creutzfeldt	Göttingen, Germany
André Delcourt	Brussels, Belgium
Yngve Edlund	Gothenburg, Sweden
Oliver Fitzgerald	Dublin, Ireland
Alfred A. Harper	New Castle, UK
Karel Herfort	Prague, Czech Republic
Henry T. Howat	Manchester, UK
Henri Sarles	Marseilles, France

The Foundation of the EPC and the First Years

On December 9 and 10, 1965, again with the assistance of the Ciba Foundation, and on the initiative of Henry T. Howat and Henri Sarles, a group of nine scientists founded the EPC in London (table 2). Their portraits are given in figures 3–11. A short report, which was published by Howat [6] in *Gut* and which used the name ‘European Pancreatic Club’ for the first time, reveals that a group of 25 scientists and clinicians from Europe gathered in London on this occasion for a small meeting on pancreatic enzymes. This meeting in December 1965 was the founding event and actually the first symposium of

the EPC. The idea was to create a platform for the exchange of information and ideas and to promote friendship between basic and clinical scientists in Europe who have a special interest in the study of exocrine function or disease.

In the first years the founding members served on a kind of ‘Council’. There were no statutes and no formal regulations.

On April 28 and 29, 1967 Henri Sarles organized the second symposium of the EPC in Marseilles (*Deuxième Colloque Européen du Pancréas* [7]). Thirty-four papers were presented in English, French or German. A major part of the papers were dedicated to basic sciences, pathology and pathophysiology, and a special section dealt with radiological methods, mainly angiography of the pancreas. The effect of alcohol was of special interest and the pathophysiology of acute pancreatitis was also investigated. The abstracts of the presented papers were published in the *Archives Françaises des Maladies de l’Appareil Digestif* [7]. This revealed that there was really an interest among European basic and clinical scientists in the pancreas, and the success of the meeting demonstrated that there was a critical mass large enough to have a fruitful exchange at special meetings.

The third symposium of the EPC took place in 1968 in Prague under the presidency of Karel Herfort. It oc-



Fig. 6. Prof. H. Sarles.



Fig. 7. Prof. W. Creutzfeldt.



Fig. 8. Prof. O. Fitzgerald.

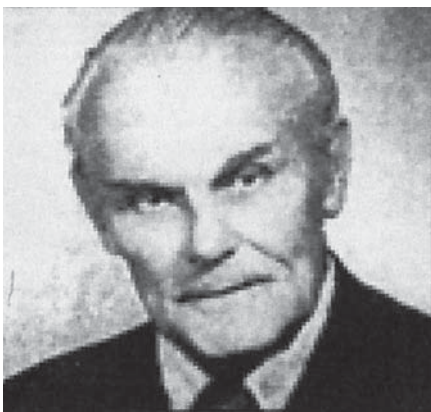


Fig. 9. Prof. K. Herfort.

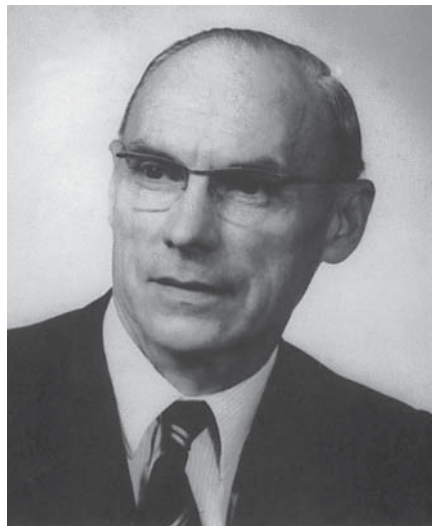


Fig. 10. Prof. H.T. Howat.

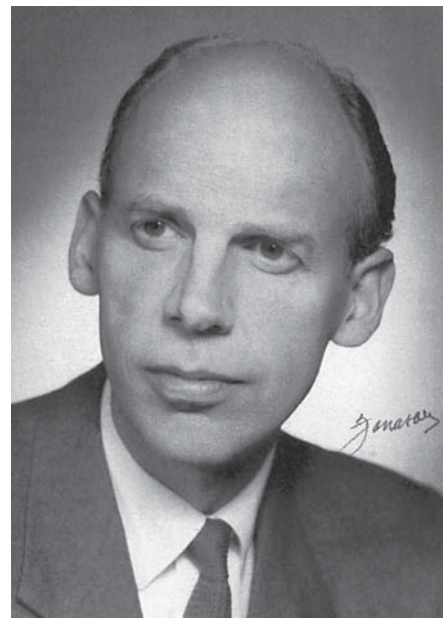


Fig. 11. Prof. Y. Edlund.

