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EDITORIAL

SEVERAL THOUSANDS YEARS AGO veterinary dermatology was in its infancy. In fact, vets as such were unknown, but in most communities someone with a particular empathy with animals and an armentarium of lore and herbs would have filled the niche. Many were both knowledgeable and skilled - some skin diseases, particularly infectious or parasitic, were well known and effectively managed. In later years, as society divorced itself from the natural order, they were often persecuted as witches or sorcerers, and much of this knowledge was lost. It is only recently we have begun to rediscover some of the potential of traditional therapy.

So where do we stand after 1000 years? Have we but come full circle? The answer is yes and no. Veterinary medicine is now a respected scientific discipline. Veterinary dermatology was one of the first specialities to be recognised and one only has to compare the first and fifth editions of *Small Animal Dermatology* to realise how far we have come since then. At the edge of the 21st century the science of veterinary dermatology is in a healthy state. Academia and practice provide comprehensive referral facilities, training and investigation. In basic and applied research we are beginning to catch up with human dermatology. Enthusiastic national and international societies keep up the momentum and disseminate ideas. And the yet the importance of the art of practising veterinary dermatology is also recognised. Individually tailored treatments, multi-valent therapy, and an holistic approach are widely recommended and interest is growing in traditional Chinese medicine, herbal and other alternative therapies. Progress with an open mind is the key to the future.

Despite the hype, little will have actually changed on 1st January 2000 (millennium bugs permitting). However it is a useful milestone along the way, giving us an opportunity to reflect on the past and look forward to an exciting future.

Abstract from the Minutes of the AGM of the ESVD

BY *Antonella Vercelli* (ESVD Secretary, Torino, Italy)

THE AGM was held on Friday 13th August 1999 at the Marina Congress Centre in Helsinki. 51 full members from different countries of Europe participated. The meeting was opened by the ESVD president Dominique Heripret who thanked Leena Sajonmaa-Kouloumies for all her work during the last year for organising this successful congress in Helsinki. Special thanks were also given to all the sponsors of the meeting.

News from the treasurer

The treasurer, Trevor Whitbread, presented a report analysing the cost of the new secretary and the income of the congress organisations. The treasurer also announced that a UK bank account has been opened and that soon it will be possible to have a **credit card account** in Euros. Next year there will be a surcharge similar to that of Eurocheques (more or less 10 Euros) for credit card payments, but this will be cheaper than using bank transfer. It was also decided that there will be a **surcharge for delayed payments**.

New members

Margreet Vroom informed the participants about the state of the membership.

There are now 582 members - 5 were deleted and 22 new members joined in 1999.

There are now 191 full members, including the following who were elected at the AGM:

- Jaume Altimra Palau, Spain
- Benoît Coppé, France
- Boel Engen, Norway
- Ivan Fileccia, Italy
- Bernard Mignon, Belgium
- Illan Skorinsky, Israel
- Karin Taglinger, United Kingdom
- Gila Zur, USA

Winners of the ESVD Grant

Chiara Noli, the publication secretary, spoke about the ESVD Grant. Thierry Olivry and Hilary Jackson were awarded the grant this year with their proposal "Ulcerative dermatitis and dermatomyositis in the Shetland Sheepdog and Collie: an immune pathological and immunohistochemical Comparison". Congratulations!

New Editors for the ESVD Bulletin and Veterinary Dermatology

Chiara also thanked the new editors of the ESVD Bulletin and Veterinary Dermatology, Tim Nuttal and Ross Bond, respectively. Special thanks were given to Chris Chesney and Ian Mason for their work as past editors of the Bulletin and of Vet Derm. Guidelines have now been established for the Bulletin, which will be published twice a year in April and November. Finally, Chiara asked the members to check their address in the Annual Report and send any corrections to Margreet Vroom.

Future Meetings

In 2001 Flemming Christensen will be the local organiser of the annual **ESVD Congress** in Copenhagen. For 2002 Nice was chosen.

Zeinab Alhaidari informed the members about the planned **ESVD Workshops**. She reminded delegates of the therapeutics workshop in Italy in October and the immunodermatology course in France at Saint Paul de Vence from 23rd-26th March 2000.

