20 YEARS OF EFNS - LOOKING FOR AN EXCLUSIVE EFNS OFFICE

by Eberhard Deisenhammer

20 years of EFNS is not only the exciting history about the development of the EFNS, about its growing congresses and the spreading of scientific education all over Europe.

Seemingly in the background and in parallel to the expansion of the society, there was also the need of a quest for shelter.

In 1991, when the society was founded, the OeGN (Austrian Society of Neurology) offered to us using their office. It was located at the Hospital Rosenhügel in Vienna, Hietzing, outside of the city, near the beautiful vineyards and the Vienna Woods, as well as the famous Wotruba Church in Mauer.

This hospital, endowed by Albert Baron von Rothschild, was built at the end of the 19th century and had then been a neuro-psychiatric institution for indigent citizens. Later it accommodated two neurological departments as well as – from 1975 on – a department of paediatric neuro-psychiatry.

Initially, the administrative work for the EFNS as well as for the OeGN was carried out by Uschi Tschabitscher. But soon it turned out that the manifold and comprehensive activities of the EFNS could not be taken care of by only one person and therefore Lisa Müller was employed. Finally, the OeGN agenda had to be handed over to a separate secretariat.

The shortage of space in the one-room-office was obvious. Uschi achieved, following some investigation and thanks to her good and friendly relationship with the Vienna Medical Academy (VMA), to rent two rooms of their huge office. A conference room could also be rent; however, it was most of the time used by the VMA. Still, in 2002 the EFNS staff moved to this office located in the former administrative building in the 1st court (out of many others) of the famous Vienna General Hospital, where a statue of Billroth welcomes you at the entrance.

This hospital was built in 1695 dedicated to the poor and invalid citizens until
it became the General Hospital in 1784, rededicated by Joseph II, whose politics of Aufklärung advocated the progress of public health services. He also cared for the well-being of psychiatric patients, the “mad”, and for these patients the famous “Narrenturm” (madhouse tower) in the vicinity of the hospital area was built. This was a modern and progressive idea for these days.

In 1954 it was decided that this old hospital, in which the departments were spread across many 2-floor buildings within several courts, was not suitable to serve as the Vienna University Hospital anymore. The historic buildings were preserved and adapted and from 1997 on, they accommodate other University Institutes, offices, shops and restaurants.

The solution of having only two rooms and being modest tenants was still not satisfying for the EFNS. Also, Anja Sander had joined the team and there was not enough space for three persons, equipment and meetings in this 30m² office.

The financial developments of EFNS allowed thinking about renting or eventually even purchasing a big and final office. At the Management Committee meeting in 2003, I was commissioned to come up with suggestions for estates in Vienna to be purchased by the EFNS. A very exciting time started for Anja and me. We searched for available properties and visited many of them. We saw wonderful old residences in the Inner City of Vienna, flats in the outer districts, even a house far outside in the vineyards. As soon as we had made a selection, also Lisa joined us to see the objects of desire.

One of them was a building that was still under construction. It did so far not have any final inner structure and was located at an amazingly beautiful place overlooking the Inner City. It became the favourite of all of us.

At the next Management Committee meeting I presented our selection, and there was only a short discussion on the size of the estate - wouldn’t 260m² be vainglorious!? On the other hand there were committee members, like Jes Olesen, who said that we should not only purchase one office, but the whole building.

As we do know now, the office of 260m² was fine for the time being. Thinking ahead, we have in the meantime bought even more space in the same building.

We had the opportunity to arrange the rooms according to our needs. Our architect together with Lisa and Anja, created a highly aesthetic and most suitable interior design.

The four cubicles that are already in use were extended by 2 more in the second office. We do have a large conference room for up to 25 persons as well
GREETINGS FROM GENEVA

Dear colleagues,

The 14th EFNS meeting has passed and I hope you all enjoyed your visit in Geneva, located in the French part of Switzerland! The Swiss Neurological Society, which just celebrated its 100th birthday, had the honour to be the host society and we were only too happy to assume this «responsibility». This was the first EFNS meeting in Switzerland and given its big success, hopefully, not the last one.

