

THE HANDSHAKE

The Australian Hand Surgery Society



NEWSLETTER

President's Report

The last couple of months has been a busy one for the AHSS preparing for the Annual Scientific meeting in Sydney.

Unfortunately, I could only participate from the other side of a screen because of a dose of COVID but it was clearly a great success with an excellent academic programme with Professor Max Haerle from Stuttgart our guest Professor, Charles Goldfarb from St Louis speaking online, Jagdeep Nanchalal from Oxford and our friends from the BSSH.

The meeting was also an opportunity to welcome our new active members: Will Alexander, Abhinav Aggarwal, Alexander Tiedgen, Matthew White, Tamer Mettyas and Neela Janakiramanen. We also welcome Mikko Larsen, Jasan Dannaway, David Kingston as Provisional members together with Michael Strong and Lilo Xu who have joined the PFET programme.

We farewelled Ian Hargreaves from the AHSS board. Ian has been the Treasurer for the last 4 years, holding a steady hand on the financial tiller of the society. His contribution to the society has extended well beyond that, being a regular participant in meetings and through his role as a consultant at both Sydney Hospital and his work in Tasmania. His insightful and entertaining insights into the challenges of hand surgery have been much appreciated by all and will be missed. We wish him well in his retirement from clinical practice.

WHAT YOU'LL FIND INSIDE:

- Presidents Report
- AHSS/BSSH Meeting Sydney
- Meet a member
- Website & Social Media
- Education Committee Update
- PFET Update
- Travelling Fellowship
- Overseas Projects - PNG
- Why AHSS needs an Advocacy Committee
- Research Committee update
- Upcoming Meetings



The Sydney meeting was also an opportunity for the board to meet in person. We spent the day before the meeting discussing the range of activities the society now finds itself involved in from education, research, outreach and advocacy on behalf of the society and how the board should engage with the society membership to act effectively on its behalf. With this in mind, the board will survey the membership this year as to the current function of the society and where improvements can be made.

The success of the society in representing its membership depends on the participation of its members. One avenue is to join the board and there is opportunity to nominate for board positions as they become vacant. In 2016, the constitution was altered to facilitate contested elections to the board in the case of multiple nominations for vacant positions. This amendment needs to be incorporated into the constitution along with some changes to the remainder of the constitution to remove inconsistencies and ensure stability of the board. The board will present these changes to the society this year with a view to putting them to a vote at the next Annual General Meeting.

The board functions on behalf of and at the behest of the society's membership. Please let us know what you think and how we can improve the society.

David McCombe
AHSS President



AHSS Annual Scientific Meeting 2023 - Sydney

March is generally a good month to be in Sydney and the city really turned it on for our local, regional and international delegates at this year's Australian Hand Surgery Society (AHSS) Annual Scientific Meeting!

We were delighted to host the British Hand Surgery Society (BSSH) as our guest society, and thank members and their families for their valuable contributions to our meeting.

Delegates united at the Hyatt Regency on the eve of March 1, against a stunning backdrop of harbour views and the setting sun.

Our International Guest Speaker Max Haerle (Germany) was first to take the podium, for one of many insightful lectures on current concepts in hand and wrist surgery, including the Bernie O'Brien Oration on 'Scapholunate Ligament Instability'.

International Guest Speaker Jagdeep Nanchahal (UK) shared his research on novel therapeutic targets and its translation to clinical trials in the setting of Dupuytren's Disease, receiving the John Hueston Award for best paper on the condition.

International Guest Speaker Charles Goldfarb (USA) 'virtually' captivated the congress with his work in the field of sports-related injuries, registries and his globally expanding 'Upper Hand' Podcast.

