

## **This is how it began**

### **My memories**

It was when I was participating actively in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Combined Meeting of the Foot and Ankle Surgeons organised from 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> of September 1998 in Venice, Italy that for the first time I had come across an idea of a foot-focused society. I was the only participant and at the same time the only presenter from Poland. During the meeting I met two its organisers, Professor Francisco Malerba and Professor Sandro Giannini, well known not only in their own country but also abroad. Next similar meeting that I participated in was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Joint Meeting of International Federation of Foot and Ankle Societies (IFFAS) that also took place in Italy, however this time in Naples from 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> of September 2005. At this meeting Professor Heino Kuester, president of the European Foot and Ankle Society (EFAS), inspired me to create a Polish foot and ankle society. Shortly, in reply to this idea, the 1<sup>st</sup> Foot and Ankle Meeting was organised in Jastarnia, Poland from 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> of April 2007. Place of the meeting, Jastarnia, was my choice as I am very fond of Kaszuby region and especially of Jastarnia in the Hel Peninsula. The interest that the conference attracted was greater than I expected. The meeting was also promoted personally by Professor Kuester during his speeches both at the EFAS meeting in Prague as well as at the PTOiTr meeting in Katowice in 2006. The Jastarnia meeting hosted about 130 participants, including several guests from abroad as well as a couple of significant medical companies interested in entering a new market and dealing with production of foot surgical medical equipment. During the conference over 30 presentations were made with the leading one by Professor Heino Kuester from Germany. Already during this first Jastarnia meeting its participants decided to establish the Polish Foot and Ankle Society (PFAS). However, it was only in September 2008 after all the legal conditions had been fulfilled including the preparation of the statute that we were officially informed by the court about creation of the Society. The author of these memories was chosen to be its first president. At this point I would like to thank Doctor Kazimierz Kowalski, at that time still from Belgium, who provided me with statutes of the French societies as well as Mr Andrzej Koralewski who prepared an application to the court. Next 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting took place in 2008 and in 2010 at the same place as the first one i.e. in Dom Zdrojowy Hotel in Jastarnia.

For our meetings a rule of “one place and one room” has been established as well as of inviting the lecturers representing diagnostics, treatment and physiotherapy.

At all PFAS meetings participated the lecturers invited especially for this occasion from Poland, Europe and the USA. In 2007 it was Andrzej Czamara (Wrocław, Poland), Marcin Dzanach (Poznań, Poland) and already mentioned Heino Kuester (Germany); in 2008 Thanos Badekas (Greece), Luis S. Barouk (France), Andrzej Czamara (Wrocław, Poland), Mark Davies (UK), Steven Haddad (USA) and Rhys Thomas (UK) ; in 2010 Zbigniew Czyrny (Warsaw, Poland), Marcin Dzanach (Poznań, Poland) and Witold Dzudziński (Poznań, Poland). As a result of flight disruptions caused by the volcano eruption in Iceland, Michel Maestro (Monaco) and Christopher Piat (France) did not manage to join us. All the lectures presented by the invited guests were published in full version in special editions of *the Journal of Orthopaedics Trauma Surgery and Related Research* ([www.medicalproject.com.pl](http://www.medicalproject.com.pl)) together with the summaries of the works accepted for presentation. In view of a successful co-operation with the publisher, the *Journal* has obtained a recommendation of our Society. All the meetings in Jastarnia were organised by PCO-Ortopedia Dziecięca Plus Sp. z.o.o.