curred in a rather intense political atmosphere from the 2 to 4 July during the short 'Prague Spring'. Shortly after the end of the meeting, the Soviet Army invaded the country. So everybody who attended this meeting, including the authors, remembers those days very well. The pro-

ceedings of this symposium were published by the Czechoslovak Medical Press under the title *Progress in Pancreatology* [8]. Thirty-four papers were published, some in full length and some as abstracts. The topics were alimentary and related polypeptide hormones, pancreatic hy-

Table 3. Meetings of the EPC

	Year	Month	Place	President
1	1965	9–10 December	London, UK	H.T. Howat
2	1967	28–29 April	Marseilles, France	H. Sarles
3	1968	2–4 July	Prague, Czech Republic	K. Herfort
4	1969	26–27 September	Göttingen, Germany	W. Creutzfeldt
5	1971	16–17 April	Brussels, Belgium	J. Christophe
6	1973	24–26 May	Gothenburg, Sweden	Y. Edlund
7	1974	4–6 July	Dundee, UK	K. Wormsley
8	1975	23–25 October	Toulouse, France	A. Ribet
9	1976	14–16 October	Oslo, Norway	J. Myren
10	1977	6–8 October	Dublin, Ireland	O. Fitzgerald
11	1978	24–26 August	Zürich, Switzerland	R. Ammann
12	1979	11–13 October	Copenhagen, Denmark	H. Worning
13	1981	14–16 May	Krakow, Poland	S.J. Konturek
14	1982	30 Sept. to 2 October	Essen, Germany	H. Goebell
15	1983	29 Sept. to 1 October	Verona, Italy	L.A. Scuro
16	1984	12–14 September	Cascais, Portugal	O. Bordalo
17	1985	23–25 September	Manchester, UK	M. Case
18	1986	18–20 September	Nijmegen, The Netherlands	J.J. de Pont
19	1987	3–5 September	Marseilles, France	H. Sarles
20	1988	29–31 August	Budapest, Hungary	M. Papp
21	1989	20–23 September	Glasgow, UK	C.W. Imrie
22	1990	15–17 October	Basel, Switzerland	K. Gyr
23	1991	11–14 October	Lund, Sweden	I. Ihse
24	1992	11–14 October	Ulm, Germany	H. Beger
25	1993	20–23 October	Paris, France	C. Rozé
26	1994	7–10 September	Bologna, Italy	L. Gullo
27	1995	28 June to 1 July	Barcelona, Spain	L. Fernandez-Cruz
28 ^a	1996	12–15 June	Mannheim, Germany	M.V. Singer
29	1997	9–12 July	London, UK	G.E. Mann
30	1998	10–13 June	Thessaloniki, Greece	C. Arvanitakis
31	1999	28 June to 3 July	Lüneburg, Germany	P.G. Lankisch
32	2000	28 June to 1 July	Kiel, Germany	U.R. Fölsch
33	2001	13–16 June	Toulouse, France	N. Vaysse
34 ^b	2002	19–22 June	Heidelberg, Germany	M.W. Büchler
35	2003	18–22 June	Liverpool, UK	O.H. Petersen
36	2004	23–26 June	Padova, Italy	S. Pedrazzoli
37	2005	6–8 July	Graz, Austria	T. Grieshaber

^a Joint Meeting with the IAP (C.W. Imrie).

^b 2nd Joint Meeting with the IAP (J.P. Neoptolemos).

drolases, surgical treatment of pancreatitis and 15 free papers. Some of the presentations had the character of ‘state of the art lectures’ (J.E. Jorpes, V. Mutt, M.I. Grossman, H. Sarles, H.T. Howat, Y. Edlund), others presented new results, mainly in the Free Paper Session. So the symposium had a mixed character that represented the interests of the time.

The EPC from 1969 to 1980: The Transition from Symposia to Meetings and the Development of ‘Internal Rules’

In the following years, with the 4th symposium in Göttingen in 1969 (W. Creutzfeldt), the 5th symposium in Brussels in 1971 (J. Christophe), and the 6th symposium in Gothenburg in 1973 (Y. Edlund), it was obvious that interest in this kind of informal meetings was growing,

Table 4. Number of participants, and submitted and accepted abstracts at the meetings of the EPC

