American Society of Plastic Surgical Nurses (ASPSN)

Historical Highlights

**NINETEEN SEVENTY FIVE**

Plastic surgical nurses of America have come a long way since the first meeting in 1975.

In Southern California in the spring of 1975, there was a group of nurses who worked for plastic surgeons and who needed continuing education to renew their licenses. These nurses often attended educational meetings with the plastic surgeons, and at one of these conferences, several plastic surgical nurses from the area met and held an organizational meeting. Officers were elected, and the first national convention was planned. This convention was held in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, in fall of 1975 in conjunction with the plastic surgeons. Fifty-five of the Society’s 100 charter members attended this meeting.

The officers elected were as follows:
- President: Sherill Lee Schultz
- President-Elect: Dorothy Henderson
- Secretary-Treasurer: Mary Helen Gianini

The members present selected a name for the new organization: The American Society of Plastic & Reconstructive Surgical Nurses (ASPRSN). The following purpose was established: Providing accredited continuing education for members. In less than 18 months, the name, logo, bylaws, articles of incorporation, and CE provider accreditation had been established. By August 1976, there were 13 local ASPRSN chapters throughout the United States and Canada.

The Society’s logo was designed especially for the ASPRSN by Ken Michaelsen, a commercial artist from Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Each symbolic element of the logo is significant. The two faces represent “male and female” and also “before and after.” The open book reminds us of the purpose of our Society and signifies “continuing education.” The torch sheds the “light of knowledge.” The laurel leaves represent “peace.”

**NINETEEN SEVENTY SIX**

In September 1976, ASPRSN held its second annual national meeting in Boston, Massachusetts. The first scientific sessions for plastic surgical nurses were presented, and eight hours of continuing education credit were awarded. Dorothy Henderson was president.

**NINETEEN SEVENTY SEVEN**

In 1977 in San Francisco, California, ASPRSN held its first independent meeting instead of meeting with the plastic surgeons. Two hundred and eighteen plastic surgical nurses attended the three days of continuing education. Cathy Findley (Salisbury) from Florida was elected ASPRSN’s third president.

**NINETEEN SEVENTY EIGHT**

The fourth annual ASPRSN meeting was held in Miami, Florida, in 1978. Carol Wood (Davis) from California was elected ASPRSN’s fourth president. Membership numbered 264 with 15 local chapters.

**NINETEEN SEVENTY NINE**

In 1979, we returned to Toronto for the fifth annual convention. In addition to the usual excellent scientific sessions, we added our first instructional course taught by Elaine Cline (Escajeada). Melody Roberts of North Carolina was elected president. Membership totaled 411.

**NINETEEN EIGHTY**

New Orleans was the site of the sixth annual convention. At this convention in 1980, our journal, Plastic Surgical Nursing was launched. Joyce Black from Nebraska was the journal editor, and she continued to improve the journal over 24 years. Tari Mayes from California was elected president. Also, during 1980, the ASPRSN became a member of the National Federation of Specialty Nursing Organizations.

**NINETEEN EIGHTY ONE**

The 1981 convention was held in New York City. Susan Hockenberger was elected president, and members enjoyed the delights of the Big Apple—Broadway shows, shopping, and fun.

**NINETEEN EIGHTY TWO**

The 1982 convention was held in beautiful Honolulu, Hawaii. Elaine Cline (Escajeada) was elected president.

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The convention program was set up so that participants could attend sessions in the morning and enjoy free time in the afternoon.

**Nineteen Eighty Three**

In 1983 we were back on the mainland for the convention in Dallas, Texas. Ajia Markland (Coolbagh) was elected president. For the first time, ASPRSN was represented by an association management firm, Styger-Willis, based in Chicago.

**Nineteen Eighty Four**

The 1984 annual convention was held in Las Vegas, Nevada. Sue Jacobs from Illinois was elected president. The Society implemented a change in transition from one Board to another so that members of the Board take office on January 1, rather than directly after the convention. During 1984, the first *Plastic Surgery Nursing Bibliography* was completed.

**Nineteen Eighty Five**

In 1985, the convention was held in Kansas City, Missouri. And Anthony J. Jannetti was our new management firm. Ron Brady was our executive director.

**Nineteen Eighty Six**

In 1986, Mary Coley of New York was president. Los Angeles, California, is the site of the annual convention. The membership totals 940. ASPRSN sent a representative to the Nurse in Washington Internship (NIWI) in Washington, District of Columbia. NIWI was sponsored by the National Federation of Specialty Organizations.

