

# *A Short History of FAPP*

## **Monika Mehlem**

**The history of FAPP** (a professional group dealing with topics and research in Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy) started on a windy October day in the year 2000. On this day Monika Mehlem and Marika Weiger met in Hanf, a tiny village near Bonn, and shared their vision of a professional study group of psychotherapists dealing with horses in a therapeutic context..

Fortunately the wish was strong and the time was right. After a busy day, the cornerstone was laid for a joint project.

The idea was to invite representatives of all psychotherapeutic disciplines who had completed psychotherapeutic training, had appropriate hippological knowledge and were currently active in the field of Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy.

The following objectives and wishes of the planned study group initially were specified:

- improved networking between colleagues
- definition of the (various) fields of work
- professional exchange
- training, education, supervision

The last weekend in March 2001 saw the official invitation to a conference center in Königswinter near Bonn. This event was supported by the DKThR, the German umbrella organization for therapeutic riding. The response was fantastic. 15 colleagues from Germany, Finland and Holland attended spontaneously. They had traveled far to present their experiences, share ideas and develop a joint vision for the future.

The range of professional competences was hard to beat. Medical doctors, psychologists and educators presented their work with horses. Many of the leading psychotherapeutic directions were presented: psychoanalysis, depth psychotherapy, behavioral therapy, systemic family therapy, gestalt therapy, body orientated psychotherapy, logotherapy, client-centered psychotherapy, bioenergetics and psychodrama. During this meeting, FAPP got its name and a fundamental joint objective was declared:

**The aim of FAPP is to collect, describe, reflect and develop the variety of practical work with horses in psychotherapy**

The group welcomes, supports, and organizes professional exchange, meetings and collaboration between representatives of different therapeutic schools.

Since its founding, FAPP has met twice a year, in spring and fall. Every meeting does focus on a special topic but there is always room for individual case presentations, personal exchanges and immersion in individual topic areas.

In the following publication, 11 authors present their work. The members of FAPP are especially proud and happy to welcome two new authors, Suz Brooks and Marilyn Sokolof who have enriched the original collection with their contributions. For the first time, European and American approaches are presented side by side. This may be the beginning of a creative worldwide cooperation and exchange.

The contributions are "uncensored" and may offer a view into the variety of individual working styles. They demonstrate similarities, differences, sometimes opposites. "Therapist" means "companion on a person's journey" and thus, the contributions tell about paths that therapists have taken with clients, about paths that people have taken with people and about paths that people have taken with horses.

It has become a very personal book that describes, motivates and asks questions. We hope that the reader feels invited to join this adventure. We look forward to feedback, ideas and impressions from our readers and would love to bring these into our further discussions.



# Introduction

## Carl Klüwer

### Curriculum Vitae regarding Therapeutic Riding

The German Association for Therapeutic Riding is interested in Therapeutic Riding within the field of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy.

The very first German publication about this topic has been presented by **Ute Ohms** and **Irene Köhler**, psychiatric socialworkers of the former DDR (German

**Prof. Dr. med. Carl Klüwer**, born 8.11.1921.

*Study of medicine in Köln, Freiburg and Düsseldorf; clinical internship in pathological anatomy, surgery, obstetrics, internal medicine and psychosomatics.*

*Psychoanalytical training in Munich (1948) and Amsterdam (1963).*

*Since 1951 psychotherapist and psychoanalyst in private practise.*

*1951–1955 with a grant-in-aid of the US-High Commissioner of Germany developing director, later supervisor of the psychosomatic health and welfare centre at the children polyclinic of the University of Munich.*

*1961–1981 founding medical director of the therapeutic-educational institution for dissocial youngsters “Haus Sommerberg” of the AW (Arbeiterwohlfahrt –Labour Welfare Services) – Including working with the horse within the therapeutic system (since 1970).*

*Since 1970 assistant professor and since 1974 honorary professor at the Ruhr-University of Bochum, section for social anthropology and social psychology.*

*Since 1970 till 2001 carrying through Therapeutic Riding in the own medical practice.*

*Since 1971 Riding Instructor A (German National Equestrian Federation (FN)).*

*Since 1974 assistance and membership to the German Association for Therapeutic Riding (DKThR).*

*1991 honoured by the German National Equestrian Federation with the Honorary Riders-Silver-Cross; Honorary membership of the Austrian Association for Hippo therapy, Remedial Vaulting and Riding for the Handicapped.*

*1988-1996 executive board member; supervisor and leader of instructor courses of Therapeutic Riding (DKThR).*

*1996 honoured by the DKThR Honorary Members Golden Cross.*

*1991-1997 president of the Fed. RDI (Federation of Riding for the Disabled International.)*

*1998-2003 numerous training-seminars on Therapeutic Riding in Europe under the scope of the German – Senior – Expert – Service (SES).*

*1999 honoured by the German Federal Republic (BRD) with the Distinguished – Services – Cross on the Ribbon.*

*2006 my very last international Therapeutic Riding Seminar Japan (Tokyo)*

Democratic Republic): “Riding on horseback – a therapeutic possibility in child psychiatry.” But for the IV. International Congress in Hamburg **1983** three presentations regarding this topic were taken into the program.

**1989/1990** the German Association annual meeting in Amelsbüren under this subject proved, that the interest in working with horses in Psychiatry and Psychotherapy was much broader than expected. Also there were more relevant experiences in this field as had been supposed. **1993** in Bielefeld – Bethel a first international working group was set up and a second at the ‘Freie Universität’ in Berlin. A special edition of the DKThR journal: “Die Arbeit mit dem Pferd in Psychiatrie und Psychotherapie” was produced in the same year. It documented the actual state of knowledge.

In **1995** there was the ‘25th anniversary of DKThR’ and also the 3rd interdisciplinary and international “psychotherapy” meeting took place at the ‘Psychiatric Regional Hospital’ in Haar near Munich. At the same place, in **1998** an International European Congress in cooperation with the “International Federation for Therapeutic Riding (FRDI)” took place. **Dr. Dr. med. Michaela Scheidhacker** introduced and directed Therapeutic Riding in that hospital since **1987**. Before that, she had positive experiences in a private and psychosomatic hospital. Out of her experiences she founded the ‘Munich School for Therapeutic Riding’. Beginning in **2001**, after several frustrating trials, a group of 15, later 20 therapists with different personal trainings and experiences in the work with horses in psychotherapy came together and were ready for a process to understand and learn from each other. They decided to come together every six months for the mutual exchange.

**Dipl. Psych. Monika Mehlem** and **Dr. med. Marika Weiger** took the initiative and the group became the „Fachgruppe für die Arbeit mit dem Pferd in der Psychotherapie – **FAPP**“ in connection with the DKThR. Some members of the FAPP were members in the “Arbeitskreis für heilpädagogisches Voltigieren und Reiten” – (working group for remedial educational vaulting and riding) in the DKThR, so a continuous exchange between different faculties was given.

By and by the FAPP became a stabile centre and could integrate new members, who fulfilled the condition of a recognized personal psychotherapeutical training and the therapeutic work with the horses. Two new members came from Finland and one from the Netherlands. In each meeting two or three members presented their experiences for the discussion. So we all found a growing mutual understanding.