We had 5100 delegates – this is a significant number of attendees! They had the opportunity to detect a rich and diverse scientific and teaching programme, covering all fields of clinical neurology. During the opening ceremony we heard Professor Théodor Landis on the «mystic brain» which touches the zone between neurology, psychiatry and philosophy. He is actually a “local” - the director of the Neurology Clinic at the Geneva University Hospital—and he shared with us his findings and thoughts about the behavioural correlates of brain function and dysfunction.

Our treasurer in 2003 (who by the way, was me) confronted the head office staff: “Having such wonderful workspace, the salaries will be reduced.” But this was successfully struck down!!!

The other key lecture was given by Professor Thomas Brandt, a leading scientist and clinical neurologist specialized on vertigo. As usual, his talk was captivating and provided us with state-of-art knowledge on the different types and treatments of balance disorders.

In total 12 main topics, 101 short communications, 26 teaching courses, and 11 satellite symposia were presented by speakers from all continents. All topics of today neurology were covered, from a more basic level up to the scientific level, and this was possible with the help of all those distinguished speakers. As in previous years, Professor Richard Hughes from London summed up the event, and did so very elegantly. We also enjoyed a smooth and efficient organisation with rich lunch buffets, so the famous good Swiss food could be discovered onsite. Our thanks goes to the EFNS Head Office, Kenes International and the local and EFNS organization committees for providing us visible but also a lot of invisible help.

The program was very dense, but nevertheless, I hope that you found some time to
see Geneva and its surroundings. September is one of the most beautiful months and it is still warm enough, to enjoy a stroll at the lakeside. As you can see in the pictures, not much has changed in all these years, except the creation of the “jet-d’eau”. It is since 1891 in the present location and it ejects its water since 120 years from this spot, much to the delight of all the visitors.

On behalf of the Swiss Neurological Society, I thank all delegates and speakers for making this event so magnificent and outstanding, and I hope we see each other again in Budapest, 10–13 September 2011

With warm regards

Professor Margitta Seeck
Neurology Clinics
Dept of Clinical Neurosciences

JUNIOR NEUROLOGISTS AT THE 14TH EFNS CONGRESS

European Association of Young Neurologists and Trainees (EAYNT)

The EAYNT, an independent organization representing European young neurologists, contributed in various means to the most successful 14th EFNS Congress in September 2010 in Geneva. We were much involved in the scientific activities of the congress. EAYNT has a delegate in every Scientist Panel of EFNS. These representatives are nominated for a period of two years and can be re-appointed twice. The newly established Palliative Care and Neurology Scientist Panel will also work together with a junior colleague. This is a great opportunity for young neurologists to learn from the best experts of the EFNS how to develop research plans and guidelines and to organize teaching courses. Some of our representatives even had the opportunity to experience an interesting challenge when they were offered to act not only as a presenter but also a co-chair of a poster session. It was most interesting for them to gain experience on this other side too.

The UEMS – European Board of Neurology arranged the 2nd European Board Examination in Neurology during the congress. Walter Struhal (EAYNT past-president, Austria) participated in the organisation and running of this examination.

EAYNT had a Special Session on the second day of the congress. The chairs were our past-presidents, Laszlo Sztriha (London, UK) and Johann Sellner (Munich, Germany). The programme featured Jacques de Reuck (Ghent, Belgium) who presented a most humorous lecture entitled A key to scientific research literature – what it says and
what it means. This was followed by a talk from Marianne de Visser (Amsterdam, The Netherlands) delineating Challenges and opportunities for pan-European education on added competences. In the final lecture, What I would do if I were you – key issues for a career in clinical neurology, Peter Schellinger (Minden, Germany) highlighted some important turning points of his career and gave advice to the future generation.

Thanks fully to the EFNS, EAYNT was able to provide, already during the third annual congress, a pleasant meeting place for young neurologists in the EAYNT Club Lounge. This was open every day, offering a great opportunity to exchange experience and meet colleagues in a friendly atmosphere. This was also the scene of some most interesting and stimulating discussions with Richard Hughes (President, EFNS), Jean-Marc Léger (Training and Education Committee, EFNS), Michael Brainin (Scientific Committee, EFNS) and Wolfgang Oertel (Liaison Committee, EFNS).

