

THE HANDSHAKE

The Australian Hand Surgery Society



NEWSLETTER

President's Report

As we approach the end of the year besides the inevitable avalanche of clinical demands and social events, several issues have been occupying the AHSS Board.

The first of these has been reviewing the process of election of members to the Board. The constitution of the society was revised in 2016 to facilitate competitive election. While the process of election was accepted at that meeting, it took another 3 years for the constitutional changes to be codified. We haven't needed to use these provisions to date but we have identified some unintended consequences of these modifications and some existing provisions within the constitution that could be improved and while the process of constitutional refinement is a sometimes tortuous journey, this is something that the Board will embark on and present to the membership in due course.

The second issue was the appointment of the AHSS 2022 Travelling fellow. Under the stewardship of Greg Bain and Randy Bindra, the process of application and appointment has been considerably improved, with the consequence of adding rigour and prestige to the appointment. As a participant in the interviews of the four AHSS younger fellow applicants, it is clear that there is significant talent and enthusiasm for the development of hand surgery education, practice and research within our membership. It is encouraging that 3 of the 4



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shortlisted applicants were graduates of the PFET Hand programme, endorsing the value of this programme for the AHSS. I would like to thank Greg and Randy for their extensive work in establishing the new Travelling Fellowship application process.

The third was a Board Governance education session led by the CEO of the AOA, Adrian Cosenza. The presentation was an introduction to the principles and basic processes by which a board functions. While the AHSS board and the society as a whole, offers its membership excellent representation and value in terms of education, research and fellowship as a whole, there is considerable talent within the board and the membership at large that could be harnessed more efficiently with improvements in board process and the development of a more strategic approach to the board's function and direction with benefit to the society. Again, the Board is aiming to engage the membership on the direction we should take in the future.



The upcoming Annual meeting in Sydney – March 1-4 – is being convened by Richard Lawson and Sarah Tolerton. The British Society for Surgery of the Hand is our guest society and together with the faculty of invited speakers and our own contributions, the conference will have a fantastic academic programme. Please register early and submit abstracts and offer to help out where needed. The meeting and the social programme will be a great opportunity to get together as a society after a long stretch in the realm of webinars and online meetings.

Finally, I would like to thank all members of the board and the associated Education, Travelling Fellowship, Outreach, and Section 11 committees, as well as Trudy Wapling and Tracey Richter – our indefatigable executive assistants – for all of their work through the year. The society is dependent for its success on its members and their willingness to participate and shoulder responsibility and burden when asked, and I am very grateful for everyone's co-operation and efforts.

I would like to wish everyone a happy and safe holiday season.

David McCombe
AHSS President

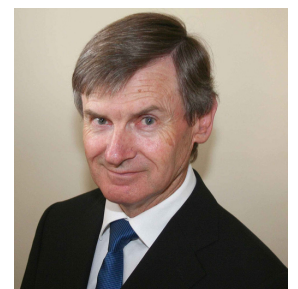


AHSS 50th Anniversary - by Roland Hicks

The Australian Hand Surgery Society – 50 Years Young

The Second Twenty-five Years

The second twenty-five years of our Society has been a period of increasing size, complexity of its activities and international standing. The Society became an incorporated entity, and the Board now has subcommittees to manage our educational, training and outreach activities.



Australian hand surgeons have made significant contributions to the hand surgery literature, reporting their basic scientific research, clinical investigations and techniques, with many serving as reviewers for submitted articles and others in editorial roles for publications such as the Journals of Hand Surgery, European, American and Asian Pacific volumes.

Education

The AHSS has continued to conduct its annual scientific meeting on rotation through the various states. An eminent overseas guest speaker is invited to present a number of papers and is encouraged to visit at least one other state for local educational activities. Each of our Guest Professors is awarded an Honorary Membership of our Society. At each meeting a prize for the best scientific presentation is awarded, honouring the memory of Bruce Conolly, a prize for innovation in hand surgery is named for Tim Herbert and the John Hueston prize is awarded for the best paper at the scientific meeting on Dupuytren's disease. The biennial invited Bernard O'Brien Oration is given by either the Guest Professor or an Australian / New Zealand member.