**Nineteen Eighty Seven**

In 1987, Georgia Moncada of Louisiana was president. The annual convention was held in Atlanta, Georgia. There is much unrest among the members about various issues —mainly those who wanted to open up membership to nurses who are not sponsored by ASPRS members. Others want to break away completely from the physicians. These were small but vocal groups.

**Nineteen Eighty Eight**

In 1988, Cynthia Nowicki was president. The convention was held in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The Society continues to sort out issues held by various groups.

1989 was a year of many accomplishments. Virginia Finnie of California was president. The first Core Curriculum is published with Terri Goodman as Editor. The Plastic Surgical Nursing Certification Board (PSNCB) is established. The first certification examination was offered at the national convention in San Francisco although the city had recently experienced an earthquake. The convention was held at the Hyatt Embarcadero. Membership totaled 1,406.

**Nineteen Ninety**

In 1990, Margaret Sheppard of Missouri was president. “Spring Clinical Updates” were held in each of the three regions. For the first time, the membership votes by mail instead of at conventions. The annual convention was in Boston.

**Nineteen Ninety One**

In 1991, Barbara Dugas of South Carolina was president. There is a major uproar over the safety of silicone breast implants. Members testify before the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The convention is held in Seattle, Washington. The presidential reception was held on the Spirit of Puget Sound dinner cruise. Also in 1991, the first nursing awards are presented. The recipients are as follows:

- Nurse of the Year ........................................ Linda Martin
- Outstanding Achievement in Plastic Surgical Nursing............................... Sylvia Huie
- Distinguished Service to ASPRSN........................................ Alice Davis

**Nineteen Ninety Two**

1992—The President is Linda Williams from Florida. Our 18th national convention is at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City in Washington, District of Columbia. The breast implant crisis continues and takes up much of our time at work and in our Society. We continue to honor our own with nursing awards, scholarships, and writing awards.

**Nineteen Ninety Three**

1993—Our president is Sandra Flynn Smyth from Virginia. Our meeting is in New Orleans, Louisiana. Our Nurse of the year is Sweetie Francis. The Distinguished Service Award is presented to Susie Hockenberger. The

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Outstanding Achievement in Plastic Surgical Nursing Award is presented to Hazel Ann Hutchinson.

**NINETEEN NINETY FOUR**

1994—Jeannie Prin from Minnesota is president this year. The convention is in the brand new Hyatt Regency Hotel in San Diego, California.

**NINETEEN NINETY FIVE**

1995—Jeri-Ann Murray of Ohio is President. The convention is in Montreal, Canada. The Nurse of the Year is Pat Hackett; the Outstanding Achievement Award goes to Terry Goodman; and the Distinguished Service Award goes to Betty Williams.

**NINETEEN NINETY SIX**

1996—Jeri-Anne Murray serves a second year as president because President-Elect, Maithe Fowler, is unable to serve. The annual convention is held in Dallas, Texas. The second edition of the Core Curriculum, edited by Terri Goodman, is published. In 1996, we have 1,552 members. 315 members have taken and passed the certification examination and can use the distinctive CPSN in their credentials. The bylaws and standards have been revised and published.

**NINETEEN NINETY SEVEN**

1997—Joanne Gladfelter from California is President. The convention is held in San Francisco. Ron Brady resigns as executive director but continues as PSNCB’s executive director. Gus Ostrum takes over as the executive director.

**NINETEEN NINETY EIGHT**

1998—Stephanie Dinman of Pennsylvania is president. We are grieved by the untimely death of Ron Brady who served as the executive director from 1985 to 1997.

The ASPRSN Web site is established thanks to Joanne Gladfelter. ASPRSN becomes a member of the Council of Related Organizations to promote communication and collaboration among the ASPRS and the other related groups. There are 1,438 members.

**NINETEEN NINETY NINE**

1999—Patricia McCaige is President. The 25th Annual Convention is in New Orleans, Louisiana. Rick Grimes is the new executive director. The Society has 1,480 members.

**TWO THOUSAND**

2000—Diane Vallee is President. The annual convention is at Universal City in Los Angeles. The year 2000 was a year of transformations. As we entered the new millennium, we also transformed our name. Following the physicians’ lead, members voted to drop the “reconstructive” and become the American Society of Plastic Surgical Nurses (effective 2001). There are 1,700 members.

