The Beginning:

Since the mid sixties it had become apparent that scientific research concerning abnormal metabolism of protein, lipid, carbohydrate, vitamins and minerals in renal disease, had progressed rapidly. In addition, the nutritional management of patients with renal disease had changed as a result of these new developments.

Several investigators, Joel D Kopple MD, Shaul G Massry MD and August Heidland MD, concluded that a Congress be held to bring together investigators interested in the science of renal nutrition. This decision proved to be beneficial and also timely and an organizing committee was formed to plan the 1st International Congress on Nutrition in Renal Disease, subsequently held at the High School of Music in Wuerzburg, Germany from 23-25 May 1977. Members of the organizing committee included August Heidland (Germany), Joel D Kopple (USA), Shaul G Massry (USA), Re inhold Kluthe (Germany), Eberhard Ritz (Germany) and Benjamin Burton (USA). The Congress was well attended by scientists from many countries. A total of 96 scientific papers (30 invited, 29 free communications, 37 posters) were presented contributing to a significant amount of new information and the re-evaluation of methodologies for research (1).

The Social Program included a Symphonic Concert by the Orchestra of the High School of Music, Wuerzburg in the Imperial Hall of the Prince-Bishops’ Residence and the reception given by the Bavarian Local Government’s Secretary of State, Dr W.Vorndran.

The enthusiastic response to this meeting resulted in the organization of the 2nd International Congress held in Bologna, Italy, from 13-15 June 1979. Vittorio Bonomini chaired the scientific and local organizing committee. This Congress was once again well attended by physicians, biochemists, physiologists and also several dietitians from Europe and USA. This Congress proved a success with a total of 123 presentations varying from biochemistry and metabolism of proteins, amino acids, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins and minerals, and methods of evaluating nutritional status and management of biochemical, metabolic and nutritional disorders in renal disease and in renal failure. The organizing committee then decided to continue and plan regular meetings. Its scientific focus expanded to include metabolism in renal disease and renal failure, to include the broad field of metabolism (2).

The 3rd International Congress on Nutrition and Metabolism in Renal Disease was held at the medical Faculty University of Marseille, France from 1-4 September, 1982. Professor Michel Olmer, Carmello Giordano and Mackenzie Walser joined the international organizing committee. The national organizing committee chaired by Michel Olmer, planned an excellent scientific Congress.

The number of presentations increased to a total of 192 (22 invited, 173 free communications and posters) and included studies about the mechanism of nutritional and metabolic disorders. The Congress was also attended by 22 dietitians from several countries. (3)

The official evening events program included the welcome reception by the Mayor of Marseille, Mr G Deferre at the Palais du Pharao, a concert given by the Regional Orchestra of the Auvergne at the Abbaye Saint-Victor, Dinner at the famous fishing village of Cassis and Banquet at Chateau de la Pioline, Aix-Les Milles.
The 4th International Congress was held at the College of William and Mary in colonial Williamsburg, VA, USA from 10-13 October in 1985. The international committee chaired by Joel D. Kopple and the local organizing committee, chaired by James F. Winchester, ensured that the scientific and the social program was outstanding for all delegates including dietitians.

It was noted that “the field of Renal Nutrition and Metabolism was one of the most exciting and rapidly growing fields in all of nephrology. Among the most promising advances were the number of nutrients that may each affect renal glomerular physiology and biochemistry, in health and in disease. Treatment strategies that involved the modification of dietary nutrient intake were being assessed for their effects on renal biochemistry, hemodynamics and pathophysiology and on the course of progression of renal disease. There was also evidence that a number of nutrients and nutritional disorders influenced the risk of hypertension and the ability to treat hypertension successfully. The Introduction of the Proceedings of this Congress include the following statement: “The purpose of these meetings in future is to evaluate, in renal disease and in renal failure, the biochemistry and metabolism of proteins, aminoacids, carbohydrates, lipids, vitamins and minerals, the nutritional assessment of patients, the causes of nutritional abnormalities and the treatment of nutritional disorders, including the use of diet to prevent or retard progression of renal failure “ (4).