In August 1989 The Australian Hand Club set up its first formal registrar meeting. Graham Lister, the guest professor, together with a faculty of members of the Hand Club, presented a 3-day teaching programme to registrars on the approved training

The Australian Hand Surgery Society – 50 Years Young cont..

programmes in general, plastic and orthopaedic surgery throughout Australia. Similar meetings were organised in Sydney in 1994 by Michael Tonkin, and on the Gold Coast, Queensland, in 1996 by David Stabler. Subsequently the Registrars course has become a more regular event occurring annually or every second year.

The AHSS now manages the Hand Surgery components of both the Australian Orthopaedic Association (AOA) and Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) scientific programmes coordinating overseas and local guests to produce high level educational programmes. In 2017, Australian hand surgeons were responsible for hosting the Symposium of Hand and Wrist Biomechanics International (HWBI) in Brisbane in July and the Asian Pacific Wrist Association (APWA) meeting in Adelaide in October.

As our educational activities have increased, a position of Scientific Co-ordinator has been established to liaise with the states, local conference organizing committees, the AOA, RACS and ASPS to assist in the provision of quality educational programs. Greg Bain from Adelaide held this position for many years, ensuring the smooth running of all these meetings. He has been succeeded in 2020 by Prof. Randy Bindra.

Training

For some time, there had been the desire of a number of members to have Hand Surgery recognized as a specialty and to establish a Fellowship of Hand Surgery. An attempt was made to establish an FRACS in Hand Surgery. This was not successful. Other options to recognise advanced training in Hand Surgery were considered and, after much debate and with the assistance of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, a Post Fellowship Extended Training program (PFET) was established in 2015 whereby trainees at the end of their basic specialisation would embark on additional specialist training in hand surgery, receiving a PFET Certificate from the College certifying their advanced specialist training.

This program has led to the certification of a number of training posts in all States and New Zealand and since 2016 has seen the successful certification of over 40 surgeons. The administration of this program has been through the tireless work of Michael Tonkin and David McCombe and from 2021 is being administered by Alexa Potter and Libby Anderson.

International Outreach

Inspired in particular by the late Bruce Conolly and Graham Gumley, for many years a number of the members of our Society have worked, providing care and teaching local doctors and therapists, in developing countries in our region including Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, Nepal, Samoa and other countries. This activity is greatly appreciated by the recipients and has helped to spread the knowledge and skills of hand surgery throughout the region. These activities are expensive to run and time and effort are freely given by our members. The AHSS has established an Outreach committee to assess the many requests for additional funding and has contributed financially to a significant degree to outreach activities for many years.

IFSSH Congress 2007

In the late 1990's it was decided that Australia should seek to host the 10th IFSSH Triennial Congress in 2007 in Sydney. It would be the first in the Southern Hemisphere. Our bid introduced the concept of holding the surgeons' and hand therapists' (IFSHT) congresses at the same venue with combined sessions and with all delegates able to attend any session of either program. This is now established practice. Like the Sydney Olympics bid we had the best technical bid, opening with a letter of support from the Prime Minister, and like the Olympics we won in Istanbul in 2001 by one vote. I led the bid and subsequently was the convenor of the Congress.

The scientific programme prepared by Michael Tonkin, Steve Coleman and their committee, was of the highest standard, it ran smoothly without any major AV glitches and the timing discipline imposed on speakers set an example for future meetings. The Inaugural IFSSH Swanson Lecturer was our Guest Professor at Lorne in 1993, Goran Lundborg, speaking about "The Intelligent Hand and the Plastic Brain" and giving us an insight into the future with his demonstration of a patient thinking of moving his finger and producing that effect in a prosthetic hand. The social events, including a private Opera Australia performance of Verdi's "La Traviata" at the Sydney Opera House and a closing party at Luna Park, ensured a memorable visit to Sydney for the two thousand registrants.

APFSSH Congress 2020

Formed in 1962, the Western Pacific Orthopaedic Association was for many years the main hand surgery educational forum for the region; however, it was limited to orthopaedic surgeons. The need to be inclusive for plastic surgeons led to the formation in 1995 of the Asian Pacific Federation of Societies for Surgery of the Hand (APFSSH). As mentioned in the last "Handshake" the first Scientific Congress of the APFSSH was in Perth in 1997. Subsequent congresses have been hosted by member national societies in rotation on an irregular one-to-three-year cycle, avoiding clashing with the IFSSH triennial congresses.