No.	Year	Place	Parti- cants	Submitted abstracts	Accepted abstracts	Publication
1	1965	London	25	?	11	Gut
2	1967	Marseilles	75	?	34	Arch Mal Appar Dig
3	1968	Prague	119	?	37	Czechoslovak Medical Press
4	1969	Göttingen	?	?	48	Faculty print
5	1971	Brussels	139	?	64	Faculty print
6	1973	Gothenburg	145	?	90	Faculty print
7	1974	Dundee	155	?	69	Faculty print
8	1975	Toulouse	184	?	105	Faculty print
9	1976	Oslo	107	?	83	Scand J Gastroenterol
10	1977	Dublin	180	?	141	Ir J Med Sci
11	1978	Zürich	130	?	89	Gastroenterol Clin Biol
12	1979	Copenhagen	182	180	139	Dan Med Bull
13	1981	Krakow	153	140	122	Faculty print
14	1982	Essen	230	170	149	Digestion
15	1983	Verona	210	230	131	Digestion
16	1984	Cascais	158	153	123	Digestion
17	1985	Manchester	210	170	150	Digestion
18	1986	Nijmegen	208	171	151	Digestion
19	1987	Marseilles	220	175	151	Digestion
20	1988	Budapest	245	172	150	Digestion
21	1989	Glasgow	218	210	176	Digestion
22	1990	Basel	246	237	167	Digestion
23	1991	Lund	235	200	150	Digestion
24	1992	Ulm	461	221	156	Digestion
25	1993	Paris	?	?	147	Digestion
26	1994	Bologna	285	215	180	Digestion
27	1995	Barcelona	277	189	160	Digestion
28	1996	Mannheim	561	312	264	Digestion
29	1997	London	?	?	225	Digestion
30	1998	Thessaloniki	286	238	174	Digestion
31	1999	Lüneburg	372	204	150	Digestion
32	2000	Kiel	231	170	152	Digestion
33	2001	Toulouse	318	184	159	Pancreatology
32	2002	Heidelberg	525	345	331	Pancreatology
33	2003	Liverpool	315	170	170	Pancreatology
34	2004	Padova	344	239	198	Pancreatology

especially also among young researchers. This led to the decision of the Council to organize symposia of the EPC on an annual basis. In 1979, due to the growing size and the now accepted duration of 2.5 days the term 'symposium' was replaced by 'meeting'. The meeting on an annual basis, with one exception in 1980, due to interference with the World Congress of Gastroenterology in Hamburg, was continued. The EPC meeting of 1980 was postponed at the request of the President S. Konturek by 1 year.

In table 3 all meetings of the EPC from 1965 through 2005 with their Presidents are listed and in table 4 the

number of participants, the submitted and accepted presentations and the organ of publication. At the 2nd meeting in Marseilles, 1967, 75 participants were counted, while at the 3rd meeting in Prague, 1968, there were 119. The number of attendants then increased steadily. At the 5th meeting in Brussels, 1971, 139 people participated and presented 64 papers. Ten years later, in 1983 (the 15th meeting in Verona), 210 researchers attended. This figure with numbers between 200 and 250 attendants interestingly has remained fairly stable until the present. It seems to represent the critical number of researchers in Europe, who are interested in the pancreas and in this

kind of meeting. This figure highlights the number of all the people who work on problems of the pancreas in European hospitals and institutes. However, if we compare this with the liver and heart researchers, there are not so many. Since 1992 more than 250 attendants were registered 9 times and more than 400 3 times. The number of abstracts, which were submitted and accepted, increased from the early years (30–60) to about 180 per meeting in the 1980s. This number is nearly the same as that of the attendants; this demonstrates that the active researchers come to the meetings. On average, 75% of the submitted papers are accepted for presentation. At the 1977 meeting in Dublin (President O. Fitzgerald), for the first time poster sessions were introduced. They received good acceptance, although the advantages were discussed. With an experienced older member as a moderator the sessions were well organized. The oral presentations were limited to about 25.

The years from 1970 to 1980 mark a phase of consolidation of the EPC. More and more researchers were attracted, not only across Europe, but also in the USA and other countries. A special concern was the involvement of researchers from eastern countries. Whenever possible, the Presidents of the Club helped with invitations and travel grants. Ideas were developed relatively early on how and where it might be possible to have meetings of the EPC in Eastern European countries behind the 'Iron Curtain'. The Prague Symposium in 1968 actually was the first one in Eastern Europe, Krakow (1981) and Budapest (1988) followed later.

Internal Rules

The step by step development of Internal Rules was very important in the consolidation of the Club. For many years the EPC was a rather informal association without statutes. It had no official list of members and no membership fee. A person usually was invited to the two next meetings after attending one or two prior meetings. Annual meeting attendance was open to all people actively engaged in pancreatic research. The EPC conferences from the beginning were aimed at the multidisciplinary integration of basic scientists and clinicians, i.e. medical and surgical pancreatologists and pathologists. This integration was made easier and put on a personal basis by the familiar character of the meetings. Young investigators were especially encouraged to attend the meetings. It was easy for them to get to know the leaders in the field of their research. This kind of informality led to a good number of new contacts, new cooperation, exchange of people and methodologies with other interna-

tional laboratories and hospitals. It offered the clinical researchers the possibility of adopting the approach of the basic scientists to the problems of research in clinical departments and laboratories, i.e. the pathophysiology of pancreatic secretion in the diseased pancreas, the development of new tests for pancreatic function, and the research with gastrointestinal hormones in disease (for instance in hormone-producing tumors). In view of the multilingual European society, presentations in English, German and French were accepted in the first years, but since the early 1970s English has become the official language of the meetings.