A barbeque was held at the historical Berkeley Plantation (town of “A Hundred (families) and Plantations”, dating back to 1619 and was the place of the 1st Thanksgiving Day Celebration). An afternoon in Colonial Williamsburg and the Gala Dinner at the Trellis Restaurant were included in the social program for delegates and guests.

Formation of the International Society of Renal Nutrition and Metabolism

The 5th International Congress was held in Strasbourg, France from 1-4 September, 1988. Henri Jahn chaired the local organizing committee. A total of 183 scientific papers were presented (73 invited and free communications and 110 posters). Parallel meetings were also organised for the 1st time for the 72 renal dietitians with 20 presentations.

The major emphasis during this congress concerned nutritional factors affecting the pathophysiology of chronic renal failure, the current status of clinical trials of dietary treatment of progressive renal disease, the compliance of prescribed diet, and the metabolism of nutrients in both chronic and acute renal failure or the nephrotic syndrome. Also addressed were the effects of carnitine treatment, the pathogenesis and treatment of hyper catabolism in acute and chronic renal failure and new developments in parenteral nutrition including the use of intravenous peptides.

At this meeting it was decided to found the International Society of Renal and Metabolism (ISRNM) and the Society was formally established in December 1988. The following members were nominated by a committee of the initial councillors and officers: Claude Jacobs (France), Gianfranco Guarnieri (Italy) and George Kaysen (USA). This resulted in the election of the 1st President: Joel D. Kopple (USA), Vice President August Heidland (Germany), William E. Mitch (USA), Treasurer and Council members Jonas Bergstrom (Sweden), Carmello Giordano (Italy), Walter H Horl (Austria), Henri Jahn (France), Saulo Klahr (USA), Shaul G Massry (USA), Mackenzie Walser (USA). The Society would from now onwards be responsible for conducting future congresses. (5) The Farewell Dinner was held in the Alsatian country side at the “Auberge de Kochersberg”.

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The 6th International Congress was held at the Harrogate Conference Center in Harrogate, UK from 26-30 August 1991. John Walls chaired the local organizing committee resulting in an excellent scientific programme that included 67 invited and free communications and 181 poster presentations. The official ISRNM logo was developed and displayed for the 1st time on all Congress material and stationary. Growth factors were subject of active investigation, both as potential agents promoting progressive renal failure and also as a potential therapy for short stature and malnutrition. Nutritional disorders play a major role in the clinical course of patients with renal disease and renal failure. Dialysis prescription and assessment of adequacy of treatment were commonly believed to be linked to the nutritional intake of the patient. During this Congress the dietitians held their first official meeting with their own programme (24 presentations and posters). Marianne Vennegoor RD (UK), Susan Bennett RD (UK), Marianne Ahlberg RD (Sweden) and Mary Kay Hensley RD (USA) were mainly responsible for this new development. Selected presentations were published for the first time in the Journal of Renal Nutrition (6).

Three hundred and seventy two delegates attended this well organised Congress including 130 dietitians. Active participation by a significant number of well motivated dietitians led to the proposal by council to admit dietitians as associate members of the Society and the associate council member representing the dietitians should be elected at the next Congress pending approval of the bylaw changes of the ISRNM in 1994. The following council members were elected:

2nd President August Heidland (Germany), Vice President Shaul G. Massry (USA), Secretary-Treasurer: William E. Mitch (USA) and ISRNM Council members: Giuseppe D'Amico (Italy), Jonas Bergstrom (Sweden), Walter H. Horl (Austria), George.Kaysen (USA), Joel D.Kopple (USA), Saulo Klahr (USA) and John.Walls (UK).

The bylaw changes included the following mission statement that will also appearing on the newly created ISRNM website (www.renalnutrition.com) from 2000 onwards.

“*The purpose of this Society shall be to advance the knowledge of nutrition and metabolism in renal disease and renal failure and to foster communication of the advancements of this knowledge by means of scientific meetings and cooperation with other scientific societies of nephrology, nutrition, biochemistry and physiology*”

The ISRNM is now a dynamic and thriving organisation. (7)

The welcome reception was hosted by the Mayor of Harrogate, a vintage train was chartered to visit the mediaeval Viking town of York and an excellent Farewell Banquet was held at Rudding House a large early 19th century mansion outside Harrogate. During this occasion two physicians Dr Sergio Giovanetti MD and Dr Carmello Giordano were awarded special recognition for their outstanding contribution to the science of renal nutrition and metabolism.