Australia again hosted the APFSSH Congress in Melbourne in March 2020. Anthony Berger convened the meeting with the theme of "Hand Surgery and the Digital Revolution". This proved to have been prescient, given the subsequent impact of the

COVID pandemic. Two months prior to the opening ceremony the pandemic struck. To assist with controlling the outbreak some borders were closed, with the result that some speakers were isolated in their own countries. In a few short weeks the meeting was converted to a hybrid meeting, with recorded presentations mixed with the speakers attending in person. Despite the pandemic almost 900 registrants attended in person. The imminent closure of some interstate and national borders caused the meeting to be cut short after three days to allow registrants to get home while they could. This highly successful meeting proved to be a forerunner of other hybrid and virtual meetings that became the norm during COVID times.

International Recognition and Service

IFSSH

Michael Tonkin served as Secretary-General (2007-2010) and as our Society's second President (2013-2016) of the IFSSH with his term of office concluding at the congress in Buenos Aires in 2016.

Greg Bain became the Member-at-Large Asia Pacific of the IFSSH Executive at the Congress in London in June 2022.

The IFSSH awards "Pioneer of Hand Surgery" status to any person who excels exceptionally, beyond what is normally expected in the field of hand surgery. Nine of our members have been honoured in this way:

Tokyo 1986	Benjamin Rank, Sidney Sunderland
Helsinki 1995	Bernard O'Brien
Sydney 2007	Bruce Conolly, John Hueston
Buenos Aires 2016	Tim Herbert, Wayne Morrison, David Vickers
London 2022	Michael Tonkin

Wayne Morrison was the Swanson Lecturer at IFSSH 2013 in Delhi.

APFSSH

Wayne Morrison, Michael Tonkin and Bruce Conolly have served as Presidents of the APFSSH. Anthony Berger is the current APFSSH President elect. Others have been elected to committees of various national and international associations, including the HWBI and APWA, and many have presented their work as invited speakers at international meetings.

In the past fifty years, the Society has been ably guided by the collective wisdom and experience of its office bearers and executive/board members, with the most capable, and often underappreciated, assistance of the secretariat, in my time as a member, Jennifer Vickers, Gail Knott and Trudy Wapling. Our numbers have grown fourfold since its founding, and we are now a much more diverse Society. Our members have continued to foster hand surgery in our Pacific region.

Our Society's future lies with its newer, younger members. I urge them to continue to present their work at our meetings and to volunteer and be engaged in the activities of the Society. It is a rewarding experience.

In preparing this article I have drawn upon archival material, previously published works and oral presentations, in particular those by Tony Berger, to whom I am most grateful.

Roland Hicks

Meet a Member - Greg Bain

Active member, Board member, Professor of Upper limb and Research, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Flinders University and Flinders Medical Centre, Adelaide, South Australia.

IFSSH Executive, Member at Large (Asia)

Private Practice: 196, Melbourne Street, North Adelaide, South Australia

Why did you join AHSS?

I was committed to learning about and teaching hand surgery. The AHSS has always been the premier Australian organisation for Hand Surgery. It provides a positive environment for exchange of ideas.

Why I joined the AHSS Board

I initially joined the AHSS board for the position of Conference Co-ordinator (2015- 19). This position was created by President David Stabler, to co-ordinate AHSS academic programs. This included member questionnaires, prospective timetables, templates, and conference protocols, that remain a resource for the society. The society's documents and record (legal, minutes etc,) were uploaded onto a AHSS executive dropbox.

I re-joined the board in 2021, as I wished to remain actively involved with the board activities and support the leadership. This has recently included active involvement with the travelling fellowship administration.



Challenges and Opportunities for the future of AHSS

We have seen with the Covid pandemic that we can adapt to the changing environment. I believe we should continue to expand how we use technology: 1 zoom guest speaker at our meetings, on-line journal club, hand e-chat group, special interest groups.

In my role as conference co-ordinator, I pushed that we should have more combined meetings with other nations. I believe we should go further and embrace our Pacific neighbour nations.

Do you have any areas of interest in hand surgery practice/research?

The Wrist – Anatomy, biomechanics, minimally invasive surgery, distal radius fractures, carpal instability, arthroscopy, Kienbock's disease, 4D dynamic CT assessment of the wrist, Advanced surgical training models.