**TWO THOUSAND ONE**

2001—Brenda Wilkerson of Kentucky is President. The events of September 11 changed our lives forever. President Bush declared that we were at war. And life seemed to stand still. Activities in plastic surgery offices declined as people put off elective and cosmetic surgery. Disney World in Orlando, Florida, was the site of our 27th convention. Despite all the turmoil, there were 450 registrants including 143 first time attendees. Forty-seven businesses exhibited their wares at the exhibit hall. The first annual walk/run fund raiser was held during the convention in honor of Dr. John Bostwick. The proceeds went to breast cancer research.

**TWO THOUSAND TWO**

2002—Patricia Terrell of Indiana is president. San Antonio, Texas, is the site of the 28th annual convention. There is cautious optimism in the country and the plastic surgery world as things seem to be stabilizing. However, ASPSN is still in financial difficulty and the Executive Board is making tough choices to cut costs. There are 1,560 members.

**TWO THOUSAND THREE**

2003 is a benchmark year in many ways. Barbara Weber of Georgia is president in 2003 and 2004. Members voted to continue Barbara Weber’s term as president for another year in order to have continuity and the benefit of her expertise as the Society works through a financial crisis. Nationally, this is a year of war and turmoil. It is also a year of financial instability in ASPSN.

San Diego, California, is the location of the 2003 annual convention. The convention is underway only a short time before wild fires break out in the area. During the annual walk/run for charity, participants encounter large smoky flakes descending from the sky.

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It was eerie. ASPSN donated the $600.00 in receipts to the Red Cross fire relief fund. Despite the fire, convention attendance was the highest in four years. 2004 was the last year with the A.J. Janetti management firm. In order to cut expenses, ASPSN sought the services of a less expensive firm. The Executive Board implements the Members Increasing Membership (MIM) Program to encourage members to recruit other plastic surgical nurses to join ASPSN.

**TWO THOUSAND ‘FOUR**

Beginning in 2004, Benchmark 360 of Norcross, Georgia, is the new management firm. Amy DeFaveri is the executive director. Barbara Weber continues as President. Members approve bylaws changes to accommodate the growing Canadian and international membership. The Board increases in size from nine to ten. The membership also voted to update the logo. Also in 2004, ASPSN’s official journal, *Plastic Surgical Nursing*, has a new publisher, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins. Joyce Black, who has served as editor from the journal’s inception in 1980 to the 2004, retires. Kathleen Walsh Spencer is appointed Editor.

In the spring of 2004, ASPSN held its first annual Aesthetic Symposium in Vancouver, Canada, in conjunction with the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS). ASPSN has its 30th annual convention October 9-13, 2004, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Nursing awards were presented as follows:

- Pat McKaige — Distinguished Service to ASPSN
- Sue Kunz — Nurse of the Year
- Sharon Fritzsche — President’s Award
- The Region of the Year — Southeast Region
- Chapter of the Year — Tennessee/Alabama

Barbara Weber conferred with the leaders of ASPS and agreed to work together for the common good. As a result we will have a combined exhibit hall at the 2005 convention in Chicago.

We are saddened by the passing of our wonderful friend and one of ASPSN’s founders--Dorothy Henderson. She died on November 9, 2004.

**TWO THOUSAND ‘FIVE**

2005—Tracey Hotta from Canada is president. In January 2005, member Diane Hart was caught in a mudslide and buried alive under 10 feet of mud for 5 hours in her home in California before being rescued. She suffered many injuries but miraculously survived. She spoke about her ordeal at the 2005 convention in Chicago.

*Plastic Surgery Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* was published by the American Nurses Association. The Aesthetic Symposium was held in New Orleans, Louisiana, in conjunction with the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery. The convention was held in Chicago.

**TWO THOUSAND ‘SIX**

2006—The Aesthetic Symposium is held in Orlando, Florida, and the national convention is held in San Francisco. ASPSN Board members begin their new terms at the close of the convention rather than at the first of the following year. Marcy Dienno of Pennsylvania, is president. ASPSN’s new management company is Dancy, Puetz & Associates, based in Pensacola, Florida.

**TWO THOUSAND ‘SEVEN**

2007—Pamala Silvers from Washington is president. The third edition of the Core Curriculum is published. Bylaws are revised to have at large directors rather than regional directors. The Aesthetic Symposium was held in New York City, and the national convention is in Baltimore, Maryland. Kathleen Wyatt Spencer completes her term as Editor of *Plastic Surgical Nursing*, and Candise Flippen is appointed editor. The Board initiates a corporate membership program. The ASPSN newsletter, ASPSNews, is an electronic newsletter only, effective June 2007.

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ASPSN Historian