

THE ORTHOPAEDIC FORUM

The 2015 Austrian-Swiss-German Fellowship Report

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The History of the Austrian-Swiss-German Traveling Fellowship

The Austrian-Swiss-German (ASG) Traveling Fellowship was established in 1979; Karl Zweymüller from Austria, Alex Staubli from Switzerland, and Günter Janssen and Udo Rodegerdts from Germany were the first fellows chosen by their respective national societies to travel to different renowned centers in the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States. The willingness to provide an opportunity to share research ideas, surgical techniques, and knowledge of orthopaedic surgery and traumatology, and to forge a closer relationship with the Anglo-American orthopaedic community, had been in consideration for some time, but it was at the end of 1974 at the German Orthopaedic and Traumatology Meeting (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Orthopädie und Traumatologie [DGOT]) that closer attention was paid to the project. At that time, the American-British-Canadian (ABC) Fellowship, founded in 1948, was a well-established traveling fellowship and served as a trigger for the ASG Fellowship. Representing each national orthopaedic society, Franz Ender from Austria, Emil Morscher from Switzerland, and Lothar Henkel from Germany determined the rules that were accepted during the DGOT Meeting in Baden-Baden on May 3, 1975. Since 1984, the American Orthopaedic Association (AOA) has been assisting with the organization of the Fellowship, after approval of a formal request by Hans Mau, then Chairman of the ASG Fellowship Commission and “father” of the ASG fellows. In 1984, the AOA incorporated the ASG Fellowship with their “Emerging Leader Program,” and founded a reciprocal tour that enabled American surgeons to visit prominent orthopaedic centers in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. In 1998, J. Larry

Marsh and Michael J. Yaszemski were the first ASG traveling fellows from the U.S.

Today, the fellowship is organized biennially and usually occurs over a period of 5 to 6 weeks, with 1 week in the U.K. (either before or after the North American tour), and incorporates attendance at the annual AOA meeting.

The 2015 ASG Fellowship

Our 2015 ASG tour started in the U.K. in London on May 24, followed by a visit to Cambridge. After 1 full week in Britain, we flew to Salt Lake City, Utah, to start the North American journey. After stops in Tucson, Arizona; San Diego, Irvine, and San Francisco, California; and Portland, Oregon, we attended the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Orthopaedic Association (COA) in Vancouver, British Columbia. We then traveled to Seattle, Washington, to Providence, Rhode Island (for the Annual Meeting of the AOA), and finally to Boston, Massachusetts, before heading home on June 30.

The U.K. Tour

London

On May 24, the first host of our tour was Professor Tim Briggs, Past President of the British Orthopaedic Association (BOA), at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital (RNOH) at Brockley Hill in Stanmore. As we learned from our delightful guide, Dr. Jerome Davidson, the hospital, which had been built in 1905, had become an emergency hospital during World War I that hosted injured military; today, this hospital is a world-renowned center for musculoskeletal oncology. Professor Gordon Blunn (from the Biomedical Engineering Department and Director of the London Implant Retrieval Center), Dr. Alister Hart, and Dr. John Skinner invited us with Dr. Harry Hoti (one

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of the managers) to gain insight on various topics, including trunnion problems (presented by Dr. Melanie Coathup, University College London) and prosthetic advancements in orthopaedic oncology (presented by Dr. Jay Meswania, University College London), before visiting the manufacturing site of Stanmore Implants.

On the next day, we joined case presentations during the metal-on-metal rounds at the Teaching Centre at RNOH before attending a variety of tumor cases in the operating room (OR) with Drs. Tim Briggs and John Skinner. Back in London, we were welcomed at the Royal College of Surgeons by Mrs. Hazel Choules, our friendly and competent organizer of the British part of the fellowship, and had a tour of the impressive Hunterian Museum.

Finally, Dr. Rajarshi Bhattacharya, Head of Trauma and Orthopaedics and a 2012 British ASG fellow, hosted us at the Imperial College Healthcare National Health Service (NHS) Trust.