In 2001 a dermatopathology course will be held in London with David Lloyd as local organiser, and in the same year courses in feline dermatology (in the Netherlands) and oncology (in France) are planned.

Change of ESVD Constitution

Antonella Vercelli reported the results of the vote for the change of ESVD constitution (see separate report in this bulletin). Dominique Heripret reported that the legal changes to the ESVD constitution will be made and that a copy of the constitution will be sent to every member when ready. The present board will not be reduced by one member and it will last for three years.

The next AGM

The next AGM will take place during the British Veterinary Dermatology Study Group meeting from 7th-8th October 2000 in Harrogate, England. ESVD will not organise this meeting but members were encouraged to participate in this European event and to attend the World Congress of Veterinary Dermatology in San Francisco. The AGM was approved by the members present and Dominique Heripret closed the meeting with the word "KIITOS" which means thank you in Finnish.

Results of the Postal Vote for the Changes to the ESVD Constitution

A LETTER WAS sent to full members in January 1999 asking them to vote with a cross "yes" or "no" (according to their choice) on 4 proposals for changes to the ESVD constitution.

The deadline for return of the postal voting forms was 15th of March 1999.

Dr. Antonella Vercelli was charged with collating the results and received 108 voting forms.

Dr. Lloyd abstained completely from the vote considering that the method of voting with a cross was unclear to members from some European countries.

Three voting forms were not included because the members cancelled yes or no instead of placing a cross (making their choice equivocal).

104 voting forms were examined in total.

Proposal no. 1

This was divided in two parts:

i) Three year terms will be adopted for officers

This was approved by 96 members, 5 didn't approve and 3 abstained from the vote.

ii) This will be retrospective for the present board

This was approved by 87 members, 12 didn't approve and 5 abstained from the vote.

Proposal no. 2

This was also divided in two parts:

i) The position of Vice President should be renamed Research and Publication Secretary

This was approved by 89 members, 12 didn't approve and 3 abstained from the vote.

ii) The Board will be reduced by one member such that it would comprise: President, Treasurer, Secretary, Research and Publication Secretary, Further Education Secretary and Past President. Thus we would be able to hire a part time secretary.

This was approved by 96 members, 7 didn't approve and 1 abstained from the vote.

Proposal no. 3

Officers (except the President) may succeed themselves in office without limitation, subject to election.

This was approved by 68 members, 32 didn't approve and 4 abstained from the vote.

Proposal no. 4

This was divided in two parts:

i) There should be no change in membership status

This was approved by 72 members, 19 didn't approve and 13 abstained from the vote.

ii) The categories of Full and Associated Member should be merged

This was approved by 33 members, 59 didn't approve and 12 abstained from the vote.

The conclusions of the postal vote were as follows:

- Officers would be elected for three years instead of two.
- The position of Vice President will be renamed Research and Publication Secretary.
- The board will be reduced by one member.
- The board will hire a part-time secretary.
- We will keep the distinction between Full Membership and Associate Membership.

Tales from 16th Annual Congress of the ESVD-ECVD

THE 16th ANNUAL CONGRESS of the ESVD-ECVD was held from 12th-14th August in Helsinki, the beautiful and historic capital of Finland. Finland, with the European Union presidency, was perhaps the most appropriate host for the last congress of the millennium. Relatively new to the EU, the Finns have wholeheartedly embraced Europe and their enthusiasm set the right tone for the meeting.

The main programme was split into parallel scientific and clinical sessions. In the scientific sessions the speakers succeeded in both giving a broad introduction and overview of their topics, within cutting edge presentations. Involvement of human specialists and comparative discussions were interesting and welcome, but particular mention should be made of Derek Knottenbelt, whose inflammatory comments on equine sarcoid set the fire alarms off! General and specialist practitioners were well catered for in the clinical sessions which covered the diagnosis and management of a range of conditions in depth.

The free communications were, as always, perhaps the most interesting part of the congress. These short sessions allow one to absorb a huge amount of new information quickly, as well as giving an insight into dermatology in practice, research and industry.

