

Professor Pierre KEHR - Strasbourg

It is in November 1976 with the Congress of the S.O.F.C.O.T in the reception of the Hotel PLM Saint-Jacques (current Marriott Rive Gauche) which Thierry HERMANN and PETIT Roland required of me to take part in the creation of an association of orthopedic surgeons which will have as a name Groupe Study for the Osteo-articular Surgery, with like French initials acronym "GECO". I accepted with enthusiasm.

After a preparatory meeting in a room of Fournitures Hospitalières (FH) in Heimsbrunn during which Patrick GRUMILLIER exposed us his brilliance work of Thesis on the fractures of the distal end of the radius, association was born with signature of the statutes in a living room of the restaurant Aubette in Strasbourg. More than fifteen years before the Law "Kouchner" governing in a very strict way the relations between Industry and the doctors, relation FH - GECO was governed in an exemplary way. Indeed FH accepted to become sponsor of GECO with any scientific freedom and only asked in exchange to be only the intervening industrialist. This contract continues to rule our relationship so far and constitutes the framework of the national and international success of the GECO.

The first widened meeting was held in January 1977 in the Sunstar Hotel in Grindelwald. In addition to the 15 founders, we had joined together about thirty surgeons. About what we did speak? It was a question at the beginning of dividing files in a retrospective study. I believe to remember that the dysplasia of hip and the fractures of the distal radius had been the subject of the first two Roundtables. It is feverishly that we sort and classify our slides, and even still let us manufacture some in extremis during the night preceding the Roundtable. And then there was the Professor MITTELMEIER, inventor of system OSTEO of self-compressive plates thanks to oblique holes in which the head of the screws slid. FH at the time represented this material made in Switzerland. Jean-Pierre VIERLING and me were to translate the long German sentences of Herr Professor, whose Jean BERGER could with humor reproduce the Prussian intonations.

In 1979, first GECO with ARC 1800, followed of three others; then 4 years with COURCHEVEL, to return to ARC 1800 in 1987 and to anchor themselves to it consequently definitively.

Which are the ingredients of the success of the GECO?

- This so fertile particular relationship with FH and the total freedom which it gives to the GECO to organize his roundtables
- Dynamism of the Standing Committee (Founders and Holders) which continues in spite of the departures of the majority of old: the crucible functions with wonder
- The meticulous preparation of each great meeting during the year which precedes thanks to several meeting by office and one or two meeting of the Standing Committee
- The invitation and this as of the beginning, famous lecturers with each meeting
- The creation of Groups surspecialized to take account of the evolution of Orthopedy and Traumatology; they are currently six: FUTURA (THP), AGREG ("TKP) GRAAL (Ligaments of the knee), TALUS (Foot), VENUS (Shoulder and upper limb), PROBIOMATERIA and a group of TRAUMA are in the course of constitution. For four years, an unifying recurring theme for the roundtables has allowed during the widened meeting, to make take part all or if not a majority of groups in the definite subject. Each group organizes moreover of the meetings and courses throughout the year, but in Paris or in other French towns.
- The conjunction scientific work and ski, from the beginning desired by Thierry HERMANN, who allows to join together in time and unity of place the participants in a relaxed casual environment (in pullover), facilitating the abstract exchanges and the discussions, while stimulating the minds by the practice of a filling with enthusiasm sport.
- Last but not least, by the publication of work of the GECO, initially in the form of printed reports, then by the participation, like cofounder of scientific magazine EJOST published at Springer France, become an international magazine in English language, referred in SCOPUS, Impact Factor and about to be in MEDLINE. GECO also published several books at SPRINGER.

35 years already! Long life with the GECO for the 35 next years!