Where did you do your Fellowship and what were the highlights?

Hand and Upper Limb Clinic (HULC), London, Ontario, Canada-1993-1994. I was most fortunate to be the first international fellow, and work with the young and enthusiastic consultants, who were keen to learn and teach. I went to many conferences, and as such became known as the "travelling fellow". This was an eye-opening experience. I knew there was "the Adelaide way" but it taught me there was so many other options to consider.

I returned to HULC in 2009 and presented to Prof Jim Roth the "Shaking Hands" glass sculpture, blown by Randall Sach. The inscription, "Thank you for the world class training, from the Fellows of the world". At his funeral, the glass hands were placed on his coffin.



Who is your biggest inspiration and why?

The late Professor Jim Roth who was my fellowship supervisor and established the HULC in 1992. He collaborated with Terry Whipple and Gary Poehling in 1986, to create a safe and structured introduction of the modern concept of wrist arthroscopy. He was extensively published, an excellent clinician and academic chair of the Vancouver IFSSH meeting in 1998. He was a strong leader and created opportunities for those who were prepared to make the most of them.

How do you define success?

Success comes in so many shades and colours. I have always enjoyed the challenge of developing new concepts and surgical techniques that can be used in clinical practice. As a trainee it would have been learning a new technique, then it became developing a new technique, and being able to define its indication, limitations and potential complications. Examples included limited wrist fusions, arthroscopic / endoscopic techniques, Endobutton distal biceps repair and surgical approaches to the wrist and elbow.

I get personal satisfaction from guiding colleagues / therapist to complete a higher degree, paper or presentation. I recently reviewed the output of my former fellows and higher degree students. I was pleasantly surprised to see they all continued to be academically involved. This is an investment for a generation!

How has AHSS helped you throughout your career?

Exchange of ideas with colleagues, opportunity to present research, opportunity for leadership.

What have been your personal career highlights?

Supporting my degree students, fellows, and therapists.

As meeting convener, I felt I could make a positive change in how we interact and learn:

- 1st Combined Meeting of the American (ASSH) and AHSS in Hawaii 2012
- International Advanced Wrist Symposium, Cairns (Post Sydney IFSSH) 2007
- 3rd Annual Congress of the Asia Pacific Wrist Association, Adelaide 2017.
- Conferences for Learning and Leisure "Hands Across the Nile" and "Hands across Africa".

President of Asia Pacific Wrist Society and the International Wrist Arthroscopy Association.

I have been editor of a few textbooks- I have found this is amazing way to obtain a comprehensive knowledge of a topic: Kienbock's disease, Elbow / wrist arthroscopy, elbow disorders, Normal and pathological shoulder anatomy.

What advice would you give to new Members of AHSS?

Make each case a learning opportunity. Take much more time to assess the history, examination and imaging to define the pathoanatomy. Prepare a detailed surgical strategy, including why each step may fail, and how you would manage it.

Focus on why things occur, and critically and honestly assess why you did not get the perfect result. With this advanced analytical approach, you never forget the concepts and next time a similar case presents, your previous analysis will fast track your understanding and help with potential solutions.

What advice would you give your younger post-fellowship self?

Define your main areas of research interest and focus more on them.

Tell us a fun fact about yourself that not many people know?

With an Adelaide based company Fusetec, I have developed a series of advanced manufacturing surgical training models, which have customised pathology. The wrist models have a SLL and TFC tear and a fracture of the radius and scaphoid. The shoulder models have either a rotator cuff tear, fractures or arthritis. The models are designed for arthroscopy, image guided and open surgery. We use the models to trial / design new surgical techniques and implants, to practice and teach surgery. These advanced models can be used anywhere and avoid the complicating factors of cadaveric specimens.



Advanced Manufacturing Surgical Training Models (Fusetec). Radiographs and CT demonstrate distal radius, ulnar styloid and scaphoid fracture. SLL and TFC tears can be managed arthroscopically. They allow arthroscopic, fluoroscopic, and open fixation. PPE is not required.