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meetings: registration fee, scientific and educational sessions, industry representation, interdisciplinarity and social events.

Regarding the registration fee 27.45% consider that the fee is appropriate, but 39.84% suggest decreasing it. A small part – 1.87% would like to increase the fee. Most of the participants are satisfied by the scientific and educational sessions, but a part of them would like to increase the number of scientific (14.6%) and educational (23.48%) sessions. The majority of the participants were satisfied with the industry representation, but 9.11% consider that it is necessary to decrease this index. 17.17% participants suggest increasing the interdisciplinarity of the meeting. Most of the participants are satisfied with the social events that take place during the Congress.

The participants were asked which TC they would like to attend in the future. In their answers they mentioned almost all the fields of neurology, but most often they mentioned: Movement disorders (87 participants), CVD/Stroke (71), Epilepsy (52), Neurophysiology (54), Multiple sclerosis (44), Neuroimaging/sonology (29), Ageing and dementia (25), Headache and Pain (25), Emergency medicine & neurology (23) and Neuromuscular disorders (21).

In the future the participants suggest having more practical courses/more case presentations, including videos; spending more time for discussions and increasing interactivity. They would like to receive hand-outs on CD/Internet, and wish to receive all slides on handouts. Many of them propose to organize TCs not only on Saturdays. Another frequent suggestion was having self-tests (before and after the course with remote control).

The general comments are that the TCs are very interesting, excellent and well organized.

Many teaching course syllabi of the Geneva congress can be found in the e-Education area on the EFNS website. Here you can read the texts and answer the related self-tests. You will receive a certificate recommending 1 hour of CME, if you have answered all questions correctly. www.efns.org

CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION ONLINE

All e-learning activities are free-of-charge for EFNS members, who are registered to www.efns.org!

Answer all questions correctly and you will receive one hour of CME.

European Journal of Neurology

Every month one article is chosen for online learning.

The following articles are available free of charge on

https://www.efns.org/EFNS-Continuing-Medical-Education-online.301.0.html


February 2011: Clinically suspected fibrocartilaginous embolism: clinical characteristics, treatments, and outcomes. Mateen FJ. et al.


Among all persons, who will correctly answer the questions related to February and March 2011 articles, 3 handbooks will be allotted.

We congratulate the winners of the last competition:

Gayane Aghakhanyan, Armenia
Natallia Jankiewicz, Poland
Maria Shumilina, Russia
DONT MISS THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET MORE THAN 5000 COLLEAGUES...

15th EFNS Congress, Budapest, Hungary, 10–13 September 2011

Early registration deadline: 15 June 2011.

**Bursary**

The EFNS offers up to 200 bursaries consisting of free registration to the congress and four nights hotel accommodation to European neurologists under the age of 35 and whose abstract has been accepted.

The EFNS is pleased to inform that it is also possible for young colleagues from EFNS Associate member societies (Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia and Syria) to apply for bursaries.

Details on how to apply for a bursary can be found on the congress website http://www2.kenes.com/efns/grants/Pages/Bursaries.aspx

**EFNS Tournament for Young Neurologists**

The tournament for young neurologists will take place at the EFNS Congress in Budapest. The tournament will be carried out in two groups, one on clinical related research, and one on basic neurological sciences.

Neurologists in training not older than 35 years are entitled to participate.

The Congress Programme Committee will select 6 candidates for each tournament group on the basis of the contents of the abstracts submitted. All persons selected will receive a bursary consisting of free registration to the Congress, up to four nights hotel accommodation, and a travel grant.

The winner of each group will receive the Uschi Tschabitscher Prize for Young neurologists consisting of: free registration at the 16th EFNS Congress in Stockholm, 8–11 September 2012, up to four nights hotel accommodation, a travel grant, as well as € 1,000.

If you wish to participate, please browse to: http://www2.kenes.com/efns/grants/Pages/Tournament.aspx

**Teaching Courses**

Please register well in advance for the teaching courses, since only a limited number of places is available.