During 1993 the ISRNM and the Moscow Medical Academy organized the Moscow Seminar in Nephrology from 30 September- 2 October. The majority of topics were related to progression of renal disease, nutritional and metabolic consequences and treatment of renal disease and dialysis. This Seminar was organized and attended by August Heidland (Germany), George A. Kaysen (USA), Joel D. Kopple (USA), Shaul G. Massry (USA) and Natale G De Santo (Italy).

The 7th International Congress, arranged under the Patronage of Her Majesty Queen Silvia of Sweden, was held at the Norra Latin Conference Centre in Stockholm, Sweden, from 29 May-1 June, 1994. Jonas Bergstrom chaired the local organizing committee and with
Anders Alvestrand, Marianne Ahlberg RD and other members of the committee an excellent scientific and social program welcomed several hundred delegates.

The science in Renal Nutrition and Metabolism has developed greatly during the past 16 years and the scientific program reflected these new developments in basic and clinical research. A total of 216 papers were presented (62 invited and free communications and 154 posters) at a Congress that was attended by 258 scientists and 75 dietitians. The 2 dietitians sessions with 24 presentations were organised by Marianne Ahlberg RD (Sweden) and Marianne Vennegoor RD (UK) and selected proceedings were once again published in the Journal of Renal Nutrition (8).

The Bylaws change regarding associate membership of dietitians was approved by the ISRN membership and the associate member’s council representative should be elected by the dietitian members during the next Congress.

It was also decided to hold bi-annual Congresses from now on.

New council members elected were: the 3rd President Shaul G. Massry (USA), Vice President: Walter H. Horl (Austria), Past President: August Heidland (Germany), Secretary-Treasurer: William E Mitch (USA) and council members: Giuseppe D’Amico (Italy), Tim H.J. Goodship (UK), George A. Kaysen (USA), Ralph Rabkin (USA), John Walls (UK), Marsha Wolfson (USA) (9).

In addition to the welcome reception at Norra Latin, A Buffet reception was given at Stockholm City Hall famous for the Annual Dinner of Nobel Prize Winners. The farewell Dinner was held at the Hasselbacken Museum.

The 8th International Congress was held at the Castel dell’Ovo in Naples, Italy in 1996 from 9-12 October. The local organizing committee was chaired by Natale G de Santo and co-chaired by Dr V Zappia.

Once again several hundred physicians, scientists, renal nutritionists and other healthcare workers attended this Congress. The topics addressed ranged from cell and molecular biology, physiology, biochemistry and epidemiology to clinical interventions and large scale trials. Nutritional and metabolic disorders are common with renal disease and acute of chronic renal failure. Treatment may reduce their morbidity and mortality. In total 169 scientific papers were presented (90 invited and free communications and 96 posters)

During the sessions for dietitians 16 papers were presented as free and poster presentations. Selected manuscripts from dietitians were published in volume 7 (1997) numbers 2, 3 and 4 of the Journal of Renal Nutrition.

The following officers were elected to the ISRN Council: the 4th President, Walter Horl (Austria), Immediate Past President: Shaul G Massry (USA), Vice President William E. Mitch (USA), Secretary-Treasurer: George A Kaysen (USA) and council members: Giuseppe D’Amico (Italy), Natale G. De Santo (Italy), Tim H..J. Goodship (UK), Ralph Rabkin (USA), Marianne Vennegoor RD (UK), John Walls (UK), Marsha Wolfson (USA) (10).

Natale De Santo also organized the very interesting “International Seminar on the History of Nutrition” at the Italian Institute of Philosophy The welcoming reception was held at the Teatro di Corte, Palazzo Reale, the Concert at the Chiesa del Gesu and Farewell Dinner at the splendid Hotel Exelsior.

The 9th International Congress was held in Vienna, Austria in 1998 from August 29-September 1. The organizing committee was co-chaired by Walter H Horl and Wilfred Druml.