AHSS Annual Scientific Meeting 2023



68 DAYS
TO GO

It's under 3 months until Sydney hosts the **2023 Annual Scientific Meeting!**

The meeting promises to challenge current thinking in **Hand Surgery** through a series of symposia, invited lectures, free paper sessions, entertaining debates and lively discussion

We are delighted to be hosting the **British Society** as our guests and look forward to hearing from our invited **International Speakers:**

Professor Max Hearle (Germany) on controversies of vascularised bone grafts, denervation techniques, scapholunate ligament instability and wrist arthroscopy

Dr Charles Goldfarb (USA) on sports injuries and data registries

Professor Jagdeep Nanchahal (UK) on anti-TNF in dupuytren's disease

Round 1 of abstract acceptance and confirmation is now complete with round 2 abstract submissions well underway

The social program will showcase just a few of Sydney's gems including sunset cocktails on **Darling Harbour**, dinner at the **Australian Museum** and the grand finale at **Taronga Zoo**

So, block out the first week of March and finalise your registration and travel plans for a memorable educational week in Hand Surgery at the AHSS ASM 2023!

Sarah Tolerton & Richard Lawson
2023 AHSS Conference Co-Conveners

IMPORTANT DATES

AHSS Annual Scientific Meeting
Wednesday 1 March - Saturday 4 March 2023



Post Fellowship Education & Training (PFET) Update - Libby Anderson & Alexa Potter



Call for Expressions of Interest – PFET training centres

The Education Committee has had a number of enquires regarding applications for becoming an accredited PFET training centre. There is further information on the AHSS website under the “PFET Program” tab.

Please don't hesitate to register your interest and get in touch via the education@ahss.org.au email address.

PFET candidates finished their terms mid-year, and three candidates will present for their program exit interviews just prior to the AHSS Meeting in March 2023. Dr Chris Conyard entered the program mid-year at Middlemore Hospital, Auckland.

Journal Clubs have continued to provide an excellent source of discussion and education. The 2022 program has completed. Dates and topics for 2023 are posted on the AHSS website under the “Fellowships & Training” tab.

Visit the website at
www.ahss.org.au



Email enquiries:
education@ahss.org.au



The Australian Hand Surgery Society is very keen to encourage our members to participate in quality research and to facilitate the journey for those who are interested. Getting started in research can be daunting so we are keen to provide support for members.

To this end we are calling for members who are prepared to act as research mentors to volunteer to be available. Ideally, we would have at least one member from each state, though there is no upper limit in numbers. We would try to match the mentor with the member requesting help, in terms of geography and area of research.

It is envisaged that the assistance could be in any number of ways, either through general advice, help with ethics applications, study design, or manuscripts.

If we are short of volunteers, I will be approaching members to help out!

cont....

Our society's strength and the diversity in our academic programmes will be improved through fostering an enthusiasm for research amongst as many of our members as possible, especially our younger members. Accordingly, in addition to seeking research mentor volunteers, we would like to extend an open and ongoing invitation to all members who would like help with research, to contact us, no matter the nature of the assistance envisaged.

I would be happy to assist where possible and, particularly as we develop a group of mentors, arrange contact between researcher and mentor.

So please contact the research committee via myself or admin@ahss.org.au to volunteer or to request assistance.

Mark Ross
Chair
AHSS Research Committee



Kathmandu, Nepal Hand Surgery Outreach trip September 2022 - David Graham

It was fantastic to finally be able to travel on an Outreach trip again – it has been a long time between drinks, with all planned trips since 2020 cancelled due to the pandemic.

On 17th September 2022, a group of hand surgeons, hand therapists and nurses dusted off their (possibly expired) passports and left Australia bound for Kathmandu, Nepal. The group consisted of Lisa (Loopy) Kiddle and Helen (Maggie) McGuire (nurses and coordinators of AusNep); Drs David Graham and Brahman Sivakumar (hand surgeons); Jade Wong and Stacey Fritsch (hand therapists); and Graham Hextell (Orthopaedic Outreach).

The team convened at the pleasant Kathmandu Guest House in Thamel on Saturday, 17 September, and made the hour-long [bumpy] trip to the Sushma Koirala Memorial Hospital, on the outskirts of Kathmandu, early the next morning.

