

The History of Hand Surgery in Norway

Pioneers:



Halfdan Schjelderup (1911-91)

Halfdan Schjelderup was trained as a plastic surgeon in Basingstoke, UK. He established the first Norwegian department of plastic and hand surgery at the Red Cross Clinic in Bergen in 1948. He gave lectures in plastic and hand surgery at the University of Bergen, and the department was included as part of the University Hospital in Bergen in 1967, with Schjelderup as the department head. He was among the “founding fathers” of the Nordic Hand Club in 1951.

Henrich Nissen-Lie (1903-78)

Henrich Nissen-Lie was a skilled orthopedic surgeon and had studied at different hand surgical centers abroad. He was the first head of Crown Princess Märtha`s Institute (KMI), established in 1956. KMI was an orthopedic hospital for treatment of sequelae after polio. It soon became a hospital for common orthopedic and rheumatoid arthritis patients, with a special responsibility for surgery in the upper extremity. He gave lectures in orthopedic and hand surgery at the University of Oslo. He was also among the “founding fathers” of the Nordic Hand Club in 1951.

Honorary members.

Arne Rugtveit (1922- 2014) was the head of KMI from 1973 to 1992. He was among the founders of the Norwegian Society for Surgery of the Hand (1979), and the first President of the society.

Harald Russwurm (1935- 2017) was trained as an orthopedic surgeon, he did tumor-, rheuma- and hand surgery. He was among the founders of the Norwegian Society for Surgery of the Hand. He did his training in Oslo, Malmö (Sweden) and Hamburg (Germany), and established the Hand Unit in Trondheim in 1981.

Tore Haga (1935-) was trained as a plastic- and hand surgeon in Umeå and Malmö (Sweden), and took part in the development of hand- and microsurgery in Bergen. He was the President of the Norwegian Society for Surgery of the Hand from 1988-91.

Astor Reigstad (1937-) was the head of KMI from 1992 to 1997, and the President of the Norwegian Society for Surgery of the Hand from 1984 to 1987. Together with Karl R. Hetland he trained in microsurgery and introduced microvascular reconstructive techniques and replantation surgery in Norway. The first replantation at KMI was in 1983. Reigstad also developed joint replacements for the basal joint of the thumb and wrist, the latter is still in clinical use today

Karl R. Hetland (1943-) was the head of KMI from 1997 to 2002. He introduced microsurgical techniques and replantation surgery with Astor Reigstad, see above

Kjell Bye (1943-) was the President of the Norwegian Society for Surgery of the Hand from 1992 to 1995. He had a broad net of international contacts and further developed the field of congenital hand surgery at KMI. He also took part in the early brachial plexus surgery.

Vilh. Finsen (1946-) was professor at the University in Trondheim and was trained as an orthopedic surgeon. Later on, he did mainly foot- and hand-surgery. He was the head of the Hand Unit at the University Hospital in Trondheim from 2003 to 2013.

Torstein Husby (1948-) was trained as a general orthopedic surgeon, however did hand-, micro- and elbow-surgery for the last 20 years of his career. He served as a board member of our Norwegian society for many years.

Leiv Hove (1948-) was professor at the University in Bergen and was trained as a plastic and orthopedic surgeon. He was the President of the Norwegian Society for Surgery of the Hand from 1996 to 1999. He started upper extremity surgery for tetraplegic patients in Norway. Other important part of his work is studies and work on distal radius fractures. He has been awarded Knight 1st Class of Saint Olav for his work.

About the Norwegian Society for Surgery of the Hand:

The Norwegian Society for Surgery of the Hand (NFH) was founded March 1979. Arne Rugtveit was the first President of the society that counted 22 members at that time. Today the society has 61 active members, as well as 19 retired hand surgeons.

The NFH joined FESSH as an observer in 1990 from the very beginning and became full member in 1993.

Founding members and Presidents, important persons:

Founding members: Arne Rugtveit, Jan Pahle, Lasse Kvarnes, Olav Reikerås, Tormod Risholt, Finn Risung og Harald Russwurm.

Presidents:

Arne Rugtveit (1979-83)

Astor Reigstad (1984-87)

Tore Haga (1988-91)

Kjell Bye (1992-95)

Leiv Hove (1996-99)

Eugen Eide (2000-03)

Magne Røkkum (2004-07)

Adalsteinn Odinson (2008-09)

Hebe Kvernmo (2010-13)

Yngvar Krukhaug (2014-15)

Jan Ragnar Haugstvedt (2016-)

Emblem:



National journals:

No official journal

National congresses:

Annual winter- meeting the last weekend in January.

Symposium in hand surgery at the annual meeting for the Norwegian Orthopedic Association the last week in October.

Hand therapy:



Norwegian Society for Hand Therapy was founded in 1993.

There are about 80 members, both occupational- and physiotherapists. The Society arranges annual meetings and has been co-organizers at the Scandinavian meetings in hand surgery and FESSH 2011 (in Oslo). The Norwegian Society for Hand Therapy (NFH) is a member of the European Federation of

Societies for Hand Therapy (EFSHT) and International Federation of Societies for Hand Therapy (IFSHT).

Education:

There is no formal specialty in hand surgery in Norway. Based on the FESSH Diploma in Hand Surgery, there is created a Norwegian Diploma in Hand Surgery. The candidates have a full specialty in either orthopedic surgery or plastic surgery, and at least two more years in hand surgery.

Important hospitals/ centers of hand surgery:

Hand surgery in Norway is organized as a regional sub-specialty. All Norwegian university hospitals have separate hand divisions as part of their orthopedic or plastic surgery departments.

Oslo University Hospital – Rikshospitalet, Orthopedic Dept, Upper extremity and microsurgical unit.

Oslo University Hospital - Ullevaal, Orthopedic Dept, Hand Unit

Haukeland University Hospital, Bergen, Plastic Surgery Dept.,

St. Olavs Hospital - Trondheim University Hospital, Orthopedic Dept.

University Hospital of North Norway, Tromsø, Orthopedic, Hand- and Plastic Surgery Dept.

In addition to the university hospitals there are smaller or larger hand divisions in Stavanger, Skien and Moss.