

## **History of the European Association of Tissue Banks (EATB)**

The history of the EATB is strongly linked to the development of tissue banking itself. The United States Navy Tissue Bank is generally accepted as the first full tissue banking service of its kind in the world. That Bank was established in 1949 by Dr. George Hyatt, an orthopaedic surgeon at the Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland and it established standards which were the template for many that are in use today. In a few years additional regional tissue banks were established in Europe as well. Those first European regional and national tissue banks were established in the former Czechoslovakia (Hradec Kralove) in 1952, the former German Democratic Republic (Berlin) in 1956, in Great Britain (Leeds, Yorkshire) 1955 and in Poland (Warsaw) in 1962. The variety of preserved and transplanted tissue and cells increased rapidly; bone, skin, heart valves, cardiovascular tissue and sperm as well as blood components and blood products were banked, transplanted and transfused. Preservation methods were further refined or newly introduced: deep-freezing, cryopreservation, freeze-drying.

Rapid developments over the following decades presented tissue banks with opportunities and challenges not faced before. The rising demand in particular for allogeneic materials in both conventional form and increasingly with enhanced biological qualities together with progress in science and technology required new forms of communication and co-operation. These developments went hand in hand with the need for co-operation between tissue banks, the interfacing of tissue banking with other important and relevant disciplines including ethics, innovative fields of medicine, biology and technology and the international development of tissue banking standards. This inevitably led to developments of regulation of provision of human materials for transplantation. Nevertheless, standards and ethical aspects can only be developed on the foundation of expertise and an evidence base. Clearly specialists and other stakeholders should be involved in the elaboration of guidance documents and it became apparent that there was a compelling role for specialist societies to represent their members to external organisations particularly to Governments and their regulatory bodies which carry responsibility for the introduction of quality and safety statutory measures into national and supra-national systems. Clearly this applies in Europe as well as elsewhere.

The American Association of Tissue Banks played a pioneering role in developing advocacy for their stakeholders. The Asian Pacific Association of Surgical Tissue

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Banking followed. Due to the “divided world” of those times, in particular the division of Europe into East and West a common European Organisation covering the entire fields of tissue banking was too challenging before the political changes at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s.

On the occasion of the first European Conference on Tissue Banking in Berlin, October 1991, 280 participants from 18 European countries agreed to establish a European scientific/professional Organisation for tissue bank professionals, scientists and clinicians working in the fields of donation, processing and transplantation of cells and tissues and that this organisation would be called the European Association of Tissue Banks (EATB).

### 1st European Conference on Tissue Banking

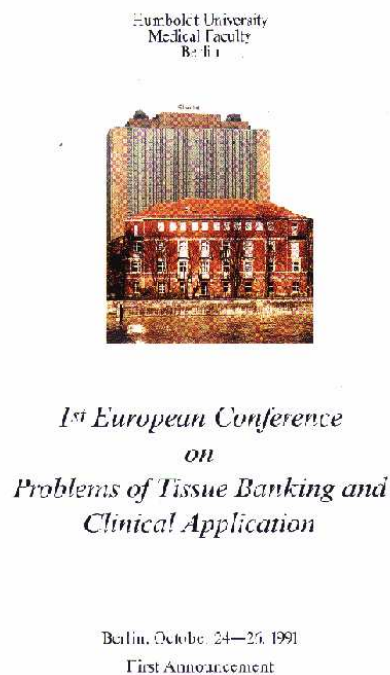


Fig. 1: Poster of the 1th European Conference on Tissue Banking, October 24 – 25, 1991, Berlin, Germany

At the 24<sup>th</sup> of October the participants of the conference elected a Steering Committee (J. Komender (Poland), P. Mericka (Czechoslovakia), G. O. Phillips

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(U.K.), D. Poitout (France), N. Triantafyllou (Greece) and R. von Versen (Germany) to organise the foundation of the Association.



Fig.2: Picture taken after closing of the first European Conference on Tissue Banking 1991 in Berlin, Charité Hospital, (left to right) Per Aspenberg (Sweden), Janusz Komender (Poland), Rüdiger von Versen (Germany), Glyn o. Phillips (United Kingdom), Pavel Mericka (Czechoslovakia), Hans Burchardt (USA), Nicolas Triantafyllou (Greece)

This Committee prepared draft By Laws for the EATB. In the six month after the Berlin conference these By Laws were distributed for discussion to about 1000 tissue bankers, surgeons and other stakeholders in tissue banking or clinical use of tissue grafts. The Steering Committee received responses with suggestions from individuals, institutions and organisations from 18 European countries. The over-arching aims of the fledgling organisation are summarised below:

*"The objectives and powers of the Association are as follows:*

*The Association is organised exclusively for charitable, educational and scientific purposes. The Association shall promote cooperation, research and developments in the area of Tissue*

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*Banking and related sciences in Europe. The aims of the Association are:*

- *international coordination;*
- *international standardization;*
- *exchange of experience;*
- *cooperation”*

The revised By Laws were finalised at a satellite meeting of the 5th World Congress on Locomotor Tissue Banking (June 1992, Marseille) organised by Dominique Poitout. At the 13th of June in Marseille the formal foundation of the EATB took place.