At the 6th symposium in Gothenburg in 1973, four of the founding members left the Council, W. Creutzfeldt (Germany), A. Delcourt (Belgium), A.A. Harper (UK) and H.T. Howat (UK), and were replaced by H. Schmidt (Germany), T. Scratcherd (UK), K.G. Wormsley (UK) and H. Worning (Denmark). At the same time the term Council was replaced by Executive Council or Committee. The transition from the founders to the younger generation was possible without a break due to the fixed and written Internal Rules for the business of the Club. These had been formulated on the initiative of H. Sarles in 1973 and were accepted by a vote of the General Assembly at the 6th meeting in Gothenburg. This step was so important for the future of the EPC that the full text is given here:

'Rules of the European Pancreatic Club, 1973'

- 1 The association shall be called the European Pancreatic Club. Its object shall be the study of exocrine pancreatic function and disease.
- 2 The meetings of the Club shall be conducted in a manner to facilitate the interchange of information and promote friendship among those who have a special interest in the study of the pancreas.
- 3 Attendance at the meetings shall be open to all who are actively engaged in research on the pancreas. Invitations for the two forthcoming meetings will be sent to participants of the previous two meetings.
- 4 The business of the Club shall be conducted by an Executive Council comprising a president, the immediate past president and six committee members.
- 5 The president shall be elected at each meeting on the recommendation of the Council. He will preside over the Club and shall be ex officio a member of the Council for that year. The six ordinary members of the Council shall serve for a period of three meetings and are not eligible for immediate re-election. Two members will be elected at each meeting by the assembly.

- Suggestions for nominations should be sent to the secretary more than two months prior to the meeting. In the case of a vacancy the Council shall nominate a substitute of the same nationality to serve for the unexpired period. The Council will designate one of its members to act as secretary and one as treasurer. Transitional rule: In 1973, 6 members will be elected, two of them will serve for one year, two for two years and two for a full three years.
- 6 Only registered participants of European countries are allowed to vote at the meeting.
 - 7 The president may elect a local secretary from among members of his own country to assist him in the organisation of the next meeting.
 - 8 The treasurer shall receive subscriptions, pay all bills and present the accounts of the Club yearly to the Executive Council and to the General Meeting.
 - 9 The secretary shall summon all meetings of the Club and Council, shall maintain a nominal role of members and shall keep brief minutes of what passes. He shall send, not less than two months before the General Meeting to each member of the Club, a list of candidates for the various offices.
 - 10 Meetings of the Club shall be held each year preferably in September in the country of the president. The meeting shall ordinarily last three days (Thursday, Friday and Saturday).
 - 11 New European guests may be introduced by members to the scientific meetings of the Club. They may submit papers and take part in discussions.
 - 12 Scientific communications shall be selected by a Committee comprising the president and two designated members of the Council. Short communications in English of two hundred and fifty words should be sent to the president some twelve weeks before the Meeting. Abstracts selected for the Meeting will be circulated if possible to all registered participants before the Meeting. Communications shall not exceed 10 min to permit ample time for discussion. The papers may be presented in any European language.
 - 13 Members will finance their own journeys to meetings and accommodation.
 - 14 Central funds will be built up to permit paying of fares of invited speakers. These would be associate members of the meeting. They will not have voting rights of full members but may be invited to talk to the Club because of some particular interest or development of their research.
 - 15 The working rules of the Club shall be changed only at a business meeting by a two-thirds majority.'

Table 5. The officers of the EPC

<i>Secretary</i>	
1965–1973	None
1974–1976	Helmut Schmidt, Göttingen, Germany
1977–1981	Harald Goebell, Essen, Germany
1982–1985	Ulrich R. Foelsch, Göttingen and Kiel, Germany
1986–1992	Manfred V. Singer, Essen and Mannheim, Germany
1993–1997	Jan. J. Jansen, Nijmegen, The Netherlands
1998–2002	John P. Neoptolemos, Liverpool, UK
2003 up to the present	Markus Lerch, Greifswald, Germany
<i>Treasurer</i>	
1965–1974	None
1975	Tim Scratcherd, Newcastle, UK
1976–1977	Helge Worning, Copenhagen, Denmark
1978–1989	Rudolf Ammann, Zürich, Switzerland
1990–1992	Harald Goebell, Essen, Germany
1993–1996	Klaus Gyr, Basel, Switzerland
1997 up to the present	Christoph Beglinger, Basel, Switzerland

The introduction of these rules stabilized the EPC in the forthcoming years. The six council members were all from different countries with a limited term of 3 years, with an equal representation of basic and clinical investigators. The elected President was responsible for organizing the meetings in his country. The appointment of a General Secretary and of a Treasurer were also important steps. Table 5 lists the officers of the EPC from 1974 to 2003. The terms of the officers changed somewhat individually, but on average it was 5 years, or 2 terms for the treasurer.

