

## 100-year Anniversary of the Finnish Dermatological Society

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The Finnish Dermatological Society was founded on 19 May 1916, and is one of the country's oldest specialist associations. The association has a current membership of 378. The society's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated during a 3-day congress at Finlandia Hall, Helsinki (Fig. 1) on 19– 21 May 2016. Domestic and foreign leading experts were invited to give lectures on a diverse range of topics. *Docent Petteri Arstila* opened the lecture series on the subject of dermatological immunology, which inspired active discussion that continued throughout the congress. The day continued with Future Forum, comprising 8 panellists (Fig. 2), who painted a picture of the future of our specialty. Forum topics included the current social and health services reform, the future of research, digitalization and teledermatology. These subjects provoked refreshing cross-talk, and novel ideas from the panel, and strong discussion with the audience. In



Fig. 2. Future forum panelists and the host Tiina Merikanto (YLE).

general, the forum foresaw more advantages than threats from these new ideas. The Future Forum was followed by some wise and motivational words from *Archiater Risto Pelkonen* (Fig. 3), who emphasized the significance of scientific research, individual growth and cooperation.

The following day saw the launch of a chronicle book of our 100-year-old society, produced by *Associate Professor Outi Kortekangas-Savolainen*. The first chapters, on the foundation of our society, were new to many members, and certainly to most of younger generation. The audience followed this presentation with great interest and enthusiasm. A copy of the comprehensive chronicle book was afterwards given to all members. The day continued with lectures by *Professor Juha Kere*, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, on keratinocyte gene expression (Fig. 4), and *Professor Annamari Ranki*, Helsinki, on targeted treatment of cutaneous lymphomas. After lunch *Professor Susana Puig* (Fig. 1), Barcelona, Spain, gave us an eye-opening lecture about genetic factors in melanoma. The "take-home message" was that the genetic burden of melanoma is sub-



Fig. 1. Lecture atmosphere at the Finlandia Hall, melanoma lecture by Susana Puig.



Fig. 3. The wise words and greetings to the 100-year-old society by Archiater Risto Pelkonen.



Fig. 4. The dialogue between lecturers and audience was active. Professor Jouni Uitto has the floor.

stantial and must be respected when assessing the melanoma risk of a single individual. The final lecture, by *Professor Leena Bruckner-Tuderman*, Freiburg, Germany, was on autoimmune blistering diseases and their treatment repertory.

The anniversary dinner was held at the plenary chamber of the Palace of Nobility (Fig. 5); a neo-gothic palace, designed by architect G. T. Chiewitz, and completed in 1862. The walls of the plenary chamber exhibit a complete roll of arms, published by George Granfelt in 1889, and the chamber provided the perfect venue for our celebration dinner. We were privileged to savour a high-class show, fine service and first-class company. *Kari Saarinen, MD*, Lahti (Fig. 6), compèred the evening with determination, and *Professor Jaakko Karvonen* (Fig. 7) gave a speech about the many chapters of our society. Greetings

were received from Professor Gregor Jemec and the Estonian Society for Dermatovenereologists. An honorary medal was awarded to *Associate Professor Tarja Mälkönen* for launching the psoriasis registry in Finland, and *Docent Raimo Suhonen* was appointed an honorary member of the society. The evening concluded with opera performances and socializing, with some participants continuing to the Helsinki nightlife.

On Saturday morning we listened to *Professor Gregor Jemec*, Roskilde, about the systemic treatment of hidradenitis suppurativa, followed by a lecture by *Dr Deirdre Dufour*, Roskilde, on carbon dioxide laser treatment of the disease. *Associate Professor*



Fig. 5. The gorgeous plenary chamber of the Palace of Nobility.



Fig. 7. Standing ovation for the speech of Professor Jaakko Karvonen.

*Rafael Pasternack*, Tampere, shed light on the treatment of hidradenitis in Finland, providing tools to tackle this disease, which has traditionally been difficult to treat.



Fig. 6. Kari Saarinen holding the stake, shepherding the evening forward.

My deepest thanks to the anniversary commission, sponsors and lecturers for enabling this successful and memorable anniversary for our society.

Hopefully, also the valuable Nordic collaboration will continue to go from strength to strength, providing congresses, training and guest lectures, for years to come.