The participants of the founding meeting agreed the EATB By Laws and elected an EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE comprised of the EATB Board and National Representatives. The members of the first Board were:

R. von Versen, President (Germany)

Dominique Poitout, 1st Vice President (France)

Janusz Komender, 2nd Vice President (Poland)

Pavel Mericka, Minutes Secretary (Czechoslovakia)

Heinz Winkler, Secretary General (Austria)

Glyn O. Phillips, Treasurer (U.K.)

There were 27 founding members representing 17 countries. Nine months after its foundation the EATB had grown to 120 members from 21 countries and in 1998 it had 300 members from 46 countries worldwide and these are detailed in Table 1.

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**Table. 1: EATB members representing 46 countries worldwide (1998)**

European Countries	Non-European Countries
Austria	Argentina
Belgium	Australia
Czech Republic	PR China
Denmark	Cuba
Estonia	Egypt
Germany	Israel
Finland	Japan
France	Malaysia
Greece	Mexico
Hungary	New Zealand
Ireland	Pakistan
Italy	Philippines
Latvia	Saudi Arabia
Lithuania	Singapore
Macedonia	Sri Lanka
Poland	Thailand
Portugal	U.S.A.
Romania	Uruguay
Slovak Republic	Vietnam
Spain	
Russia	

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Sweden	
Switzerland	
The Netherlands	
Turkey	
Ukraine	
United Kingdom	

The Members of Councils and Standing Committees were elected one year later at the 2<sup>nd</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking in Athens (May 5 – 8, 1993) and these are detailed in Table 2.

**Table. 2. Committees and Councils established in 1993**

Committees	Councils
Ethics and Legal C.	Musculoskeletal C.
Scientific C.	Heart Valve C.
Education C.	Ocular C.
Accreditation and Membership C.	Skin C.
Standards C.	Reproductive C.
Finance C.	Tissue Bank (general) C.

By September 1992 the Founding President presented the formation of the EATB to the American Association of Tissue Banks (AATB) at its 16<sup>th</sup> AATB Meeting in San Diego. This initiated a fruitful co-operation between the two organisations. The first discussions commenced about initiating a World Conference on Tissue Banking to include the Asian Pacific Association of Surgical Tissue Banks represented by Moritoshi Itoman (Japan). The first World Conference on Tissue Banking was held 1996 in Brisbane, Australia.

The EATB has been guided in its early days by a series of Boards headed by the EATB president and the Presidents and Treasurers of the EATB from inception to date are listed below in Table 3.

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**Table 3 Presidents and Treasurers of the EATB**

Date	Name of President	Town of Origin	Name of Treasurer	Town of Origin
1992 - 2001	Rudiger von Versen	Berlin, Germany	Glyn O. Phillips	Cardiff, UK
2001- 2003	Moishe Salai	Tel Aviv, Israel	Anna Dziedzic-Goslawska	Warsaw, Poland
2003 - 2007	Jan Koller	Bratislava, Slovakia	Jaroslav Spatenka	Prague, Czech Republic
2003 - 2005			Jiri Adler	Brno, Czech Republic
2007 - 2009	Ruth Warwick	London, UK	Jaroslav Spatenka	Prague, Czech Republic

From these early beginnings EATB followed the principle of co-operation with other international, European and national scientific/professional organisations. This is illustrated by the attendance of such organisations in EATB Annual Congresses and in the elaboration of Common Standards such as those for Musculoskeletal Tissue Banking with the European Association for Musculoskeletal Tissue Banking (EAMST) and the collaboration with the European Burns Association which produced Skin Standards and the European Eye Bank Association.

There have been annual Conferences also termed Congresses since 1991 and they have been held all over Europe and the details of these are given in Table 4.

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**Tab. 4: Conferences**

Year	Conference	Venue	Landmarks
1991	1st European Conference on Tissue Banking	Berlin, Germany	Formation of Steering Committee
1992	2 <sup>nd</sup> World Congress on Locomotor Tissue Banking, Satellite Meeting	Marseille, France	Foundation of EATB and election of Executive Board
1993	2 <sup>nd</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking	Athens, Greece	
1994	3 <sup>rd</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking	Vienna, Austria	In co-operation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
1995	4 <sup>th</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking	Leuven, Belgium	In co-operation with the International Association of Law and Ethics
1996	5 <sup>th</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking	Berlin, Germany	In co-operation with France Cryo, International Institute of Refrigeration, Spanish Interdisciplinary Society of Cryobiology
1996	1 <sup>st</sup> World Congress of Tissue Banks	Brisbane, Australia	In co-operation with Asia Pacific Association of Surgical Tissue Banking (APASTB) and American Association of Tissue Banks
1997	6 <sup>th</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking	Edinburgh, U.K.	In co-operation with the British Association of Tissue Banks
1998	7 <sup>th</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking	Turku, Finland	In co-operation with the European Association of Musculo Skeletal Transplantation (EAMST)