Cambridge

The start of our tour in Cambridge on May 28 was as unusual as it was spectacular: Sid Lawrence, a resident finishing his F2 (foundation 2) year, took us on a punt-boat tour that cruised the scenic River Cam along the most famous colleges of the city. At Addenbrooke's Hospital NHS, our host, Dr. Vikas Kandhuja, introduced us to the entire orthopaedic faculty, including Dr. Andrew McCaskie and "Mr. C" (aka Dr. Christopher Constant) at an academic symposium. Dinner took place at the wonderful Christ's College in the elegant Mountbatten room (Fig. 1), named after Earl Louis Mountbatten of Burma

(1900-1979), a British Sea Lord and famous alumnus of Christ's College. Mr. C delighted us with a limited edition of Alan Murley's book, *Some Aspects of the History of Orthopaedic Services in the Cambridge Area*.

The next day, we visited clinics and learned about research at Addenbrooke's Hospital with Dr. Peter Hull, Vikas Khanduja, and Graham Thytherleigh Strong (thank you for your very interesting and exotic work about sternoclavicular joint arthroscopy); we also visited the research unit. We are very thankful that Mr. C introduced us to the Evelyn Cambridge Surgical Training Centre, an incredible facility that teaches surgical skills to residents, which is run by Mr. C himself.

The U.S./Canada Tour

Salt Lake City, Utah

On Sunday, May 31, we crossed the Atlantic Ocean and started the North American tour in Salt Lake City. We began our visit with the Tumor Board at the University of Utah's Huntsman Cancer Institute. We were impressed by the extensive research facility and, most of all, by the level of clinical and research work on sarcomas by Drs. Lor Randall and Kevin Jones.

The next day, we attended a couple of technically impressive periacetabular osteotomies (PAOs) with Dr. Chris Peters. Later, our hosts took us on a hike. There was an unbelievable view of Salt Lake City from Ensign Peak, which first was climbed by the Mormons on July 26, 1847, 2 days after Brigham Young and the first group of Mormon pioneers entered Utah's Salt Lake Valley. In the evening, Professor Charles Saltzman, Chairman of the Department of Orthopaedics, hosted



Fig. 1
The hosts and ASG fellows at Christ's College, Cambridge. From left to right: Andrew McCaskie, Vikas Khanduja, Christoph Zilkens, Hermes Miozzari, Marcus Egermann, Andrew Robinson, Mr. C (aka Dr. Christopher Constant), Joel Melton, Kuldeep Stöhr, Philipp Funovics, and Graham Thytherleigh Strong.

a dinner party at his home with the entire faculty to honor the ASG fellows.

After academic presentations during the next day's Grand Rounds, we traveled the long road to Tucson by car, with stops at the Arches National Park in Utah, Monument Valley on the Arizona-Utah border, and the Grand Canyon, right on time for a breathtaking sunset.

Tucson, Arizona

On June 4, we visited University Hospital in Tucson. Dr. John Ruth, head of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, and his team provided an interesting insight into their most recent research about bone regrowth using a sheep pseudarthrosis model, in which healing was induced with a 3-dimensional (3D)-printed scaffold made from polybutylene terephthalate (PBT) that was filled with stem cells. In the outpatient clinic, we discussed some trauma cases with Dr. Jordan Smith before enjoying some rest during the rainy (!) afternoon.

The following day was dedicated to a staff meeting. Dr. Smith presented an introduction to the state of Arizona, the city of Tucson, and the local residency program. The topics allowed for intense discussions. In the evening, we were invited for dinner at Dr. Ruth's house, along with his family and part of the staff.

The next day, before we left for San Diego, Drs. Ruth and Smith took us to visit the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum outside of Tucson. Crossing the Saguaro National Park where the museum is located, there is an impressive view of the valley below, and we strolled among diverse cacti and wild animals in the early hours (Fig. 2).