Jennifer Green and Dean Boyce led a stimulating symposia on diversity in hand surgery; amongst many other outstanding symposia, lectures, free papers and discussions/debates (too many to individually acclaim!). Of note, the Bruce Connolly Best Paper Prize was awarded to Jeff Ecker for 'The Hook Test is Not Pathognomonic for Foveal Detachment of the Triangular Fibrocartilage'; and Tim Herbert Award for Innovation in Hand Surgery to Xin Zhang for 'A Novel Dynamic Cadaveric Wrist Simulator For 3-Dimensional Carpal Bone Motion Measurement Using Biplane X-ray Fluoroscopy'.

While the victory urn for the inaugural 'Ashes Debate' may be temporarily on international soil, it should be known that victory by water was also claimed by the Brits at the conference sailing regatta.

Needless to say, our social program was received as well as the academic. PFET trainee and alumni cocktails at the colourful Jackalberry Bar; drinks and dinner amongst the dinosaurs at The Australian Museum; and the grand finale dinner at Taronga Zoo following yet another stunning Sydney sunset.

With a grand total of 229 registrants, including 36 internationals and 26 local registrars and PFET trainees; the success of this year's meeting reflects the current and future strength of our society.

Many thanks as always to our industry support, Wayne Taylor & co. from Taylored Images, the AHSS Board and members.

Run by our Society, for our Society, we hope this year's ASM fulfilled your educational and social needs and look forward to seeing you at the next!

Sarah Tolerton & Richard Lawson
AHSS ASM 2023 Conveners



Professor Max Haerle accepts Honorary membership to the AHSS



Ian Hargreaves receives Retired membership following 4 years as AHSS Treasurer



International guest speaker Charles Goldfarb (USA) attended virtually

Jeff Ecker - winner of the Bruce Conolly Best Paper Prize



BSSH President Dean Boyce



International Guest speaker Jagdeep Nanchahal (UK)



*A snapshot
of the*

2023

**AHSS
ASM**

**HYATT
REGENCY
HOTEL
SYDNEY
NSW**



Meet a Member - Tanya Burgess - Active Member AHSS



Why did you join AHSS?

I wanted to be part of a society of peers in Hand Surgery. This gave me the opportunity to learn, collaborate and grow as a surgeon by attending meetings and conferences. It also legitimised my practice as a Hand Surgeon.

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

I enjoy the major and minor trauma. I enjoy managing arthritis in the hand and wrist although my private practice encompassed most aspect of hand surgery. I usually don't see children or manage complex nerve injuries.

Where did you do Fellowship/PFET training and what were the highlights?

I completed three fellowships.

My first fellowship was at Ganga Hospital, Coimbatore, India. The sheer volume of work and major trauma was incredible. The skills of the surgeons in India were phenomenal.

My second was in Newcastle which provided excellent experience in trauma. I learnt how to navigate the complexity of the Australian medical systems and also learnt what was considered 'within the bell curve' in Australia. It was an invaluable year in learning how to set up a practice and be a hand surgeon in Newcastle.

My third fellowship was in Paris, France at L'institute de la Main. I enjoyed living in Europe, travelling and made some outstanding friendships amongst the other fellows.

How do you define success?

This is a very individual concept. Success in my professional life by building a solid practice where I have good results, happy patients, happy staff and am respected by my peers.

A successful personal life is where I have strong relationships, am healthy and have happy, healthy, well-adjusted children.

I define success as a balance of both.

Who is your biggest inspiration and why?

I am inspired by my patients on a daily basis. Each person has a unique story to tell and I am constantly humbled and amazed by their ability to triumph against personal odds each and every day. I am grateful every day for the opportunity to listen to these stories and strive to be worthy of them. Such beautiful vignettes such as a spinal injury patient teaching underprivileged children to sail; the 74 year

old man competing in the masters athletics championships, the grandparents taking care of their grandkids after their children succumbed to cancer.... It has taught me that each of these people are the true hero's of our era.

I have also recently been greatly inspired by an Australian runner called Nedd Brockmann who ran from Cottesloe to Sydney (3953 km) in 46 days to raise money for homelessness. He raised over \$2.5 million through sheer grit and determination. As a 23-year-old he has an incredibly well-developed social conscience which I think is also a reflection of his generation. His ability to run 100 km a day, putting one foot in front of the other through sheer willpower was incredible. The strength of his mind and purpose and his willingness to put his body through such trauma for the benefit of others is humbling.