The scientific program of this congress with a total of 197 presentations (101 invited and free communications and 96 posters) included new information about appetite, the role of inflammation in the pathogenesis of malnutrition in the development of atherosclerosis and
the association between malnutrition and morbidity and mortality. Also included were the effect of nutrients and growth factors on erythropoiesis and the haematological response to Erythropoetin, mechanism of uremic toxicity, assessment and treatment of nutritional disorders in CKD. The dietitians contributed with 30 presentations (17 free communications and 13 posters) and selected proceedings were published in volume 10, numbers 1, 3 and 4 of the Journal of Renal Nutrition.

The new officers elected to the ISRNM Council were: the 5th President: William E. Mitch (USA), Immediate Past President: Walter H. Horl (Austria), President Elect: John Walls (UK), Secretary-Treasurer: George A Kaysen (USA) and council members: Gianfranco Guarnieri (Italy), Mary Kay Hensley RD (USA), William.Keane (USA), Toshimitsu.Niwa (Japan), Boleslaw Rutkowski (Poland), Sudhir.Shah (USA).

The Thomas Addis award was presented to William E Mitch MD for his contributions to the science of renal nutrition and metabolism (11).

The welcome reception was held at the Rathaus Keller Rittersaal, a buffet dinner at the Museum of Fine Arts and the Gala Dinner at the Schoenborn Palace.

The 10th International Congress was held at the Palais de Congress in Lyon, France from 6-8 July 2000 with Denis Fouque and William E Mitch as congress presidents. This Congress in the heart of France was attended by more than 400 delegates (100 were dietitians) from 40 countries worldwide.

During the official opening of the Congress Sergio Giovanetti MD from Pisa, Italy who died on 20 January 2000 was remembered by a one minute silence.

There were 166 presentations (62 invited and free communications and 104 posters) and these covered topics concerning clinical and basic research areas, insulin resistance and diabetic nephropathy, control of phosphate and the development and management of renal osteodystrophy, control of dietary sodium and mechanism of hypertension, metabolic consequences of proteinuria, methods to improve nutritional status of Dialysis patients and new concepts of the regulation of protein metabolism.

Professor Michel Apericio from Bordeaux, France delivered the ISRNM Award lecture about the nutritional safety of supplemented low protein diets. He received this award for his outstanding contributions and understanding the metabolic effects of renal disease.

During the parallel sessions for dietitians 39 scientific papers were presented on various aspects of nutrition research and practical aspects of delivering nutritional care.

During the council elections the following members were elected: the 6th President: John Walls (UK), Past President: William E. Mitch (USA), President Elect: George A.Kaysen (USA), Secretary-Treasurer: Sudhir Shah (USA) and councillors: Denis Fouque (France), Gianfranco.Guarnieri (Italy), William Keane (USA), Christina Kilates RD (USA), Toshimitsu.Niwa (Japan), Boleslaw Rutkowski (Poland).

The ISRNM presented their highest award, the Addis Medal to Jonas Bergstrom for his many contributions to the area of renal nutrition and metabolism.

Denis Fouque and his congress organizing committee were congratulated on providing an excellent social program that included the Mayor’s welcoming reception held at the splendid Town Hall of Lyon and the extraordinary culinary experience at Paul BocuseE’s “L’Abbaye de Collognes” restaurant, still remembered by many to this day (12).

The 11th International Congress was held in Nagoya, Japan at the Nagoya Congress Centre, from 29-31 March in 2002. Toshimitsu Niwa was chairman of the program and local organizing committees.
This excellent Congress was attended by 624 delegates from 28 countries attended this meeting and included more then 25 dietitians. A 2 minutes silence was observed at the start of the Congress to remember the 6th President of the ISRNM, John Walls from UK, who had died on 1 March 2001 and the passing of Jonas Bergstrom who died on 17 August 2001. The John Walls Memorial Lecture was presented by Glen Chertow entitled: “Mineral Metabolism and Mortality in Hemodialysis” on 30 March. Amongst the 212 papers (70 invited and free communications and 142 posters) presented were lectures on major advances in nutrition and metabolism and how these advances influence the care of pre-dialysis patients, dialysis patients and transplant recipients and herbal use in renal disease. Public lectures included “Prevention and Diet therapy of Renal Disease”. During the dietitians sessions 18 papers were presented by colleagues from far a field. As with all previous Congresses, this Congress once again provided an excellent forum and the opportunity for individual exchange and networking (13). Selected proceedings were published in the Journal of Renal Nutrition (14).

