

Report on the Polystan Award

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In July, 1974, in Dallas Texas, I was honored with the first annual Polystan Educational award. The award was given to the author technician of the most educational paper published in the Journal of Extracorporeal Technology during 1974.

The content of the award from Polystan was an all expenses paid, two week trip to Europe to visit medical centers and observe cardiac surgery and perfusion techniques in use in Europe and England. My trip began in Copenhagen, Denmark where Polystan has its headquarters. I was met there by Mr. Colin Green, Polystan's sales manager, and thus began a most interesting and relaxing week of tours, exotic meals, making of new friends, hospital visits, more exotic meals, and for me, the most exciting part, feeling a different way of life. I enjoyed the different customs very much.

A most rewarding experience was to meet the President of Polystan, Mr. Erik Kyvsgaard. He was a delightful host and possessed a sparkling personality. To him and to all the people of Polystan I say, TAK!

After a week in Denmark my trip continued on into Germany. I went by train from Copenhagen to Gottingham, Germany. At this point I must relate a funny story about that trip. My train ticket contained vouchers for all the stops I would make between Hanover, where I first boarded the train, and Zurich, my last train stop. It was somewhat confusing to me since it was all printed in German. I began to worry when I made a train change in Hanover, (4 minutes between trains) since I was not certain the train I boarded was the correct one. But, I got on anyway. My anxiety mounted and I began to look for a conductor to clarify my situation. To my dismay, none of the conductors spoke English and I spoke no German. I tried to make myself understood by saying the name of my next stop, Gottingen. The name didn't come out properly and the conductor walked away with a strange look on his face. My anxiety was now at a peak and I decided to draw a block map and write in the names of the cities I would visit and show it to the conductor. With my map in hand, I went to locate the conductor. When I found him, he too was looking at a map of the train route trying desperately to find a place like the one I had said I wanted to go to. I showed him my map and pointed to the name Gottingen. What followed was some laughter and my first grammar lesson in German. I had practiced saying the name Gottingen so much that I got it all wrong. To my knowledge there is no place on the face of the earth with a name like the one I was saying. At least the train I was on didn't go there. I did however get to Gottingen, and that is where I wanted to be.

In Gottingen, I was met by Mr. Michael Barrett, a Polystan representative for that area. After a good night's sleep, the next day we visited the University Hospital where I observed two cardiac surgery procedures. In Gottingen, as throughout Europe, I found perfusion techniques to be excellent and in most respects, very similar to those I have observed in the U.S. I was particularly impressed with the amount and variety of monitoring equipment in the operating rooms. The chief perfusionist at the hospital was a Mr. Bock. I was privileged to review some research work which he had done in the area of filtration. I hope his data will appear in the

Journal soon for it was well done and a meaningful work. Later that evening I joined the entire perfusion team for a meal and the German version of bowling. My thanks to all of them for an informative and enjoyable stay in Gottingen, or whatever the name of that city is.

Next day, off to Nuremberg to visit the University Hospital in Erlangen. I was escorted by Mr. Katz who represented Polystan. At Erlangen, I was fortunate to find the surgeons spoke excellent English and I enjoyed long chats with them about the U. S., for both surgeons I met there had lived and done part of their training in the States. Erlangen is one of the largest centers in Germany for cardiac surgery and their case load was a routine four or more cases a day. The perfusion techniques were styled after those used by Dr. Cooley in Houston. I found the program at Erlangen to be very smooth and efficient. I enjoyed the discussions about the differences between Europe and the U. S. on a variety of topics, medical and otherwise.

From Erlangen, I went next to Zurich, Switzerland. There I was met by Mr. Billinger. We visited the Kanton Hospital in Zurich where much of the time was spent touring the research facilities of the hospital. I was most impressed by the work and the laboratory spaces there. The clinical cardiac surgery program was temporarily shut down so I was unable to observe any cases.

I was scheduled to leave for London at 1:00 P.M. the next day. My host, Mr. Bollinger, a private pilot, suggested we spend the morning flying through the Alps in his plane. It was a flight without comparison for me. The breath-taking beauty of the Alps was fantastic. I shall never forget it. My thanks to Mr. Bollinger.

From the beauty of Zurich, I was next off on the last leg of my trip. I flew to London England, the land of my ancestors. I looked forward to England because it was the first English speaking country on my trip. Further, I was to have a weekend free to sightsee.

I was met in London by Mr. Graham Hall and escorted to my hotel. The next day was a working day and we visited the National Heart Hospital to observe two cases. Later that evening we went to Mr. Hall's favorite restaurant for a typical English meal. The restaurant was a place which few visitors to London would ever find. In this regard, my hosts were either natives or very familiar with the cities I visited and would take me places off the beaten track, a part of the trip I enjoyed most for it allowed me to become a part of a culture different than that of the U. S.

On Saturday, my free day, to sightsee, I walked about 20 miles. I began at the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace and saw all the major points of interest on foot. As I look back on that day I feel that walking was the best way to see the city. I would have missed many interesting sights had I gone by bus or taxi.

On Sunday, Mr. Hall and his lovely wife and I went to Cambridge University. Cambridge is a beautiful city and truly a university town. Campus buildings are everywhere, interspersed with shops and dwellings. In the afternoon, we all went punting on the canals surrounding the city and campus. A home cooked meal with the Halls was the end of a perfect day.

Monday, Mr. Hall and I visited Brompton Hospital in London. Brompton was interesting because there they used a disc oxygenator on some cases. It was the only hospital I visited where the discs were used. My experience with discs has always

suggested enormous priming volumes and a huge cleaning chore. However the priming volume was comparable to most disposable bubble oxygenators and the discs were disposable.

Tuesday was a day of mixed emotions for I was to depart for the States. I was anxious to return to my home and family and sad to leave all the beautiful people and places in Europe and England.

As I look back upon the trip, I feel a warm glow for the many kind technicians with whom I shared ideas, techniques and cultures, the surgeons with whom I chatted, my warm and giving hosts in each country I visited and the beauty of Europe. My fond hope is to return one day to Europe and re-establish these friendships.

To Erik Kyvsgaard, Jon Mungsfeldt, Colin Green; to all of the people of Polystan for this magnificent award, TAK.

Comment from Canada

Your editor has very kindly offered to print a few words from the north. I would like to first congratulate AmSECT on their superb publications — The Journal and AmSECT News. Both editorial boards have consistently maintained an excellent professional and informative publication, and are to be commended.

As you may know, the Canadian Society of Extracorporeal Circulation Technicians (CanSECT) became the Canadian Society of Perfusionists (CSP) early in November of 1974. The name had been changed officially since 1972, and the present Board of Directors felt that it was time that membership became acquainted with their legal name. It has been felt for some time that unions are becoming increasingly stronger in Canada — even within the field of medicine — and that by referring to ourselves as “Extracorporeal Technicians” or “Pump Techs” that we could possibly be forced into a union with technicians. It is hoped that by calling ourselves “Perfusionists” that we may remain a professional entity. Although the Canadian society has been in existence almost as long as its American counterpart, we are now only beginning to organize in such a way to function adequately for our members. It is very fortunate that there exists a strong liaison between the American and Canadian societies, as Canada has problems ahead and the help and advice received from across the border is invaluable.

I would like to mention that our annual convention will be held in Toronto, in October, and we would welcome papers and attendance from any member of AmSECT. Toronto is a beautiful city — and one you can still freely walk in at night! If you can possibly attend, I know you will enjoy yourself.

I would like to thank the Journal for the privilege of a comment from Canada, and extend our wishes for continued success in all of your endeavours.

Talley Hill