San Diego, California

On June 6, after a generous welcome reception at Dr. Steven Garfin's house with Drs. Richard Santore, Michael Muldoon, and Bradford L. Currier, among others, we visited the Sharp Memorial Hospital, a private hospital that is part of the not-for-profit Sharp HealthCare system in collaboration with the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), located north of San Diego. Mrs. Mary Elington, the Vice President of the Orthopaedics and Neurologic Services, welcomed us, and Dr. Santore set up a live PAO surgery for our visit. From the boardroom, we were able to watch the surgery, which was broadcast live; one at a time, we each had the opportunity to visit the OR. The case was performed on a young lady, a past soccer player at the university, who had a labral lesion with dysplasia of the left hip and hypermobility. The first step was a hip arthroscopic procedure by Dr. Michael Muldoon, which freed the labrum from the abundant scar tissue along the capsule, and then fixed it back with 1 anchor. Thereafter, Dr. Santore performed a technically remarkable, bloodless PAO, with continuous "blood management" by the anesthesiologist, Dr. Paul Coray, using a blood-flow control system to monitor blood pressure, flow, and resistance.

In the afternoon, Dr. Santore gave us a tour through the city and the Cabrillo National Monument from where we could appreciate the entire San Diego Bay. Despite the heavy afternoon traffic, we made it back to the exclusive meeting on "Conservative Hip Surgery: A European and American Perspective." There were almost 80 participants, including surgeons, physical therapists, radiologists, anesthesiologists, and 2 patients who had undergone PAOs. Drs. Egermann and Zilkens



Fig. 2

The ASG fellows at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum in Tucson. Notice the "Excellence in Orthopaedic Care" logo on the back of the T-shirt.

had the honor to share the European experience regarding treatment options for aseptic necrosis, as well as the latest research on hip cartilage imaging, combined with impingement stress simulation.

The next day, we were invited to visit the UCSD Research Center. Samuel Ward, PT, PhD, guided us through the laboratory before we attended a scientific session with the faculty on different perspectives on total knee arthroplasty, hip surgery, and cartilage repair.

Irvine, California

On June 9, Dr. Thay Lee of the University of California, Irvine, took us to the VA (Veterans Affairs) Long Beach Hospital and the Orthopaedic Biomechanics Laboratory for a guided tour with Mike Kunzler, a research fellow. The facility is focusing on biomechanical shoulder investigations, and the vast number of publications from Dr. Lee is hard proof.

In the afternoon, we joined Drs. Charles Rosen and Gregory Rafijah at the Portofino Marina at Redondo Beach for a sailing trip. Despite cold and foggy weather, there was enough breeze for 3 hours of great sailing along the shore. We learned about the Physician Payments Sunshine Act from Dr. Rosen, who explained the requirement that “data on payments and gifts made to physicians and teaching hospitals by medical device and pharmaceutical companies be publicly available on a searchable federal database” (<http://www.aaos.org/Advocacy/Sunshine>).

The next morning, we had a Grand Rounds session, followed by trauma rounds. Dr. Rosen took us to visit the entire hospital, including the orthopaedic ward, the OR, the intensive

care unit, the outpatient surgery facility, and the laboratory, where Dr. Schwarzenberg presented some challenging revision arthroplasty cases.

San Francisco, California

On June 11, our host Dr. Hubert Kim, from the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), and his wife invited us for dinner at their home with Dr. Benjamin Ma, for what was a great “homemade, slow food” dinner.

Dr. Anthony Luke runs the Human Performance Center at the brand-new UCSF Medical Center, an orthopaedic institute for athletes, where we gave our talks during a morning session with the residents and the faculty, which was hosted by Dr. Kim. Thereafter, Dr. Alfred Muo guided us through the laboratory in the Alexandre Centre and a tour of the campus at Mission Bay. After watching Dr. Ma perform a lateral meniscal transplant in a 15-year-old patient following a meniscectomy (with the dovetail technique), Dr. Kim brought us to the Women and Children’s Center, a brand-new set of interconnected buildings that form an innovative hospital with updated technology (including delivery robots rolling around autonomously).

