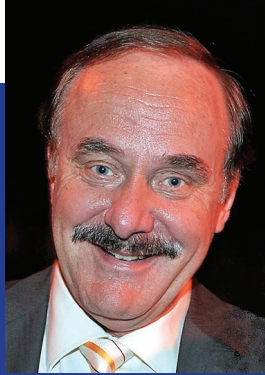


The Presidents



1998_Thomas Brandt
Munich, Germany

1. Reasons for joining the ENS

It was at the second Meeting of the ENS in Brighton in 1990 after the V Gordon Holmes lecture that the first president PK Thomas asked me if I would be interested in joining the Executive Board of the Society. I enthusiastically replied that I was interested, for the Brighton Meeting had already met all the major aims of its founding members. These aims included the establishment of individual clinical scientific quality counts, the vigorous exchange of ideas, cooperation and friendship, and last but not least the promotion of young scientists within a framework of relevant values and financial support.

2. On the values and missions of the ENS

The yearly meetings of the Executive Board remain unforgettable. Gerald Said organized them to take place in Paris in December. They were characterized by an atmosphere of lively, open-minded discussions of all neurological topics, especially the planning of the scientific and teaching program of the next ENS meeting. In the evening the Executive Committee meetings always culminated in a late dinner, during which many young neurological friendships developed deep and long-lasting roots.

3. Important achievements during my presidency

In retrospect I feel that achievements during my mandate were somewhat mixed. There were outstanding highlights like the organization of the great ENS meeting in Munich in 1995 and the privilege of serving as President in 1998 and as Co-Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Neurology for 10 years. Less satisfying were the endless discussions of whether to merge or not to merge with the EFNS. At that time three major barriers prevented unification: first, each organization had a fundamentally different structure (individual membership in the ENS as opposed to national delegates to the EFNS); second, there were overriding personal interests and personal positions to be defended; and third, the problems of competing financial support kept growing, especially from the pharmaceutical industry. However, all has been resolved and we have all made it on board. Now we are looking forward to the first meeting of the European Academy of Neurology in Berlin in 2015. Still alive, the ENS and the EFNS have both made unique contributions that reflect their independent histories. Metaphorically speaking, two independent plants have been transformed by the horticultural process of grafting into a new plant - the European Academy. It combines the strong qualities of the old with the promise of the new. As we know, Nature often creates the exceptional at such turning points. We wish it a long, productive life.