The results of the Council election were as follows: the 7th President: George A. Kaysen (USA), President Elect: Denis Fouque (France), Secretary-Treasurer: Sudhir Shah (USA) and council members: Lillian Cuppari RD (Brazil), Gianfranco Guarnieri (Italy), William F. Keane (USA), Toshimitsu Niwa (Japan), Boleslaw Rutkowski (Poland), Peter Stenvinkel (Sweden).

The Congress was concluded with a special Japanese Gourmet Dinner with Hostess’ (Geisha) entertainment. The optional day visit by the Shinkansen “bullet” train to the ancient city of Kyoto, with the cherry blossom trees in full bloom, this was an unforgettable experience for many.

The 12th International Congress was held at the Congress Center “Pietro Abano” in Abano Terme, close to Padua and Venice, Italy from 18-22 June in 2004. Chairs of the Programme and local organizing committees were: Gianfranco Guarnieri, Annamaria Bernardini and Giuseppe Bucciante. More than 430 delegates participated at this Congress that began with a half day Pre-Congress Educational Update attended by many. Two hundred and three papers were presented (113 invited and free communications and 90 posters). Topics in the main Congress program included new hormones and inflammation, protein metabolism, exercise and nutrition to improve metabolic abnormalities, pharmacological therapy, cardiovascular complications and energy balance and body composition. Other aspects included carnitine supplementation, enteral and parenteral nutrition. During the dietitians sessions attended by over 90 dietitians, 28 papers were presented on several aspects of nutrition research and practice. The 2nd International Workshop on Skeletal Muscle Metabolism and Exercise Physiology in Chronic Renal Disease was held immediately after the ISRNM Congress. The results of the council elections were as follows: the 8th President: Denis Fouque (France), Past President: George A. Kaysen (USA), President Elect: Gianfranco Guarnieri (Italy), Secretary-Treasurer: T. Alp Ikizler (USA) and council members: Maria Chan RD (Australia), Harald Franch (USA), Nathan Levin (USA), Yoshiki Nishizawa (Japan), Peter Stenvinkel (Sweden) and Christoph Wanner (Germany).

During the preceding years negotiations had begun with the National Kidney Foundation (USA) and resulted in future co-sponsorship of the Journal of Renal Nutrition.
Proceedings of this Congress were published in this and in future editions of the Journal with Co-Editors Denis Fouque and Jordi Goldstein-Fuchs (15).

The social programme included the official opening ceremony in the splendid Aula Magna “Galileo Galilei” of the “Bo Palace” at the Old University of Padua. One of the scientific sessions ending with a concert was held at the Scuola Grande San Giovanni Evangelista in Venice (with many famous paintings by Tinteretto). The Farewell Conference Dinner was held at the Relais Golf in Montechia.

The 13th International Congress of the Society was held at the Fiesta Americana Hotel in Merida, Mexico from 28 February-4 March 2006. Alejandro Trevino-Beccera presided over the scientific and organizing committees. The Pre-Congress Workshop on Skeletal Muscle Metabolism in Renal Disease and the Basic Nutrition in Renal Disease Course were held on 28 February and well attended. One hundred and forty nine papers (including 27 by dietitians) were presented at a highly successful Congress attended by more then 500 delegates of which 134 were dietitians and nutritionists many from Mexico and South America.

Council election results were as follows: the 9th President of the Society: Gianfranco Guarnieri (Italy), Past President: Denis Fouque (France), President Elect: T.Alp Ikizler (USA), Secretary-Treasurer: Harald Franch (USA) and council members: Maria Chan RD (Australia), Philippe Chauveau (France), Francis Dumler (USA), Kaymar Kalantar-Zadeh (USA), Nathan Levin (USA), Yoshiki Nishizawa (Japan), Christoph Wanner (Germany). The prestigious ISRN Addis Award was presented to George A. Kaysen for his outstanding scientific contributions concerning renal nutrition and metabolism.