The next day, Dr. Kim scheduled a wine tasting in Napa Valley. Leaving San Francisco Bay by ferry, we had a superb view of the city skyline on a foggy, chilly morning. Once in Vallejo, Mrs. Marlene Paulson guided us through some superb vineyards, including Odette, Haber, and Keenan.

Portland, Oregon

On June 14, Drs. Robert A. Hart and Thomas Huff welcomed us for a sturgeon fishing session on the Columbia River at “The



Fig. 3
The ASG fellows with Dr. Bas Masri (center), President of the COA-ACO.

Gorge.” On the way back to Portland, we stopped at the Rowena Crest Viewpoint, which offered a wonderful panoramic view of the Columbia River.

The next day, we attended morning rounds at the Oregon Health & Science University Marquam Hill Campus, where we discussed trauma cases from the weekend and selected case presentations by attendings. After our social presentations about “Adolf Lorenz, an Austrian Orthopaedic Pioneer” (Dr. Funovics) and the “Swiss Lord of the Rings” (Dr. Miozzari), we attended spinal surgery with Dr. Hart. In the evening, we met the entire faculty for a beautiful reception with Peruvian food specialties. The next morning, after presenting our research talks, we visited the hospital and had a tour of the academic campus.

Vancouver, British Columbia

Arriving in Vancouver on June 17, we were honored to stay at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver, the location of the 2015 COA-ACO (Canadian Orthopaedic Association/Association Canadienne d’Orthopédie) meeting. During the Opening Ceremony, Dr. Bob Bell, Ontario Deputy Minister of Health, gave the guest lecture; then, all of the visiting fellows, including the North American Traveling Fellows (NATF) and the Canadian-French-Belgian-Swiss (CFBS) Traveling Fellows, were welcomed by the society’s president, Dr. Bas Masri (Fig. 3). Drs. Egermann and Zilkens moderated COA Paper Sessions on trauma (with Dr. Matthew R.G. Menon) and adult hip reconstruction (with James P. Waddell), respectively. In the evening, we joined orthopaedic-oncologic specialists Drs. Robert

Turcotte, Jay Wunder, Peter Ferguson, Franklin Sim, and others for dinner.

The next day, for the Subspecialty Paper Sessions, Dr. Funovics moderated on tumors with Dr. Michele Ghert, and Dr. Miozzari moderated on reconstruction of the adult knee with Steven MacDonald. In the early evening, we were invited for the “Soirée Under the Sea” at the Vancouver Aquarium, an unbelievable environment of aquatic life with rich color and diversity.

Seattle, Washington

On June 20, we were welcomed to Seattle by Dr. Howard Chansky, Chair of the Department of Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine at the University of Washington, who generously organized seats for us at a Seattle Mariners baseball game against the Houston Astros. The faculty members had the difficult task of introducing the Europeans to the rules of the game.

Drs. Neil Tarabdkar and Christopher Domes took us on a boat tour on Lake Union, after a stop at Storyville Coffee (a Seattle-based coffee roaster) close to the Queen Anne neighborhood, a wonderful, well-known viewpoint to observe the city skyline with Mount Rainier in the background. We also visited the Seattle Center, which was built in 1962 for the World’s Fair, and Pike Place Market.

The next day, we gave our presentations in the presence of the faculty and Dr. Pat Gorai at Harborview Hospital. We visited the cadaver laboratory and practiced surgical approaches to the pelvis for about 2 hours. At the Northwest Hospital, we shadowed Dr. Navine Fernando to observe a



Fig. 4
The ASG fellows with Dr. Richard Iorio, Chief Coordinator of the AOA-ASG Fellowship Program (third from left), Michael Yaszemski (fourth from left), and Dr. Bob Hart (sixth from left).



