

# The Tord Skoog Visiting Professorship

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**T**ord Skoog (1915–1977) founded the Department of Plastic Surgery at Uppsala University Hospital in 1951. He was appointed the first full university professor of plastic surgery in Scandinavia in 1961 and, as a pioneer of our specialty, he contributed to the surgical evolution in several diverse areas such as cleft lip and palate, burns, breast reduction, and facial rejuvenation.<sup>1</sup> Today our department honors his legacy by installing the Tord Skoog Visiting Professorship.

Tord Skoog was born and raised on an estate in the outskirts of Uppsala. His parents were tenant farmers and the family had 3 sons. He graduated from Uppsala University Medical School in 1943 and early on developed a strong interest for surgery. A scholarship visit to Finland in 1944 brought him in contact with the Finnish Surgeon General Richard Faltin and his associates. The post war reconstructive surgery made a lasting impression on Skoog, and Faltin also introduced him to the treatment of cleft lip and palate. In 1946, Skoog spent a year as a British Council scholar and stayed with both Sir Harold Gillies and Sir Archibald McIndoe.

His thesis from 1948 was the first detailed account and analysis of McIndoe's procedure for Dupuytren's contracture. In 1952, he went to Korea and the Swedish field hospital in Pusan. He was invited as an observer to the US forces and field hospital to study the treatment of severe burns. These early international experiences laid the foundation for reconstructive surgery and burn treatment in Uppsala at the newly formed Department of Plastic Surgery.

Tord Skoog's passion for reconstructive surgery, curiosity, and international outlook brought him a wide international professional network. In 1955, he was the general secretary of the first International Congress of Plastic Surgery in Stockholm-Uppsala. Over the years, he

became an educator of many surgeons who traveled to Uppsala from all over the world to learn from his experience. Among Skoog's publications, the most noteworthy are his thesis on DC from 1948 and his textbook *Plastic Surgery* (Saunders, 1974). The thesis became internationally recognized and led to a longer stay in the United States in 1949, with visits to several plastic and hand surgeons of the time. His textbook presented methods and refinements and became internationally acknowledged for its photographs, illustrations, and clear descriptions of his personal surgical experience.

The Department of Plastic and Maxillofacial Surgery at Uppsala University Hospital carries an enduring legacy of Tord Skoog. The program of the visiting professor consists of a 3-day visit to Uppsala University Hospital with teaching activities for residents and fellows, including a lecture at hospital ground rounds on the topic of clinical excellence of the visitor. Candidates will be selected based on their contribution and spirit of work; to promote high level of education in plastic surgery; and to continue to expand the horizons of our field.

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**Fig. 1.** Tord Skoog surrounded by colleagues of the Tord Skoog Society, 1967.