The introduction of a Selection Committee for the submitted papers was also new. From 1974 to 1975 it was the President plus 2 members, from 1976 to 1978 the President plus 3 members and from 1979 to 1988 the President plus 4 members. In 1989 the Selection Committee was increased to 8 members, 4 for basic and 4 for clinical sciences, serving for 2 years. Because of the requirement that the individual countries should be represented and at the same time also the need that those selected would be competent, the selection process had to be carried out with great sensitivity.

With the new rules there was a transition period from the Council of the founders to an Elected Committee, which lasted from 1973 to 1976. Yngve Edlund, Karel Herfort, Henri Sarles and Jean Christophe left the Council in 1975. They were replaced by Stanislaw J. Konturek (Poland), Rudolf Ammann (Switzerland) and André Ri-



Fig. 12. 12th Symposium EPC – Copenhagen, October 11–13, 1979. President: Helge Worning. Welcome reception.

bet (France). Helmut Schmidt (Germany) became the first Secretary of the Club in 1974. He served until 1976. Rudolf Ammann came into office as Treasurer after a short transition period (Tim Scratcherd in 1975, Helge Worning in 1976/1977) in 1978 and served in this function until 1989 (table 5).

Social Functions of the Club

From the very beginning it was felt to be very important for the exchange between basic and clinical scientists and the development of friendships across borders to have social events during the EPC meetings emphasizing the familiar character of the Club. So a welcome evening (fig. 12) and a gala banquet (fig. 13) usually with dancing became integrated parts of the meetings. Other cultural events like visits to museums and also invitations to the

homes of the local scientists were highly appreciated. An important role was always played by the partners of the members and also by a good ladies program. There is no doubt that all this contributed to significant and often long-lasting friendships and collaborations.

Figure 14 gives a view of the lecture hall during the EPC meeting in Zürich in 1978.

The EPC from 1980 to 1990 and the Relation to Other Scientific Societies

On the basis of the new rules of 1973 the EPC developed steadily with increasing acceptance. This is mirrored by an increasing number of participants to an average of 200 at each meeting. The number of abstracts

Fig. 13. 11th Symposium EPC – Zürich, 1978. Gala dinner. From left to right: Rudolf Ammann (President), Rosemarie Goebell, Oliver Fitzgerald, and Marianne Ammann.



Fig. 14. 11th Symposium EPC – Zürich, 1978. President: R. Ammann. Rudolf Ammann (row 1: 3rd person, right to left), D.A. Dreiling (row 1: 2nd person, right to left), H. Sarles (row 2: 1st person, right), H.T. Howat (row 2: 2nd person, right to left), and H. Goebell (row 3: 2nd person, right to left).



submitted oscillated between 150 and 350, of which around 150 were accepted (table 4).

An important issue was the publication of the abstracts of the accepted papers. In the years from 1969 to 1981 they were presented to the members during the meetings as faculty prints or in some years in national journals (table 4). In 1982 the Club reached an agreement with Karger Publishers with the help of W. Creutzfeldt who was at that time Editor-in-Chief of *Digestion*. The affili-

ation with *Digestion* for the printing of the abstracts lasted 19 years until 2000 (32nd meeting in Kiel). After intense discussions it was then decided to change to the journal *Pancreatology*, also published by Karger. This was done for the first time at the Toulouse meeting in 2001. *Pancreatology* from that date has been the official journal of the EPC and of the International Association of Pancreatology (IAP) and of five other national pancreatic societies. Here it should be mentioned that the foun-

Table 6. Origin of accepted and printed abstracts at the meetings of the EPC

	1971– 1980	1981– 1990	1991– 2000	2001– 2004	Total
Austria	4	–	5	6	15
Belgium	48	30	11	9	98
Denmark	31	33	23	4	91
Finland	–	8	7	24	39
France	166	216	133	60	575
Germany	156	386	460	229	1,231
UK	126	187	148	110	571
Hungary	12	53	41	69	175
Ireland	14	10	2	2	28
Italy	51	139	228	49	467
The Netherlands	18	75	31	15	139
Norway	7	–	–	2	9
Poland	10	32	53	94	189
Portugal	7	–	–	–	7
Spain	8	17	123	43	191
Sweden	26	70	121	35	252
Switzerland	12	50	74	12	160
USA/Canada	31	48	60	53	352
Other countries outside central Europe (i.e. Eastern Europe, Asia, South America), sporadically					248
Total					4,837