Fig. 5

The ASG and JOA traveling fellows at the President's Dinner at the Squantum Association. From left to right, back row: Takayuki Furumatsu, Sumihisa Orita, Jun Nishio, Tomoki Nakamura, and Kanji Mori. Front row: Koichi Ogura, Marcus Egermann, Hermes Miozzari, Philipp Funovics, and Christoph Zilkens.

couple of total hip replacement surgeries with different approaches. Dinner was in a lovely Italian restaurant with Drs. Adam Sassoon, Navine Fernando, and Darin Davidson. The following day, we met with Drs. Sassoon and Fernando for the morning rounds at the Northwest Hospital and observed several cases in the OR.

Providence, Rhode Island

Before the Opening Ceremony of the 128th Annual Meeting of the AOA on June 24, we met Kathy Sinnen, the incredibly nice and helpful coordinator for the North American trip, as well as Dr. Richard Iorio, Dr. Bob Hart, the American-British-Canadian (ABC) fellows, and the Japanese Orthopaedic Association (JOA) fellows. The AOA president, Dr. J. Lawrence Marsh, introduced the Carousel of elected presidents, as well as all of the traveling fellows (the ABC fellows, the NATF fellows, the ASG fellows, and the JOA fellows).

The next day, we attended a great session on "Leadership with Effective Communication and Negotiation Across a Diverse Workforce" that was moderated by Dr. Denis R. Clohisy, with other topics presented by Dr. Michael J. Yaszemski and Joanne Lipman (author, media advisor, and editor). In the evening, we met Drs. Iorio, Hart, and Yaszemski for the ASG fellows dinner (Fig. 4).

During the "Fellowships Alumni Reception," Dr. Jeffrey C. Wang introduced and honored the ASG and the JOA traveling fellows, and all of the AOA-ASG traveling fellows were acknowledged. This was the time to share our impressions with the Japanese fellows: Takayuki Furumatsu, Okayama University; Kanji Mori, Shiga University of Medical Science; Tomoki Nakamura, Mie University Graduate School of Medicine; Jun Nishio, Fukuoka University Faculty of Medicine; Koichi Ogura, The University of Tokyo; and Sumihisa Orita,

Chiba University Graduate School of Medicine. The President's Dinner took place at the Squantum Association clubhouse (Fig. 5).



Fig. 6

The ASG fellows with Dr. Mike Millis (center) at the Massachusetts General Hospital.

Boston, Massachusetts

After a short detour to Cape Cod on June 27, we made our way to Boston. Dr. Mike Millis welcomed us for tours of Boston Children's Hospital, Harvard Medical School, Massachusetts General Hospital (Fig. 6), and the Massachusetts State House.

At the Boston Children's Hospital, Drs. Millis and Travis Matheny started the day with a pediatric case presentation, and then performed a PAO case. In the evening, we met at the prestigious Harvard Club of Boston for a faculty dinner organized by Dr. Harry E. Rubash (Massachusetts General Hospital, host of the AOA-JOA fellows) and Dr. Millis (host of the ASG fellows), which we were honored to attend.

Dr. Millis organized a special schedule for our last day at the Boston Children's Hospital, including an OR visit for Drs. Miozzari and Zilkens and a visit to the outpatient clinic with Dr. Mark C. Gebhardt for Dr. Funovics. (Dr. Egermann had departed from the U.S. to start as the Head of the Department for Orthopedic and Trauma Surgery at the St. Vincenz and Elisabeth Hospital in Mainz, Germany.)

This was the last highlight before the tour was over and we had to make our way to the airport.

A Final Word

The ASG Fellowship was more than just a travel experience through different countries. It was an active exchange of clinical and research experiences, hospitality, and friendship. The

experiences that we shared during those intense weeks will forever change the way that we will welcome our academic guests. We want to express our gratitude to all of the people whom we met throughout our journey. We learned from respected teachers, and we exchanged ideas with honored colleagues, but, more than anything, we made beloved friends. ■

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