**Saturday, September 10, 2011**

Free Teaching Course: How do I examine…
Teaching Course 1: Movement disorders – basic clinical knowledge
Teaching Course 2: Movement disorders – advanced
Teaching Course 3: Stroke: neurological complications in the long term. Basic clinical knowledge
Teaching Course 4: Advances in stroke in the young
Teaching Course 5: Multiple sclerosis – basic clinical knowledge
Teaching Course 6: Management of multiple sclerosis by early and persistent immunotherapy - advanced
Teaching Course 7: Luigi Amaducci teaching course on dementia – basic clinical knowledge
Teaching Course 8: Luigi Amaducci teaching course on dementia – advanced
Teaching Course 9: Treatment of epilepsy – basic clinical knowledge
Teaching Course 10: Advanced aspects of epilepsy for the clinician
Teaching Course 11: Chronic headache: update on epidemiology, mechanisms and treatment
Teaching Course 12: Neuroimaging of neurodegenerative diseases
Teaching Course 13: Neuromuscular diseases I
Teaching Course 14: Neuromuscular diseases II
Teaching Course 15: Neurosonology
Teaching Course 16: Neuro-ophthalmology
Teaching Course 17: Metabolic neurogenetic disorders
Teaching Course 18: My most difficult cases
Teaching Course 19: Therapy in neurology

**Sunday, September 11, 2011 07.30 – 09.00**

Teaching Course 20: Hands-on course on clinical neurophysiology – Nerve conduction
Video Teaching Course: Epilepsy video session

Monday, September 13, 2011 07.30 – 09.00
Teaching Course 21: Hands-on course on Doppler sonography – practical demonstration in four groups

Monday, September 12, 2011 07.30 – 09.00
Teaching Course 22: Hands-on course on clinical neurophysiology: Electromyography (EMG) and nerve conduction studies (NCS)

15.30 – 17.00
FREE Teaching Course 23: How to do a treatment trial

Tuesday, September 13, 2011 07.30 – 09.00
Teaching Course 24: Hands-on course on clinical neurosonology
Teaching Course 25: Hands-on autonomic testing – from bedside to laboratory. Investigations of ANS disorders

Sunday, September 11, 2011 20.30
Scientific Gulyás Dinner: Neuroimmunology: a walk through the woods
EFNS SCIENTIFIC FELLOWSHIP 2010 FINAL REPORT

by Agata Gajos

With the support of the EFNS Scientific Fellowship, I spent 6 months at the Institute of Neurology, Queen Square, London, UK. During my stay in London I joined the team of Professor Kailash Bhatia. The main interest of the team is movement disorders, particularly dystonia, myoclonus and parkinsonian conditions – their clinical aspect, genotype-phenotype correlations, pathophysiological studies by means of transcranial magnetic stimulation.

During my fellowship I was working on Environmental modifiers of DYT1 dystonia - a case control study project. The aim of it was to assess, whether any environmental factors are responsible for clinical manifestation of dystonia in patients carrying the DYT1 mutation. More than 100 potential environmental modifiers were evaluated.

I joined a study which had been in progress since 2000 when clinical material consisted of 93 patients (manifesting carriers, non-manifesting carriers and negative family members) from UK, France and Italy. I included 17 Polish subjects which were a part of material collected previously for my PhD thesis. My role in London was to organize the database and to perform statistical analysis.

Our study showed abnormal delivery as a risk factor for the appearance of dystonic symptoms in DYT1 mutation carriers. This finding might be the subject of future research studies to reveal how the brain injury related to delivery can trigger the later development of dystonia in DYT1 mutation carriers. It would also be advisable to carry on further studies to find out if some unidentified features of DYT1 carriers may contribute to difficult delivery. An abstract entitled as the project has been submitted to 11th MDS Congress in Toronto.

This project gave me an opportunity to gain more experience in the assessment of dystonia as well as in methodology of epidemiological research studies. On the other hand I had a great possibility to spend many hours observing Professor Bhatia’s work at the Movement Disorders Outpatient Clinic. I also had the possibility to attend Ward Rounds, Movement Disorders Video Sessions, Basal Ganglia Meetings and other lectures.