The opening ceremony was held in the Peon Contreras Theatre ending with a ballet performance by the Ballet de la Universidad Antomonia de Yucatan. All delegates had the opportunity to visit the most impressive archeological site of Uxmal followed by the Sound and Light show. The Farewell Dinner was held at the Hacienda Teya Restaurant, well known for its typical Mexican cuisine.

The 14th International Congress of the Society was held at the Palais de Pharo in Marseilles, France from 11-15 June 2008. The Congress President, Noel Cano and his local and scientific committees organised an outstanding scientific and social programme. The Honorary President was Yvon Bertrand.

Two parallel workshops were held: the 3rd Workshop on “Muscle Protein Metabolism in Renal Disease” and the “ISRN Educational Session”. Both sessions were as at previous congresses, very well attended with 52 and 150 delegates respectively attending both workshops. The Congress itself attracted over 640 delegates, from 44 countries and included 190 dietitians, an all time record. The 3 day scientific programme, included 9 Symposia led by Industry and a joint meeting with the European Society of Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism (ESPEN). A total of 261 invited, oral communication and posters presentations were delivered, included 64 from the dietitians.

Council Election Results were as follows: 10th President of the Society: Alp Ikizler (USA), President Elect: Harold Franch (USA), Immediate Past President Gianfranco Guarnieri (Italy), Secretary/Treasurer: Christoph Wanner (Germany) and new council members: Carla Avesani (Brazil), Noel Cano (France), Jonathan Himmelfarb (USA), Pieter Ter Wee (The Netherlands).

The Welcome Reception was held at the Palais de Pharo, overlooking the picturesque old harbour and town of Marseilles. The Conference Dinner was held at the
Vignoble Bodin Restaurant in Cassis, well known for its “Haute Cuisine” after a memorable bus trip along the Corniche and the Mediterranean Sea.

All delegates were invited to join the post congress tour that included a guided tour of the Saint Victor Abbey and Notre Dame de la Garde Basilica. Lunch was provided on a 19th century old boat converted into restaurant “La Nautique”, anchored in the old harbour of Marseilles.

The 15th International Congress of the Society was held in the Olympic City of Lausanne, Switzerland from 25-28 May 2010. The President Daniel Teta and his local and scientific committees organised a well attended Congress with an outstanding scientific and social programme for scientists and dietitians.

The Honorary President was Michel Burnier from Lausanne. On the 1st day the ½ day educational session was followed by the official opening Symposium of the Congress “Sport and the Kidney” under the Patronage of the IOC and was also attended by the Swiss Media. One of the Olympic medal winners (cycling), also a CKD patient, contributed to this interesting session.

The Congress was attended by 700 participants, with many of them dietitians, from 46 counties around the world. There were an additional 112 delegates, including patients that attended the Opening Ceremony Symposium and the final joint ISN Symposium dedicated to Sports and Exercise in Chronic Kidney Disease with presentations from the ISN President Elect: John Feehally (UK).

A total of 309 invited, oral communications and posters presentations were delivered during this Congress, 79 by dietitians.

This was the first Congress that most presentations could be viewed as PDF files on the Lausanne2010 website link: www.isrnmlausanne2012.org/press.php

Council elections results were: 11th President of the Society: Harold Franch (USA), President Elect: Christoph Wanner (Germany), Immediate Past President: Alp Ikizler (USA), Secretary/Treasurer Pieter Ter Wee (The Netherlands) and new council members: Tilly Karupaiah (Malaysia), Vladimir Teplan (Czech Republic), Angela Wang (Hong Kong).

The Opening Ceremony of the Congress took place at the Olympic Museum. An evening and dining boat tour on Lake Geneva was organised enabling the delegates to take in the beautiful Unesco Heritage protected, Lavaux region, Vineyards, Vevey, Montreux and Castle Chillon.

The Gala, Farewell Dinner was held at the equally well known “Belle Epoque” and 150 year old Hotel Beau Rivage Palace Lausanne overlooking Lake Geneva with its 3 Michelin stars restaurant.