

## LONZA's Centenary

### EDITORIAL

*Lonza Ltd.* is celebrating its centenary this year. It was founded in 1897 as *Elektrizitätswerk Lonza Aktiengesellschaft*, with headquarters in Gampel, Valais. Where the Lötschen and Rhône valleys meet, *Lonza* built Valais' first major hydroelectric power plant on the right bank of the *Lonza* river along with a carbide factory. Production started in 1898.

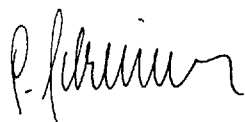
In the past hundred years, *Lonza* has developed from a carbide and fertilizer plant into a modern chemical and biotechnology company. Today, the name *Lonza* stands for a globally operating chemical group focused on polymers and additives (*Lonza SpA*), specialty chemicals (*Lonza Inc.*), and fine chemicals (*Lonza AG*).

It's a long way from calcium carbide to products with high added value. The road systematically followed by our predecessors involved the development of chemical building blocks of ever great complexity into a genuine core competency by means of large-scale production. The combination of sophisticated intermediates and chemical building blocks together with a large number of key technologies put *Lonza* in a pole position as a supplier to the international life science industry. In place of the conventional technology and product orientation, we are now focusing on satisfying customers' needs. *Lonza* anticipated the trend to outsourcing as far back as the mid-1970s. At the Valais Works in Visp, we built the fine chemicals complex, gradually adding highly flexible multipurpose chemical production plants in the period 1984–1997.

Thirty years ago, *Lonza* started systematically expanding research and development in Visp, which in the meantime has become a center of excellence not only for *Lonza AG* but for the entire *Lonza* Group. Its achievements – as reflected in the very promising R&D pipeline – are highly esteemed by our international clientele. Keenly aware that *Lonza* can only thrive in the marketplace if it can ensure its continued access to leading-edge technology, we began developing close contacts with universities both in Switzerland and abroad some time ago.

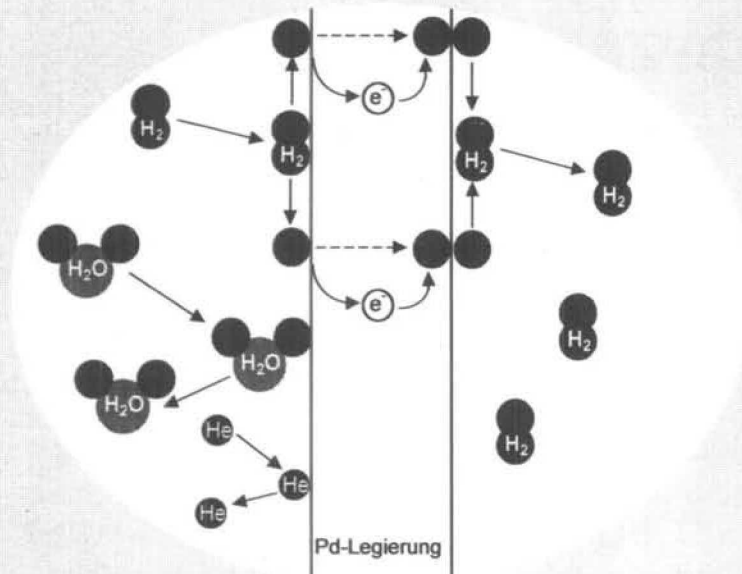
Switzerland will continue to prosper as an industrial center if we can rapidly translate cutting-edge research into industrial results. While forging ahead with the globalization of its business, *Lonza* is clearly committed to Switzerland and will strengthen its fine chemicals complex in Visp with further investments.

It gives us great pleasure to give you an overview of our history and activities in this special issue.



Dr. Gerhart Schreiner

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