I would like to thank Professor Bhatia for the really good opportunity to improve my movement disorders knowledge and skills, for the interesting research project and support for its realization. I’m also grateful for the possibility to participate in the research and social life of the international movement disorders team at Queens Square. Besides I would like to thank Mark Edwards for his help and instructions during the realization of the research project.

I’m really grateful to the EFNS for this great opportunity to spend half a year in such a prestigious medical research center.

EFNS NEWSLETTER FORUM

by Gian Luigi Lenzi

Newsletter Editor, Professor of Neurology

The EFNS Congress in Geneva was an ideal opportunity for meeting with WHO officials and colleagues involved in working with WHO (World Health Organisation).

Out of these over-coffee-conversations, it became very clear that the potentialities offered by WHO have great importance and it was decided to formulate a basic interview including a few key-questions to be posed to a group of WHO experts and officials.

The questions are obviously neurology-biased, as it quickly became very clear that a
major knowledge gap among neurologists needs to be filled in particular with regard to the WHO - WFN (World Federation of Neurology) – EFNS interactions and potentialities in countries worldwide.

INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR ETTORE BEGHI, MILAN, ITALY

1) How did you become involved with the WHO?

I have been nominated by the International League against Epilepsy to the WHO-Neurology&Mental Health for the now-running revision of the codes for the ICD10-ICD11 manuals.

2) Which part of your job at WHO do you find the most interesting and challenging?

Due to my personal knowledge of epidemiology, I easily understand what lies behind the codes. In particular, it is important to maintain a link with the present codes, without introducing major changes that may impair the utilization of the relevant and precious bulk of the existing data.

3) Which are the best modalities for a collaboration between the two entities (EFNS and WHO)?

From the WHO-Neurology point of view it is absolutely relevant to have more people from EFNS involved in the OMS-WHO Projects. It is important to remember that in the WHO-Neurology&Mental Health Committee there is a huge majority of psychiatrists who obviously affect the directions of the Committee.

4) How can WHO-Neurology & Mental Health contribute to Neurology’s growth and public perception in Europe?

I would suggest organising a Teaching Course on the ICD11, or eventually a Special Session, at the next EFNS Congress.

INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR MURAT EMRE, ISTANBUL, TURKEY

1) How did you become involved with the WHO?

The Neurological Diseases and Mental Health sections of the WHO are in the process of revising the ICD-10 disease codes in order to produce the next version, namely ICD-11. They requested the involvement of neurologists who are experts in the disease areas under revision, in my case for revision of the dementia section. I was invited by Alzheimer's disease International, the world-wide federation of national Alzheimer Societies to be their representative on the WHO Committee which is in charge of revising the dementia section.

2) Which part of your job at WHO do you find the most interesting and challenging?

In a dialectic sense, working in an international group with different medical, medico-social and cultural backgrounds is both very challenging, but equally interesting and rewarding. The new product, ICD 11 must be applicable all around the world, covering all potential causes of dementias, and obtaining agreement from all involved disciplines: achieving this is very challenging, the success will be as much rewarding.

3) What are the points of contact between EFNS and WHO-Neurology&Mental Health and how would you describe this relationship?

To my knowledge there are no regular contacts, I believe it would be mutually very beneficial to establish these contacts and keep them alive.

4) Which are the best modalities for collaboration between the two entities?

My suggestion would be that the EFNS Liaison Committee should have close regular (periodic or ad hoc meetings) with WHO-Neurology&Mental Health sections in order to discuss on-going activities on both sides.
needs, opportunities for collaboration and also
to identify priorities in our region where both
institutions could co-operate. In consideration
of geographical proximity and needs, EFNS
may also join forces with WHO for activities in
Africa, an area which is high up on the priority
list for Africa.

5) How can WHO-Neurology & Mental
Health contribute to Neurology’s growth
and public perception in Europe?

TALKING TO THE PRESS

by Laura Spinney

“In some circles the media is [sic] seen as
part of the problem rather than the solution to
improving public understanding of risk and sci-
entific advice…”

That’s a quote from the seventh report of the
UK’s House of Commons Select Committee on
Science and Technology, which was published
in 2006. “Some circles” may or may not include
the readers of this newsletter, but I’d like to take
this opportunity to argue why scientists and
clinicians should see the media as allies, not
as enemies, and continue to cooperate with
them.