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1999	8 <sup>th</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking and 2 <sup>nd</sup> World Congress on Tissue Banking	Warsaw, Poland	In co-operation with the American Association of Tissue Banks and the Asia Pacific Association of Surgical Tissue Banks and International Transplantation Society European Burns Association  European Eye Bank Association  European Association of Skeletal Transplantation  British Association of Tissue Banks  Israeli Association of Tissue Banks  Spanish Association of Tissue Banks  Spanish Interdisciplinary Society of Cryobiology
2000	9 <sup>th</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking	La Coruña, Spain	In co-operation with the Spanish Association of Tissue Banks
2001	10 <sup>th</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking	Eilat, Israel	In co-operation with the Israeli Society of Tissue Banking International Federation of Eye and Tissue banks (IFETB) European Eye Bank Association (EEBA) EAMST
2002	3 <sup>rd</sup> World Congress on Tissue banking	Boston, USA	AATB, APASTB, EATB
2002	11 <sup>th</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking	Bratislava, Slovak Republic	In co-operation with Slovak Medical Society
2002	EATB satellite meeting: Advances	Brno, Czech Republic	In co-operation with University Hospital Brno Tissue Bank

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	in Tissue Banking		
2003	12 <sup>th</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking	Brugge, Belgium	Postal voting for members of the Board was introduced
2004	13 <sup>th</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking	Prague, Czech Republic	In co-operation with Czech Transplant Society
2005	4 <sup>th</sup> World Congress on Tissue Banking	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	Latin American Association of Tissue Banks (ALABAT), AATB, APASTB, EATB
2005	14 <sup>th</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking	Florence, Italy	In co-operation with Tuscany Transplant Society EAMST
2006	15 <sup>th</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking	Varna, Bulgaria	In co-operation with the Bulgarian Association of Tissue Banks
2007	16 <sup>th</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking	Budapest, Hungary	
2008	5 <sup>th</sup> World Congress on Tissue Banking	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	APASTB (organiser), AATB, EATB, ALABAT, Australasia Tissue Baking Forum (ATBF) and Malaysian Society of Transplantation (MST) Malaysian Orthopaedic Association (MOA) Malaysian Nuclear Society (MNS)
2008	17 <sup>th</sup> European Conference on Tissue Banking	Edinburgh, U.K.	In co-operation with the British Association of Tissue Banks

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In Athens first drafts of EATB GENERAL STANDARDS and ETHICAL RULES were presented to the public, with the aim of harmonisation within the European countries. The following meeting in Vienna focused on the interface between advanced tissue banking, standardisation, quality control, legal and ethical aspects, biological and clinical sciences, to pool European and international knowledge and to strengthen worldwide cooperation.

In Athens the EATB resolved to support the IAEA programme on Radiation and Tissue Banking in the 13 countries of the Asia and Pacific Region. As a result of this cooperation the Conference in Vienna was designed as a joint meeting of the two organisations, providing an excellent opportunity to explore the specific application of ionising radiation for tissue sterilisation and irradiation effects on sterilised tissues.

It was a special pleasure for EATB to welcome tissue bankers and surgeons from America, Asia and the Pacific rim, representing the AATB and the Asia-Pacific Association of Surgical Tissue Banking.

This policy of co-operation with other organisations in Europe and further afield continued in subsequent years. International organisations as IAEA and European bodies (European Commission and Parliament, Council of Europe, and national governments began to involve EATB as the voice of tissue banking in Europe and took account of EATB Standards. Over the years the EATB has sought to honor distinguished individuals who have made a major contribution to the field of tissue banking by honorary membership and since 2007 with the Rudolf Klen Award. The individuals who have been honored in this way are listed in Table 5.

**Tab. 5: EATB Honorary Memberships & Rudolf Klen Award**

<b>Honorary Members</b>		
1993	Rudolf Klen	Czechoslovakia
1994	Nicolas Triantafyllou	Greece
1995	Frank Dexter	U.K.
1996	Kazimierz Ostrowski	Poland
1997	Yves Goffin	Belgium

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1998	Allan Aho	Finland
1999	Yongyudh Vrajaradul	Thailand
2000	Janusz Komender	Poland
2003	Rüdiger von Versen	Germany
2004	Glyn O. Phillips	United Kingdom
2006	Anna Dziedzic Goslawska posthumous	Poland
<b>Rudolf Klen Award</b>		
2008	Jan Koller	Slovak Republic

The early "History of EATB" will be completed by the time and continued by the description of the further progress of the Association.

**Rüdiger von Versen, M.D., D.M.Sc.**

Founding President