Social highlights included the reception in the city hall and the wonderful dinner dance in the 18th century sea fortress. Returning from the latter the Scottish contingent regaled Helsinki harbour with a stirring rendition of Flower of Scotland. Not to be outdone the Australians replied with Waltzing Matilda. Other memories include bathing in the Baltic at midnight, cooking sausages over an open fire, watching the sun go down over Helsinki's islands and, of course, the saunas.

Many thanks are due to Leena Saijonmaa-Koulumies and her team for organising this wonderful meeting at short notice. Thanks are also due to the sponsors, Leo, Academy of Finland, Finnair, Hills, Iams, Novartis, Orion, Schering-Plough and Virbac for their support.

Helsinki - The Residents' day

by *Silvia Auxilia* (Crema, Italy)

THIS YEAR'S RESIDENTS' DAY was intense, with plenty of factual content, yet still characterised by a nice, familiar atmosphere. Both sets of lectures by Keith Thoday and Claudia von Tscharner were very interesting. Keith Thoday's lecture was on the Part I Diploma process and he comprehensively covered the subject pointing out the main aspects and clarifying the ambiguous and more complex parts. Claudia von Tscharner's lectures were on the pattern analysis approach to the diagnosis of inflammatory diseases in dermatohistopathology. For every pattern, she showed sections that typically represented that specific inflammatory picture. Linking the morphological classification to the actual histopathological changes was a very effective and helpful approach. At the end of the lecture we were treated to an interactive discussion on a few cases with controversial diagnoses, presented by Claudia and Fabia

Scarpella. Finally, the day ended with the presentation of clinical communications by Laura Navarro, Didier Pin and Mieke Leistra which raised some questions and stimulated an interesting discussion.

During lunch we were even lucky enough to see the (quite cloudy, I'm afraid) eclipse! The day was rounded off with an excellent, and traditionally Finnish, meal over which further discussion continued and new relationships were forged across Europe.

We are very grateful to the organisers of the Residents' Study Day (Tim Nuttall, Mieke Leistra and Fabia Scarpella) for all their hard work in organising the day. Many thanks are also due to the speakers (Dr Keith Thoday and Dr Claudia von Tscharner) for their excellent presentations and material, and to the sponsors (Bayer and IAMS) and the ESVD for enabling this event to take place.

ESVD Equine Dermatology Workshop

Tuesday 21st July to Friday 24th July

Bedford Lodge Hotel, Newmarket, Suffolk, England

by *John H. C. Hutt* (Rochester, England)

THIS IS A DISCIPLINE in its infancy, and all the more fascinating for it. This was the second such workshop organised under the auspices of the ESVD.

Whilst it is evident that the body of knowledge and experience is growing rapidly, there still remains a paucity of clinical research and literature on the subject. Much of our current knowledge is still anecdotal, but the enthusiasm demonstrated for the subject last year in Newmarket, suggests that this will not remain the case for too much longer.

Speakers Valerie Fadok, Wayne Rosenkrantz, and Stephen White set forth a clinically orientated programme of lectures, which provided a framework for lively and interesting discussion on many points. This was an interactive course, with much useful input from delegates in the audience, demonstrating a wide range of experience.

Lectures, after an introduction on diagnostic approach, were divided along clinical grounds into sections on pruritus, nodular disease, scaling and crusting, pigmentary disorders, alopecia and hirsutism. In addition congenital skin diseases were covered, and a final discussion on the confusing "grease heal" syndrome was appended.

Organisers Janet Littlewood and Jane Coatesworth must be thanked, and also commended for the thoughtful social programme, which rose above the now common practice of putting everyone in the hands

of local tour operators and forgetting about them. Overall, this was a useful and well-structured workshop, but one wonders how far we are away from the day when a course under this banner must endure the prefix "aspects of".