dation of the EPC in 1965 had an enormous positive influence on the development of pancreatology in the European countries as is documented by the foundation of many small regional ‘clubs’, making the EPC, so to speak, their ‘mother’. The international acceptance of the EPC is reflected by the number of abstracts not only from European countries but also from the Americas and Asia. Table 6 lists the countries according to their contribution to the scientific sessions. The bulk of papers came from Germany, France, UK and Italy. Other European countries with a considerable number of contributions were Belgium, Denmark, The Netherlands, Hungary, Poland, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. We always had guests from the USA. They contributed 352 original papers to the meetings of the EPC.

In the years from 1980 to 1990 one of the most important topics of discussion in the Executive Committee and in the General Assembly was the relationship to other supranational societies with an interest in pancreatology. As early as 1974 David A. Dreiling, New York, N.Y. tried to persuade the EPC to found a World Pancreatic Society, mainly including the EPC, the American Pancreatic Association (APA) and the American Pancreatic Club. This

proposal was unanimously declined. The main arguments were that young members cannot travel all over the world to meetings and the informal and stimulating character of the EPC meetings would be lost.

In 1983 a new initiative for the foundation of a bigger worldwide acting society, the International Association of Pancreatology (IAP), was started by Orlando Bordalo from Portugal, a pupil of D.A. Dreiling. It was supported by colleagues from Italy, Portugal, South America, some from the USA but not many from other European countries. The proposal was to have meetings along with the World Congress of Gastroenterology and from time to time together with the EPC or the APA or the Japanese Pancreatic Association. After intense discussions at the EPC the unanimous opinion was not to support the foundation of this new society. Nevertheless, the IAP was founded in Cascais in 1984. They had a first but separate meeting without the participation of the EPC, which had its 16th meeting in the same week also in Cascais under the presidency of O. Bordalo. The situation was very delicate.

Fortunately matters improved in the following years. The IAP developed separately, especially under US influence. As a matter of fact, many European researchers are now members of both societies. The IAP meets every 4 years. The EPC has since delegated a member to the executive council of the IAP.

In 1996 the first joint meeting of the EPC (President Manfred V. Singer) and the IAP (President Clem W. Imrie) took place in Mannheim. A second joint meeting was held in Heidelberg 2002 with Markus W. Büchler as President of the EPC and John P. Neoptolemos as President of the IAP. Both meetings had a high standard and attracted many participants; the IAP side mainly consisted of surgeons. The next joint meeting of the EPC with the IAP will take place in Lodz, Poland, in 2008 under the EPC presidency of Eva Malecka-Panas and the IAP presidency of Markus Lerch.

At the 20th EPC meeting in Budapest in 1988 David A. Dreiling made another plea to the EPC and the IAP to form one single club. But this was again refused.

At the 17th meeting of the EPC in Manchester in 1985 and under the presidency of Maynard Case, the founding member Henry T. Howat gave an Anniversary Dinner Talk at the banquet on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the foundation of the EPC. He reflected on the 20 years of a successful development of a well-renowned scientific society.

The Years 1990–1992 and the Transition of the EPC to an Official Society with New Statutes

In the years 1989 and 1990 the Association des Sociétés Nationales Européennes et Méditerranéennes de Gastroentérologie (ASNEMGE) under the presidency of A. Torsoli, Italy, and the Secretary General R.H. Dowling, UK, started an initiative to create a United European Gastroenterology Week (UEGW). The representatives of seven European (not national) societies, among them the EPC, were invited to join this initiative. The preliminary meeting took place in Rome on February 10, 1990 and the founding session in L'Aquila on April 28, 1990. The President of the EPC Klaus Gyr attended the meeting in L'Aquila. He returned with a very positive attitude to the new idea of the UEGW. In fact a united meeting of several small societies in Europe, also as a counterpart to the Digestive Disease Week in the USA, seemed to be attractive for gastroenterologists in Europe, especially in the Eastern countries.

The issue of the UEGW and of its organization UEGF (United European Gastroenterology Federation) was discussed extensively by the Executive Committee of the EPC at the 22nd meeting in Basel with Klaus Gyr as President.

There was consent that: '(1) The meetings of the EPC will continue on an annual basis. In general the meeting will last two and a half days as has been the case before. The EPC wants to keep its own identity and to continue to be a club where basic and clinical scientists can meet in a familiar atmosphere to discuss science and to create new and continue old friendships. (2) The Council of the EPC expresses its general support of the ASNEMGE and (3) the EPC is prepared to organize the pancreatic session of the UEGF during the so-called United European Gastroenterology Week (UEGW)' (from the protocol of the session of the Executive Council of the EPC, Basel, 1990). K. Gyr and M.V. Singer were asked to act as delegates of the EPC to the UEGF/ASNEMGE.

