



# SRS News

September 2013

## HISTORIAN CORNER: REMEMBERING PIERRE STAGNARA (1917–1995)

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Historical Committee Chair



As our upcoming 2013, 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting & Course will be held in Lyon, France, I felt it would be appropriate to honor a son of Lyon, Pierre Stagnara, M.D. in this issue. I first met Dr. Stagnara in 1975, when I was a fellow and he was visiting the Twin Cities Scoliosis Center. I was very excited and happy to finally meet him as his name was mentioned almost every day during my fellowship: the Stagnara wake-up test, Stagnara view, Stagnara cast and brace, and his techniques in the treatment of severe adult spinal deformity. I would like to thank Jean Dubousset, Bob Winter, Ron DeWald and Pierre Roussouly as well as members of the Historical Committee for providing material, allowing me to complete this article.



Pierre and Denise Stagnara (1977)

Born in Loriol, France in 1917, Dr. Stagnara became internationally known for many accomplishments in the field of spinal surgery. He attended medical school in Lyon and, after World War II, became a senior resident with Maurice Guilleminet in Lyon. Stagnara founded the Spinal Department of the Livet Foundation before becoming Chief of the “Centre des Massues” from 1959 until his retirement in 1982. Pierre was happily married to Denise and together they raised ten wonderful children. After his retirement, he and his wife wrote a wonderful book entitled *Faithful Love, Utopia or Reality?* (1989), demonstrating their philosophy in life.

In his 1996 tribute to Dr. Stagnara (*Spine* 21/18: 2176–77), Jean Dubousset states that the study of spinal deformities was Dr. Stagnara’s life’s work, including the classic report on scoliosis published in the French Society of Orthopaedic and Trauma Surgery (SOFCOT) in 1954. Stagnara was the first to establish an organized nonsurgical approach to manage scoliosis with casts and braces, now referred to as the *Lyonssais Treatment*. His Centre focused on the entire field of spine pathology utilizing a multidisciplinary approach.



Rotational Deformity as measured by Stagnara

Stagnara was one of the first to surgically treat complex adult deformity, which led to the development of the Stagnara wake-up test in 1973 with the help of his anesthesiologist Mme. Vauzelle; this test is still used today.

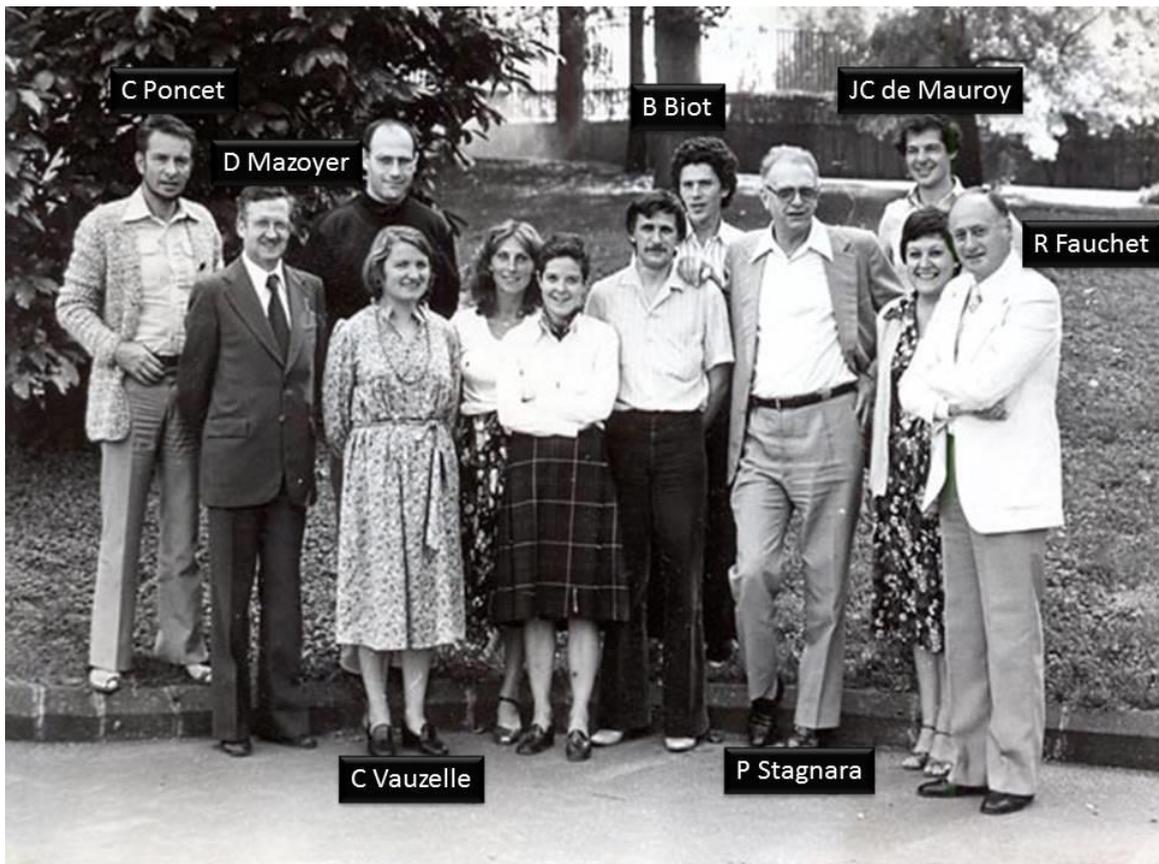
Stagnara continues to be well known both in literature and through his colleagues. As Ron DeWald states, “Dr. Stagnara presented his ‘wake-up technique’ [at the Lyon meeting 40 years ago], and at first, we couldn’t quite

believe what we were hearing. It was a revelation that we in the USA quickly adopted.”

Bob Winter recalls “Stagnara was a Harrington guest lecturer and spoke about treating adults with terrible spine deformities. I think the average curve was 150°. He is the person who taught us about ‘kyphosing scoliosis.’”

Pierre Stagnara will remain an important figure in the developing history of spine deformity surgery and as the current Historian of the SRS, it is my honor to present this tribute to our members.

Behrooz A. Akbarnia, M.D.



1978 Stagnara me´decins Massues

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