The Sushma Koirala Memorial Hospital was established by Interplast Germany in 1997 to provide Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery services to Nepal. It was a pleasure to catch up with old friends again [Dr Santosh, plastic surgeon who had completed a fellowship in Ganga Hospital, Coimbatore, India, with Dave], and make new ones [Dr Nilesh, orthopaedic surgeon].



The initial day was spent with Brahman and Dave running a triage clinic, whilst Jade and Stacey liaised with the local physiotherapists. A wide spectrum of pathology was seen – congenital cases included an adult non-treated radial longitudinal deficiency with absent thumb [who had compensated well, not requiring treatment], constriction band syndromes and brachial plexus injuries; whilst neglected trauma cases and post burn contractures also abounded.

Of note were a 25-year-old male with chronic hand pain from a hook of hamate non-union and proximal phalanx malunion secondary to a mangled hand from a motor vehicular accident, and a young boy with a complicated acrosyndactyly.

Two patients were seen with loss of all digits on a hand secondary to burns – they were counselled regarding toe-to-hand procedures and will likely undergo this next year. We were surprised (and slightly scared) by the huge number of patients being admitted with Dengue fever, however – apparently Kathmandu was suffering an outbreak, and we were all glad to have our bushman spray!

The team returned to Sushma Koirala Hospital the following day, with some of the team feeling worse for wear after a particularly bumpy trip. Dave and Brahman operated on the 4-year-old with the complicated acrosyndactyly, whilst Jade and Stacey treated patients with the local therapists, giving tips on splint fabrication and post operative therapy.

Patients seen in clinic included one of the junior doctors with a previous index finger amputation for consideration of toe transfer – this provided an opportunity to discuss functional need and the principles underlying reconstruction, as he had compensated well and did not require any treatment. In the meantime, Graham, Loopy and Maggie made connections with the local staff, identifying areas for potential improvement and plans for future trips.



Over the next few days, the team spent the majority of their time at Sushma Koirala Hospital. Notable cases include fixation of a both bone forearm fracture with the local orthopaedic surgeon Dr Nilesh [which provided an excellent opportunity to discuss the AO principles of fixation, the importance of soft tissue handling, and remembering not to cut corners (such as plate contouring and using a depth gauge!)]; release of a cubital tunnel syndrome which had been misdiagnosed as a cervical spine issue; and one that the team had not seen before – a bear attack with significant hand, leg and hand lacerations. Brahman and Dave also took the opportunity to introduce the local surgeons to the concept of intramedullary screw fixation of phalangeal fractures, for a patient who had a malunion of a proximal phalanx with a painful non-union of a hook of hamate fracture requiring excision.



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The latter part of the week was spent educating and establishing relationships for future outreach trips. Jade and Stacey executed a well-received hand therapy workshop, teaching local hand therapists about appropriate splinting, positioning and casting. The surgeons and Loopy travelled to the Tribhuvan University teaching hospital to reconnect with the Professor of Plastic Surgery and discuss future collaborations, as well as review the progress of patients that the team had previously operated on.

Whilst there, they also reviewed a patient with severe post burn contractures affecting the wrist and hand – despite the extreme heat, the patient was obviously psychologically scarred, and wore a big leather jacket to hide the hand. Treatment options were discussed, including a release and wrist fusion to realign the wrist and possible groin flap for coverage, followed by a staged toe transfer as necessary, and the patient will likely undergo this procedure during the team's next visit.

A relationship was also established with Dr Shilu Shrestha [orthopaedic hand surgeon] at the National Trauma Centre. Dr Shilu is the only fellowship trained hand surgeon in Nepal [with a population of 30 million people], and is passionate about developing this field in Nepal. The team was able to attend the morning trauma hand over and x-ray meeting, and had the opportunity to discuss tumour and trauma management principles with the general orthopaedic surgeons. It was exciting to discuss future possibilities for an ongoing relationship with Dr Shilu and the National Trauma Centre, with the formation of a WhatsApp group for research and case discussion.



Despite the heavy schedule during the day, the team found time to enjoy the local delicacies [momos!] at night in the thriving hub of Thamel, including a enjoyable meal with Santosh and Mamrata from Sushma Koirala Hospital, in a tower with views over the Kathmandu valley. We also found time to visit some of the iconic local Buddhist and Hindu temples on our last day.