It was also discussed that it was necessary to work out new statutes for the EPC (on the basis of the 1973 rules) to meet the criteria of a modern scientific society. A commission for statutes was inaugurated. The following members were designated: Ingmar Ihse (President 1991), Manfred V. Singer (Secretary), Harald Goebell (Treasurer), Clem W. Imrie (Past President 1989), Maynard Case (Past President 1985) and Nicole Vaysse (Toulouse). A time schedule was recommended with the presentation of a first draft to the Executive Committee in the course

of 1991 and to the General Assembly at the meeting in Lund in 1991. The plan for the final vote on the new statutes was to be taken by the General Assembly at the meeting in Ulm in 1992.

In 1991 M.V. Singer prepared a draft of the statutes which was distributed among the members of the special committee and discussed at the regular meeting of the official boards in Lund. M.V. Singer was asked to work out, on the basis of the first draft, a final version with the statute committee, to present this version to all registered members of the Club, and to ask for their comments and proposals. This big action indeed happened during 1992 and the Secretary presented a final version of the statutes to the General Assembly in Ulm after approval by the Council. Interestingly there was again a lively discussion about the necessity of the new statutes, which demonstrated how much the members treasured the informality of the Club. But finally everybody was convinced and the new statutes were approved by an almost unanimous vote (three votes against, one withheld).

So after 3 years of really democratic work the Club had new statutes. After this vote the General Assembly decided on the proposals of the Council for the different offices, the Presidents and places of the forthcoming meetings up to 1996, the Secretary of the Club for the next 5 years (Jan Jansen, Nijmegen), the new Treasurer (Klaus Gyr), the Council with 6 members and the Abstract Selection Committee (four basic and four clinical scientists). As delegate of the EPC to the IAP C. Beglinger (Switzerland) was elected and as delegates to the UEGF K. Gyr and M.V. Singer. At the end of the Ulm Meeting the President Hans G. Beger thanked Manfred V. Singer for his immense dedication to the creation of the new statutes. Without his commitment the transition of the EPC to an official society would not have occurred in such a smooth manner.

The new statutes of 1992 were formed on the basis of the rules of the EPC from 1973. In five articles name, purpose and status (1), membership (2), powers (3), meetings (4) and change of statutes (5) were defined. Membership required a membership fee, which is set by the General Assembly on the proposal of the Council. The composition of the Executive Council was not changed (President, Secretary, Treasurer and six councillors and the Past President). The election of all officers now became the task of the General Assembly on the proposal of the Council. It was ascertained that the meetings will be held annually with a duration of 2.5 days. Members of the Selection Committee for the scientific communications are the President ex officio and four members for

basic and four for clinical sciences. These members are elected by the General Assembly for 2 years on the proposal of the Council. A registration fee in addition to the membership fee is payable at the meetings. The new statutes were accepted unanimously and did not change the essential character of the meetings.

From this day forward the EPC was also represented on the boards of the UEGF actively organizing half a pancreas day at the UEGW. The first such meeting was held in Athens in 1993.

The EPC from 1993 to 2005

In the years after the introduction of the new statutes the Club developed steadily. In the 1990s the number of participants usually was between 200 and 250 with many new young researchers. In 1996 the first joint meeting of the EPC and AIP took place in Mannheim (President M.V. Singer). The second joint meeting was organized in Heidelberg 2002 by the Presidents M.W. Büchler and J.P. Neoptolemos. In 1997 it was decided that the executive council should meet twice yearly at the EPC meeting and in connection with the UEGW to deal with all issues properly. The financial situation of the Club was good. Therefore, it started to create an EPC scholarship for annual travel grants to young investigators. In 2004, for instance, a total of 36 travel awards and 2 best abstract prizes were awarded. The travel awards were given to 8 basic scientists, to 18 scientists involved in experimental pathophysiological work and to 10 scientists doing pure clinical work. The best abstract prizes were given to 1 scientist for basic and 1 for clinical work.

The Young Researchers Corner, a new category of scientific information, was introduced by President Claude Rozé for the first time at the 25th meeting in Paris in 1993. Its purpose was the postgraduate training of members in research techniques. So in Paris ‘cultured cells, receptors, cell pathing and calcium imaging’ were discussed. This new form of information is now regularly organized at each meeting with much success (for more details see part 2 of this article).