Immunology in Provence

THERE ARE still places available for the immunodermatology workshop in the Southern French village of Saint Paul de Vence, close to Nice and the airport. The speakers are Verena K. Affolter from the University of California (sponsored by Novartis) and Thierry Olivry from North Carolina University (sponsored by Virbac). They will lecture about the immune system and how to study it, the pathogenesis of canine atopic dermatitis, mechanisms of autoimmunity and selected autoimmune diseases of the epidermis, BMZ and hair follicle, lupus, lymphocytic and histiocytic proliferative disorders in cats and dogs.

Venue

Hotel le Mas d'Artigny

06570 - Saint Paul de Vence - France.

Fax: ++33 493 32 95 36

E-mail: mas.artigny@wanadoo.fr

SINGLE ROOMS

- 650 FRF (99.24 euros) per person, per night

DOUBLE ROOMS

- 400 FRF (60.98 euros) per person, per night

If you wish to share, please let us know and we will circulate a list.

Delegates should book rooms directly with the hotel.

Registration

- Deadline for registrations: **January 31st 2000**
- Registrations will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. Confirmations will be sent on receipt of the registration form and a bank transfer copy. Priority will be given to ESVD members; non members will be put on a waiting list and notified 3 months prior to the workshop.
- ESVD members - 350 euros (2300 FRF)
- Non ESVD members - 455 euros (3000 FRF)

These fees have been made possible with the partnership of our sponsors. In addition to those mentioned in the program the proceedings are sponsored by Merial and leaflets by Virbac France.

Further Information

Zeineb Alhaidari, Clinique Vétérinaire, Cidex 248 - RN 85, 06330 Roquefort les Pins, France.

Phone - ++33 493 77 14 12, Fax - ++33 493 77 62 48 - E-mail - zalhaidari@aol.com

ESVD Workshops tentatively planned

2001 May - Dermatopathology - London (UK)
2001 August - Deline Dermatology -
Amsterdam (NL)
2002 Clinical Pathology - Nantes (F)

2002 Equine Dermatology - Newmarket (UK)
2002 Exotic Dermatology - Utrecht (NL)
2003 Skin Biology - Reichenau (CH)
2003 Canine Dermatology - Copenhagen (DK)

National Dermatology Meetings in the Year 2000

SWEDISH VETERINARY DERMATOLOGY STUDY GROUP

Meetings planned for 2000 include:

- Cytology with wet lab in January
(limited number of participants)
Erik Teske (in English)
- Endocrinology in Stockholm in March
Ad Rijnberk (in English)

PLEASE CONTACT THE SVDSG SECRETARY FOR FURTHER
DETAILS:

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BRITISH VETERINARY DERMATOLOGY STUDY GROUP

Spring meeting - 5th April 2000 in Birmingham -

Allergens and antigens: from food to pollen, house dust mites and bacterial superantigens

- Ewan A. Ferguson BVMS DVD MRCVS
(Royal Veterinary College)
Environmental allergens: the role of pollens
- Prof. Jonathan R. Lamb, MA PhD FRCPath
(University of Edinburgh)
Regulation of immune responses to allergens.
- Dr. Merle E. Olson DVM MSc
(University of Calgary)
*Food Allergies in Dogs: Insights into Pathogenesis,
Prevention and Treatment*
- Steven C. Shaw BVetMed CertSAD MRCVS
(Animal Health Trust)
*Allergic disease in dogs: house dust mite allergens,
recent developments I.*
- Dr. Catherine McCall D. Phil
(Heska Corporation)
*Allergy to HDM in the cat - recent developments
in allergen identification*
- Tim Nuttall BSc BVSc CertVD MRCVS
(Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies)
*Allergic disease in dogs: house dust mite allergens,
recent developments II.*
- Dr. Michael J. Day
BSc BVMS (Hons) PhD FASM DipECVP
MRC Path FRCVS (University of Bristol)
Superantigens in allergic skin disease

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER PLEASE
CONTACT KAREN BATES OF CLASS EVENTS:

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The cost of £ 30.00 (48.00 euro) for BVDSG
members and £ 45.00 (72.00 euro) for non-
members, includes coffee and tea breaks, lunch
and a copy of the proceedings.

N.B. - The 2000 ESVD AGM will be held at the autumn meeting of the BVDSG in Harrogate, England,
7th-8th October. Further details will be in the April Bulletin.

