

FELLOWSHIPS

Austrian-Swiss-German Travelling Fellowship Tour 2013

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Fig. 1 A visit in the OR of the Princess Grace Hospital, London. (Left to right) Andreas Niemeier, Tobias Renkawitz, Fares Haddad, Rainer Biedermann and Fabian von Knoch

A great start in the UK.

Between May 27th and July 3rd 2013 the Austrian-Swiss-German (ASG) travelling fellows visited a number of outstanding academic orthopaedic centres in England, Canada and the USA.

The ASG Travelling Fellowship programme, initiated in 1978, is considered the highest distinction within the German-Speaking Orthopaedic Associations and recognises the commitment and dedication to academic orthopaedic surgery of four emerging leaders. One Austrian, one Swiss and two German orthopaedic surgeons

visit orthopaedic centres in England, Canada and the USA, in a programme co-ordinated by the British (BOA), American (AOA) and Canadian (COA) Orthopaedic Associations. In return, one Canadian, one British and two American surgeons tour Austria, Germany and Switzerland.

The ASG fellows 2013 were: Rainer Biedermann (University of Innsbruck, Austria; paediatric orthopaedics, foot/ankle), Fabian von Knoch (Schulthess Clinic Zurich, Switzerland; adult hip and knee reconstruction), Andreas Niemeier (University of Hamburg,

Germany; adult reconstruction) and Tobias Renkawitz (University of Regensburg, Germany; adult hip and knee reconstruction).

We visited 14 different academic orthopaedic departments. The main features of each visit were academic sessions, with presentations by the fellows and their hosts, tours of the clinical areas, campus and research facilities and time in the operating theatre, which allowed excellent scientific and personal discussion. In addition, an impressive social and cultural programme was organised by the hosts.

Starting on May 27th in the UK, our first host was Fares Haddad, Professor of Orthopaedics and Director of the Institute of Sport, Exercise and Health at University College, London (UCL) and Editor-in-Chief of *The Bone & Joint Journal (BJJ)*. With Rami Kallala, one of Professor Haddad's research fellows as our guide, we undertook a sightseeing tour of London on a bank holiday, including a visit to 'The Shard', the tallest tower (310m) in Western Europe with its spectacular views over the city.

The following day, we visited the operating theatres at UCL and the Princess Grace Hospital, enjoying challenging cases of ACL reconstruction, hip arthroscopy and a periacetabular osteotomy (Fig. 1). In the afternoon a scientific symposium was held at the brand-new UCL Institute of Sport, Exercise & Health with talks by the UCL faculty and ASG fellows, which covered a wide range of topics including the mechanisms of disease in subtypes of OA, femoro-acetabular impingement, meniscal augmentation, failure of the unicompartmental knee replacement, component positioning in TKR, measurement of migration and pinless navigation in primary and revision THR, all of which stimulated a vivid exchange of ideas about the on-going research of all presenters. The day ended with an excellent faculty dinner.

The following day started with a discussion of difficult cases and treatment strategies in total joint replacement with Professor Haddad. Afterwards, it was a special honour to attend a meeting at the editorial offices of *The Bone &*

Joint Journal in the heart of London, with inspiring presentations by Editor-in-Chief Fares Haddad, Editor Emeritus James Scott and Head of Editorial Publishing Services, Emma Vodden. Topics included the the history of the *JBJS (Br)* and orthopaedic surgery in England, as well as the evolution of the *BJJ*, academic publishing and current challenges in the peer review process. In the afternoon, we joined Mr Rahul Patel in the operating theatre for a couple of sports medicine cases.

In the early evening of 29th May, we continued our trip by train to Nottingham (Fig. 2) where we were welcomed by Mr Peter James, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon at Nottingham University Hospital. Next morning, after attending the trauma rounds at Queens Medical Centre, we joined Peter James at Nottingham City Hospital where we were introduced to specific features of the British world of surgery, such as an open Nightingale ward. In the afternoon, Peter James organised a very lively, interesting and enjoyable scientific session on 'lower limb joint replacement', with alternating talks by ourselves and Peter James and Andrew Manktelow from the Nottingham faculty. We covered many aspects of lower limb primary and revision replacement, and included discussion of controversial cases. The day ended with a visit to England's oldest pub 'Ye Olde Trip To Jerusalem' and a delicious 'Curry night out in Nottingham', hosted by Peter James.

The following day started with a morning session chaired by Angus Wallace, Professor at the Division of Orthopaedic/Accident Surgery, Nottingham University, with a variety of 'challenge the ASG fellows' cases, most entertainingly presented with a touch of British humour. We then

went to the operating theatres, joining colleagues for a variety of primary and revision upper and lower limb joint replacements. This was followed by an afternoon academic session on the upper extremity, which again included talks by ourselves as well as the Nottingham University faculty (Fig. 3), on topics which ranged from bone-preserving shoulder replacement to the diagnosis and treatment of upper limb tumours and the development and clinical application of the Nottingham Surgilig (LockDown) system. In the evening, Professor Wallace took us to a restaurant close to Sherwood Forest and "home" of Robin Hood where the group enjoyed a spring evening with outdoor drinks and a wonderful selection of venison dishes. On Saturday we used some free time for outdoor sports at the National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham. On Sunday, June 2nd, Professor and Mrs Wallace invited us on a unique canal tour of the British Midlands on their narrow boat 'Jacana Mist', which included an exciting training session in steering for each fellow.

On June 3rd, we left Birmingham, UK on a flight to Chicago, USA. A more detailed report of the latter stages of the Fellowship will be published shortly in the English and German literature.

We would like to express our special thanks to Professors Haddad and Wallace and their teams in London and Nottingham for dedicating their time, immense hospitality and great friendship to us, which made our time in the UK a perfect start to the tour.

We also express thanks to the American, Canadian and British Orthopaedic Associations, as well as the respective national Austrian, Swiss and German Orthopaedic Associations, who made this outstanding 2013 tour possible. 



Fig. 2 "Always on the go, bags included". The four ASG traveling fellows on their way from London to Nottingham



Fig. 3 Exchanging scientific ideas during an academic session in Nottingham. (Left to right) Tobias Renkawitz, Hernan de la Vega, Brian Holdsworth, David Thyagarajan, Angus Wallace, Andreas Niemeier, Fabian von Knoch, Rainer Biedermann

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