

ISDE presidential biography: André Duranceau

André Duranceau finished Medical School at the University of Montreal in 1968. He completed General Surgery residency at the same university and then completed a one year fellowship in Thoracic Surgery at the Hotel Dieu Hospital in Montreal, before the specialty of General Thoracic Surgery actually existed in Canada. It was then that his illustrious career in Academia, Esophageal Surgery, Esophagology and Esophageal Motility began when he spent two years in the laboratory at Duke in North Carolina under the tutelage of Dr David Sabiston. It was at Duke that André's interest in esophageal diseases was solidified and in conjunction with Al Hurwitz, he helped to build the first esophageal motility laboratory at Duke.

André returned to Montreal and the Hotel Dieu Hospital in 1976 and was one of the first surgeons in the Province of Quebec to dedicate his career exclusively to Thoracic Surgery. He focused almost exclusively on esophagology, esophageal surgery, and motility. He opened an academic and clinical Functional Esophageal Laboratory, in which he grew his clinical practice and built his academic career. Along with Griff Pearson from Toronto, André was instrumental in enabling Thoracic surgery to be recognized by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. Over the next three decades, André built the second largest Thoracic Surgery Division in Canada and one of the largest esophageal surgery programs in the world.

André has occupied the most important positions in esophageal surgery at local, provincial, national, and international stages. He has been a Full Professor of Surgery at the University of Montreal since 1985. He served as President of the ISDE between 2004 and 2006 and was the President of the ISDE World Congress in Montreal in 1998 (Fig. 1). A meeting which was a huge success and which he still talks about today. He served as Editor of *Diseases of the Esophagus* between 2008 and 2014. He has authored and co-authored over 150 peer reviewed manuscripts and close to 100 book chapters on esophageal diseases.

During André's two years as president of the ISDE, he played a major role in the structural transformation of the administration of the society alongside Tom DeMeester, Toni Lerut, and Mark Ferguson. He helped transition the administration of the ISDE from

Japan to Los Angeles and encouraged the creation of a member supported endowment fund in order to guarantee the funding for the Annual Meeting. André pushed for the integration of gastroenterologists into the ISDE, giving them equal opportunities and responsibilities throughout the administrative organization of the society and annual meeting. All of these important changes favored the increase in credibility and membership of the ISDE and cemented the ISDE as the foremost focused esophageal academic society.

André is a master maple syrup producer. He owns and operates his own forest of maple trees in Quebec as well as a traditional maple syrup distillery, where he makes one of the best quality maple syrups in the world, year after year. Many esophageal experts from across the globe have had the good fortune of being able to help André produce this liquid gold and then enjoy some of it with him at his authentic "cabane a sucre."

I asked André what he believed was the most important thing he had done in his career and he emphatically responded that it was "properly learning esophageal and lung physiology at Duke University in the 1970s." His advice to young esophageal and thoracic surgeons would be to: "make sure to not only be a technical expert, but to develop their career foremost academically." He feels indebted to Dr David Skinner and Dr Tom Demeester who he feels were his surgical and academic mentors, respectively.

André's self-proclaimed favorite operation is the Collis Nissen Repair for a Massive Hiatal Hernia and the procedure he dislikes most would be esophageal dilatation for radiation induced strictures. What excites André the most in medicine is the academic "snowball effect," which builds on the excitement and contagious spirit of research and discovery and he encourages young esophageal surgeons to catch the academic investigational research bug!

André Duranceau is world renowned in the fields of esophageal function, esophageal cancer, Barrett's Esophagus, benign esophageal disease pathogenesis and treatment, and gastro-esophageal reflux disease and the damage associated with it. He is a world renowned expert in diseases of the upper esophageal sphincter and oculopharyngeal dystrophy and the effects of surgical treatment on the esophagus



Fig. 1 André Duranceau at the Presidential Address of the ISDE Congress in Montreal, 1998.

and the upper sphincter. André has clinically and academically trained hundreds of young esophageal surgeons from all over the world and is a mentor to countless esophageal and thoracic surgeons.



Fig. 2 Esophageal Surgeons Fishing on the Pacific Ocean near Acapulco, 1990. Back row (left to right): Toni Lerut, Manuel Pera, Bernard Launois. Front row: André Duranceau.

He enjoys not only sharing academic endeavors with fellow esophageal experts, but also life and leisure with them (Fig. 2).

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