Science coverage in the media isn’t created
in a vacuum. Most of the time, a scientist or
clinician is asked to explain his or her work to
a journalist. He or she can therefore influence
the quality of the end-product. Now, more
than ever, you have an opportunity to shape the
future of science journalism.

With the advent of the Internet and blogg-
ing, journalism is changing. In the future, the
journalist ringing you up is increasingly likely
to have no science background at all, and the
specialised science and medical journalists who
now cast what a Nature editorial described in
2009 as a “fair but sceptical eye” over the mass
of information and opinion flooding into the
public domain will constitute an ever-shrinking
minority of news-gatherers. It’s in your inter-
est to ensure that they survive. As the same
Nature editorial put it, “If there is to be a tran-
sition to new… types of analytical media, sci-
ence journalism will integrate into them all the
better if scientists are taking an active interest
in its health”.

What does that mean in practice? Here are a
d few suggestions for how to keep science jour-
nalism healthy, and to ensure that you get your
own message across at the same time. First, if
a journalist asks you for an interview, give it. If
the information is already in the public domain,
in the form of a published paper, say, then the
chances are it will be reported anyway. By
answering the journalist’s questions, you only
increase the likelihood that the report will be
factually correct, and any interpretation appro-
priate.

Second, assume no background knowledge.
You can always preface your introductory spiel
with, “Stop me if you’ve heard this before,” but
it’s better to err on the side of caution. Even a
journalist who specialises in science may cover
a wide range of subjects, and his or her knowl-
edge of your particular research domain may be
less profound or up-to-date than it needs to be
to set the findings in context.

Third, it’s perfectly acceptable to answer
a question with “I don’t know,” or to say that
your results don’t speak to that subject. Turn
the situation to your advantage using the politi-
cians’ trick of bridging: “I can’t answer that, but
the key point here is…” Two or three of those,
even if the journalist’s questions are consis-
tently wide of the mark, you will have conveyed
the essential information.

Fourth, communicate risk clearly. The press
has had a bad track record on this in the past,
with the unfortunate result that predictable
public health problems have turned into full-
blown scares. The industry is taking steps to
address this, but you can help. One very good
idea, suggested by the UK’s Royal Society in
a 2001 report, is to provide measures of both
relative and absolute risk. For example, a 30
per cent increased risk of stroke for those tak-
ing a certain drug sounds scary. But if you
translate that relative risk into an absolute risk
one extra stroke in every 5,000 people taking
the drug, say it sounds less scary.

Fifth, keep it brief. According to an old jour-
nalistic saying, the speech hasn’t been written
that couldn’t be cut in half without losing any
vital information. Bear in mind that space is
always short in a newspaper or magazine, and that a news story has the structure of an inverted pyramid, with all the essential information contained in the first paragraph, and the information content shrinking with each subsequent paragraph. This is so that an editor can cut from the bottom without losing the thread of the story.

Which brings me to my sixth and final suggestion: always have a take-home message. An editor considering whether or not to give space to a story will subject it to the “so what” test.

Laura Spinney is a freelance science journalist who writes for Nature, New Scientist and The Economist, among others.

EFNS SUPPORTS ESNI – EUROPEAN SCHOOL OF NEUROIMMUNOLOGY

ESNI, established in 1999, provides a European framework for continuous educational programmes in neuroimmunology. It is with great pleasure that also this year EFNS contributes to the realization of the course by providing a grant of Euro 20,000.

The 11th ESNI Course, July 4 to 7, will take place in the magnificent surroundings of Glasgow University.

The programme of the 11th ESNI course is designed to provide post graduate and post doctoral participants with an eclectic view of cutting edge neuroimmunological research demonstrating how novel techniques are providing new insights into disease pathogenesis and treatment.

This year, in order to foster student participation and networking, two student led sessions have been included in the programme.

ESNI, established in 1999, provides a European framework for continuous educational programmes in Neuroimmunology.

More on ESNI and the 2011 course can be found at:

http://www.esni.org/course.php?course=11&op=info