A new category of activities at the EPC was opened in 1995 at the 27th meeting in Barcelona with the inauguration of cooperative studies among members. A European Study Group of Pancreatic Cancer (ESPAC) held the first meeting in Barcelona under the chairmanship of H.G. Beger, J.P. Neoptolemos, and M.W. Büchler. The group now meets regularly at the EPC. At present it runs three different studies (for details see part 2 of this article). A

European register for Hereditary Pancreatitis and Familial Pancreatic Cancer was opened at the 33rd meeting in Toulouse in 2001. Since 2001 the topic of hereditary diseases of the pancreas is run under the title EUROPAC (European Registry of Hereditary Pancreatitis and Familial Pancreatic Cancer).

A new attractive logo was developed by Thomas Griesbacher and accepted in 2000 in Kiel. In 2001 the EPC organized its own website: www.e-p-c.org. In 1999 a News Letter was published for the first time. Number 6 came out in 2004. The Secretary of the Club is the editor. The EPC created an award medal for outstanding work for the Club and for pancreatology. In 2001 it was presented in Toulouse to Rudolf Ammann and Hans G. Beger. Also in 2001 the journal *Pancreatology* was chosen for the publication of abstracts and as their official organ at the suggestion of Markus Lerch and with an unanimous Council vote. A triple membership was offered to the members of the EPC, the IAP and the National Pancreatic Associations in Europe combined with automatic subscription to *Pancreatology*. In 2003 the EPC had 230 registered members. The vast majority has taken advantage of the triple membership.

Revision of the Statutes from 1992 in the Year 2001

Nevertheless, having served as a stable basis for the work of the EPC it was felt that some revision of the statutes was needed to adopt details to meet the requirements, although for the authors of this paper these requirements are not quite clear. More details in a statute are not necessarily better. In the year 2000 the Executive Council worked on this problem and in Toulouse 2001 the revised statutes were accepted by the Council and the General Assembly. Compared to the statutes of 1992 they were more detailed and precise on some issues. They now have 11 articles instead of 5: Article I: Name, Article II: Duration and Dissolution, Article III: Aims, Article IV: Membership, Article V: General Assembly, Article VI: Council, Article VII: Responsibilities of the Council, Article VIII: Quorum and Voting of the Council, Article IX: Sub-Committees, Article X: Organisation of the EPC Meeting, and Article XI: Change of Statutes. The full text of the 2001 statutes is available at the EPC website [10].

The EPC is now registered in Switzerland as an international association (Article I). The aims are much more detailed (Article III): ‘(A) To promote communication between basic and clinical scientists in Europe interested

in the pancreas and its disorders; (B) to promote and organise an annual scientific meeting devoted to all aspects of the pancreas; (C) to promote scientific, epidemiological and clinical research into pancreatic function and into the prevention, diagnosis and therapy of pancreatic diseases. Preference will be given to co-operative projects; (D) to establish scholarships and promote postgraduate education and training; (E) to support other meetings concerning the pancreas organised by members of the EPC; (F) to disseminate information about EPC activities, and publish such educational matter as the EPC council may consider desirable.' This new definition of the aims now covered issues such as postgraduate training, cooperative studies like ESPAC and EUROPAC, and involvement in the organization of the UEGW meeting. Article V defines the role of the General Assembly, which was not the case in the statutes of 1992. The General Assembly is now characterized as being the 'highest organ of the EPC'. It decides on the proposals of the Executive Council, i.e. elections, accounts, fees, alteration of the constitution, and cooperation with other societies. A quorum is introduced with the presence of at least 30% of the members participating at the annual meeting. Voting by proxy in writing is also permitted. A single majority in votes is needed with the exception of alterations of the constitution which require a two-third majority. In Article V the Council is defined. The members are now the President, the President Elect (new), the Past President, the Secretary, the Treasurer and six Councillors from different European countries, three basic and three clinical scientists. The latter serve for 3 years, the Secretary cannot be re-elected whereas the Treasurer may be re-elected.

It is also new that the Presidents and the countries for the forthcoming meetings must be decided on by the General Assembly 'strictly' 4 years in advance after nomination by the Council. In Article VII concerning the responsibilities of the Council, it is new that it can delegate responsibilities to subcommittees or working parties as appropriate.

The present constitution of the EPC represents a stable and reliable base for the future. One thing must be pointed out at the end of this discourse about the history of the EPC: In the headline of the statutes it says: 'Statutes, European Pancreatic Club, Founded in 1962'. The latter is definitely wrong, as we have shown in our article. The EPC was founded in 1965 and not in 1962 (will be corrected as assured by the EPC Secretary).

The manuscript is based on the nearly complete set of programs, abstract books, drafts and final versions of the statutes, votes, minutes of the sessions of the Committee and General Assembly and many personal contacts. The material is now stored in the newly founded Archive of the European Club, which will presumably be deposited in the library of the University of Zürich, Switzerland. Until that date it is stored with Prof. Goebell, Essen [9].

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