We received multiple generous donations of equipment, which were gratefully received by the TU Teaching Hospital and National Trauma Centre. We would like to thank Newclip, Medartis, Medical and Optical, John Flynn Private Hospital and Pindara Private Hospital for their generous donations to the Nepal Outreach program.

All in all, this was a successful outreach trip, with an excellent mix of reconnecting with old colleagues; teaching; operating; and making new and exciting connections. We look forward to many more hand surgery and therapy outreach trips to Nepal in the future.



Meet the AHSS Staff - Trudy Wapling

Most of you will only know me as the person whose name appears at the end of the AHSS emails you receive regarding updates, newsletters, subscription reminders, letters from the Executive, and so on. At the annual meeting, I am usually sequestered in the back room working behind the scenes for the Board, but available for any questions you may have.

I started working for the AHSS in March 2017 when I took over from Gail Knott who left very big shoes to fill after 14 years in the role. Tony Berger, who was President of the Society at the time, approached me to take on the role of Secretariat and I was happy to do so.

Tony Berger (Past President) and David McCombe (current President) are senior members of the Victorian Hand Surgery Associates where I work for 4 days of the week as Practice Manager and, to a lesser extent, practice nurse. I have worked in hand surgery for the last 30 years, most of which has been as a theatre scrub nurse for the VHSA surgeons. Stepping into the role with the AHSS seemed like a natural evolution for me.

My workload at AHSS has expanded greatly over the last 5 years and I am very grateful that the Executive agreed to split the role and take Tracey Richter on as the Executive Assistant for the education portfolio. Tracey has proven to be a wonderful addition to the team.

The AHSS are a very professional organisation and I am pleased to be able to contribute in some small way to their continued success. The Board are committed to improving member experience, diversity, and to giving members a voice in the larger health community. Each new board member brings fresh ideas and renewed energy which is so important.

In my spare time, of which there is little these days, I enjoy volunteering at the Essendon Rowing club where I competed in master's events for 15 years (including World Master's Games at which I won a silver and two bronze medals) before 'racking my oars' due to injury. I am a founding member (now in my 21st year) of the Essendon Rowing Club Saltwater Challenge Committee, which organises and hosts this popular annual 4.5km time trial race for quad sculls, held on the Maribyrnong River in Melbourne.



I enjoy travelling but sadly, like most people, haven't done so since 2019. I look forward to planning new adventures next year. I also look forward to a return to painting which I haven't done for several years now and feel the need to rediscover my love of this. I come from an artistic family with most of them dabbling in some sort of creative activity. I would like to try impressionism although I think Monet's place on the gallery wall is safe!

I have two adult children and an adorable 5-year-old grandson whom I look after when I can. I have a strong social network of friends who have been a great support to me, particularly following the death of my husband shortly after the last AHSS ASM in Port Douglas.

Life is different now and as I navigate my way to a new 'normal', I am grateful to be involved with the AHSS and look forward to continuing this relationship.

Finally, I would like to thank the Board for their unwavering support over the last 5 years, and especially the last 8 months. And if you attend the 2023 ASM, which of course I hope you will, please pop in to the 'back room' and introduce yourself to Tracey and I.

Trudy Wapling

Merry Christmas!



Dublin, 2019

Upcoming Meetings

FUTURE AUSTRALIAN MEETINGS

2023	Date	Location	Guest	Convenor
AHSS ASM Lawson (BSSH invited Society) Tolerton	March 1-4	Sydney	Max Haerle	Richard Sarah Dean
Boyce (BSSH) RACS ASC AOA/NZOA Combined ASM	May 1-5 Nov 12-16	Adelaide, SA Melbourne, Vic		
2024 AHSS/ASSH Combined ASM A(HSS)	May 2-5	Maui, Hawaii		Eugene Ek Sanj Kakar
(ASSH) AOA NSW Branch ASM NSW	July 19-20	NSW		

FUTURE INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

2023	Date	Location
APFSSH/APWA FESSH ASSH	31 May - 3 Jun 10-13 May 5-7 Oct	Singapore Rimini, Italy Toronto, Canada
2024 FESSH APWA ASSH	June 12-15 Nov 19-21 Sep	Helsinki, Finland Minneapolis, USA



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Thank you to all members for your
continued support and
very best wishes to you,
your family and loved ones
for the
holiday season.
May it be merry and bright!

See you in 2023