




---

**Prof. Stanisław Tomaszunas, MD, PhD, DTM&H**

(1927-2011)

---

Prof. Stanisław Tomaszunas died on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2011.

In 1991-2010 he was involved in editing and publishing the journal *International Maritime Health*, the title of which was Bulletin of the Institute of Maritime and Tropical Medicine until 1998. He was the Editor in 1991-2008, and continued until 2010 as the Honorary Editor of the journal.

He was born on 31<sup>st</sup> July 1927 in Pinsk, Poland, as the son of the Polish Navy surgeon; his mother was also a medical doctor.

In 1944 he joined the Polish Army as a 17-year-old volunteer. In 1947-1952 he studied medicine at the Medical Academy in Gdańsk and qualified as a medical officer.

In the same year he was employed at the Institute of Maritime and Tropical Medicine in Gdańsk as an assistant in the Department of Epidemiology in the Laboratory of Highly Contagious Diseases. In 1953 he participated in a field project of Control of Tularaemia in the North-Western area of the country. He began publishing as a co-author and author of papers on the microbiology and epidemiology of tularaemia, and one of the subjects was the problem of pathogenicity and immunogenic properties of attenuated strains of *B. tularensis*.

In 1959 after presentation the results of his laboratory investigations on this pathogen he received his MD degree at the Medical Academy in Gdańsk. At the same time he qualified as a specialist in medical microbiology.

In 1958 he was transferred to the Clinical Department of the Institute in Gdynia. In 1958-1967 he conducted medical examinations of seafarers and fishermen, and participated in studies on their work-related health problems and published several papers on this subject.

In 1959 was employed as a ship's doctor on a Polish merchant vessel on a voyage to South-East Asia. In 1961 was a medical officer on a ship-base for a group of professional divers.

In 1962-63 he was also twice employed as a medical officer on tanker ships.

Beginning in 1962 he also conducted medical examination of workers delegated to work in tropical countries and trained doctors in problems of prevention of exotic diseases. In 1964 he worked for several months in Vietnam to gain practical experience in a clinic of exotic diseases.

By 1967 he had published 27 papers and was the author of chapters in medical books on subjects such as diagnosis and therapy of tropical diseases, diagnosis of leprosy, hygiene of life and work in the tropics, sexually transmitted diseases in seafarers, toxic cargo and the health of seafarers, epidemiology of work-related diseases and injuries of seafarers, and chemotherapy and prevention of malaria.

In 1963 he studied at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and received his DTM & H Diploma. In 1965 he qualified as a specialist in Maritime Medicine.

In 1967 he was employed as a WHO Medical Officer and worked in Togo, Turkey, Lebanon, and Afghanistan in the global Malaria Eradication Programme in those countries until the end of 1971.

In 1974 he presented at the Medical Academy in Gdańsk the results of his studies on the epidemiology of malaria in Afghanistan and obtained his PhD degree.

In 1975–1976 he was twice employed as a Consultant in the WHO Smallpox Eradication Programme in India. In 1976 he joined the WHO as a long-term staff member and worked up to the end of 1981 at the WHO Regional Office in New Delhi organizing the work of the Expanded Programme on Immunization in ten countries in the region.

On returning to Poland in 1981 he joined again the Institute in Gdynia and worked there until his retirement. He organized the WHO Inter-Regional Reference Medical Centre of Maritime Health there. He also participated in the work on the second edition of the International Medical Guide for Ships as well as writing and publishing two editions of the Polish Medical Guide for Ships (1979, 1987).

Professor Tomaszunas continued his research work at the Institute on subjects such as – medical care for seafarers at sea and on shore, morbidity and work-related accidents in seafarers and fishermen, allergic reactions in fishermen, the work of port health and ships' medical officers, health promotion in ships' crews, and travel medicine problems. He actively participated in the work of the ILO/WHO Joint Committee on the Health of Seafarers preparing background materials and working papers for consecutive sessions, and presented the results of his work at international scientific meetings and symposia on maritime, tropical, and travel medicine.

He organized and conducted in Gdynia three postgraduate international symposia for medical doctors from 17 countries, on maritime occupational health. As from 1991 he participated in International Symposia in this speciality, and proposed establishing the international association of doctors who take care of the health of seafarers and fishermen in various countries. At the time of the symposium held in Oslo in 1997 this idea was approved by the majority of participants, and the International Maritime Health Association (IMHA) was established. He was elected the Secretary of the IMHA in 1997 and 1999.

Prof. Tomaszunas published over 140 original and review papers on microbiology, epidemiology, tropical diseases, and occupational health in international and Polish medical journals, and was the author or co-author of 6 medical books. Until 2010 he participated in training activities at the Institute in Gdynia and lectured on maritime health problems.

Throughout his life he was fully devoted to his professional work.

His free time was devoted to his hobbies – water sports, history, and numismatics.

He will be remembered by his colleagues and friends. *Non omnis moriar.*

Professor Tomaszunas is survived by a wife and two daughters.



Dr Tomaszunas at the time of his voyage to South East Asia as a medical doctor on a merchant vessel (1960)

**We would like to thank all our friends, readers of our journal for your words of sorrow, compassion and sympathy over the loss of Professor Stanislaw Tomaszunas, an eminent scientist, physician and Honorary Editor-in International Maritime Health**