An ESVD Itch Scale

by *Christopher Chesney* (Exeter, England)

The Problem

The itch, la demangaison, die Kratze, is a phenomenon well known to all dermatologists. However, it is very hard to quantify in humans, even more so in animals. Yet when we treat an animal, we need to know if it is getting better, to know if the itch is lessened. A scale would be useful, and some dermatologists have tried to devise one in which the animal's behaviour is observed, and related to the perceived level of itch suffered by the animal.

Among ESVD members there is much experience of observing itchy animals. Perhaps we could put our knowledge together, and so devise a scale which all would understand and agree. This would help each of us to "measure" the itchiness of our patients, would simplify the writing of reports, and allow comparison between reports.

The Plan

I would like everyone reading the ESVD Bulletin to write down their description of six levels of itchiness which they would describe in the dog.

This must range from the "0", the normal dog, to "5", the worst itch you can imagine (e.g. severe infestation with *Sarcoptes scabiei*). For each level give a short sentence which describes the behaviour of a dog with each level of itch.

FOR EXAMPLE:

- 0 = Normal dog behaviour, grooms normally
- 1 = Licks, chews or scratches occasionally, more than a normal dog
- 2 = etc.

(Please write in English only - sorry!)

Your completed form should then be e-mailed or sent by fax to Christopher Chesney:

- e-mail chris.chesney@tesco.net
- Fax No. +44 (0)1392 460191

All the descriptions will be analysed, in the hope that a consensus of agreed descriptions will emerge. This will be written up as a paper to be submitted for publication in *Veterinary Dermatology*.

Please help by contributing your thoughts. Thank you.

Doing an exam again - Experiences of the ECVD Diploma, Part One

by *Erik Jan Tjalsma* (The Netherlands)

IN MID-JUNE nine practitioners from five European countries went to Nantes in France to participate in the part I examination of the ECVD Diploma. On Monday 14th we met in the waiting room of the Dermatology Clinic of the State Veterinary School in Nantes. Just as in former days of exams, the atmosphere was a little tense!

After two members of the examination committee (Dr. Wisselink and Prof. Bordeau) welcomed us, we started with the multiple choice questions. After coffee, there were the short answer questions. The overall impression was that the questions were fair and reasonable. The nervousness gradually faded until the practical session in the afternoon.

This took years off my life! Twenty microscopy questions and allergy test results, with five minutes per item. The morning's moderate optimism disappeared.

The following day the examination committee organised two live patients for each candidate - no mean achievement, given last year's problems. Personally, I saw a Boxer with calcinosis cutis and a hunting dog with scabies contracted from ferrets (I hope!).

In the evening we had a friendly and relaxed farewell dinner in a superb restaurant with Marinus Wisselink and Ian Mason.

Within a week we got THE LETTER - we all passed!

RESEARCH AWARD

Sponsored by the European Society of Veterinary Dermatology

The ESVD wishes to encourage high standards in all aspects of veterinary dermatology and to promote the development of related research. An annual research grant is awarded by the ESVD for basic or clinical research in veterinary dermatology. Each grant is for 5,000 Euro. Projects are usually expected to be of one to two years duration.

Applicants will be expected to propose a project of scientific merit that is applicable to veterinary dermatology. Preference will be given to novel proposals, including the development of pilot studies, but applications for support of an identifiable component of ongoing research work will be considered. It is not the intention to provide funds for single items of capital expenditure.

All applications will be subject to blinded peer review and must include background information, project aims and objectives, project design and specific methods and budget, together with discussion of the relevance of the proposed work to veterinary dermatology. Successful applicants will be expected to submit their results for publication in *Veterinary Dermatology* and to present their findings to ESVD members at the annual congress.

Proposals should be submitted by **April 1st 2000** for consideration by the grant awarding committee. Grants are evaluated on scientific merit, feasibility, and relevance. The award will be announced at the next AGM of the Society. Guidelines for proposal may be obtained from, and research proposals should be sent to, the current ESVD grant and publications secretary:

Chiara Noli, Via Sismondi 62, 20133 Milano, Italy.