How has AHSS helped you throughout your career?

By accepting me as a member, the AHSS has legitimised my standing as a Hand Surgeon in Australia. It has also provided me with a fantastic community that I rely on for support and guidance. The conferences are outstanding in content and it's always a delight to catch up with colleagues every year. I am very honoured to be the current recipient of the AHSS travelling fellowship. I am very excited about my travels later in the year.

What have been your personal career highlights?

Hopefully being a visible role model for other female orthopaedic surgeons in demonstrating what is possible for others to achieve.

Good patient outcomes every day.

What advice would you give to new Members of AHSS?

Tampere your ego and arrogance and don't be so quick to dismiss the wisdom of the older generation. They have knowledge which has been gained through decades of experience. Take the time to just sit and listen.

Don't race to the finish line. There are decades of a working life ahead of you and your children will remember you reading that bedtime story but the patient who you stay back late to operate on won't remember your name in a few years time.

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

As above. Take more time off for maternity leave. Learn to say no. Take up surfing earlier.

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

I used to be a keen Kiteboarder but it's a very selfish sport. I am now trying to learn how to surf to keep up with my three kids who are already ripping in the surf. It's not going well.

Website & Social Media Update - Sarah Tolerton

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Education Committee Update - Randy Bindra

Add a little bit of body text



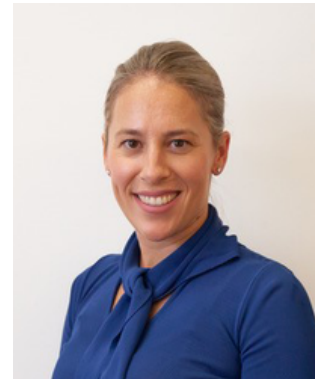


Post Fellowship Education & Training (PFET) Update

Libby Anderson & Alexa Potter



Visit the website at
www.ahss.org.au
Email enquiries:
education@ahss.org.au



Add a little bit of body text

The Australian Hand Surgery Society Travelling Fellowship

The AHSS Travelling Fellowship is a prestigious award and provides an opportunity for development of an early career Consultant Hand Surgeon. The Travelling Fellowship has been established to promote the advancement of knowledge, skills and leadership of developing AHSS members. It should build international relationships for the AHSS and its members.

The fellowship is aiming to extend the individual's opportunities, knowledge, and insights in research, education and leadership. The successful fellow is expected to give back from what they have learnt to the AHSS, but also to the local and state hand surgery communities.

The travelling fellowship program has been completely reviewed and updated in the last 12 months. We have now established structured in- person interviews at the Annual Scientific meeting. There has been a minor change to the criteria - consultant hand surgery for 2 - 10 years of starting consultant practice.

We have been able to establish the first travelling fellowship with the British Society of Surgery of the Hand, with the support of Dean Boyce, the President of the BSSH.

It has been a real pleasure to interview many of the new quality young surgeons from our society.

We are pleased to announce the winners, following the recent interviews.

Tanya Burgess –2023 Travelling fellowship

Brahman Sivakumar –2024 Travelling fellowship

David Graham –AHSS / BSSH travelling fellowship



1.The Travelling Fellowship

- The fellow coordinates their travel to a major international meeting (e.g. IFSSH, APFSSH, FESSH, BSSH, ASSH meetings).
- Attend at least 3 significant academic centres over a period of 2 or more weeks.
- The fellowship will be awarded 2nd yearly.
- To be completed in the calendar year of the interviews, or the following year. The fellowship can be taken in 1 trip or separate trips.
- The successful applicant will be supported for travel, registration and accommodation expenses to a maximum of \$18,000.

2.Criteria

- Applicant must have completed their formal surgical training.
- Ideally completed PFET program, and/or have a significant involvement of hand surgery.
- Be a practicing surgeon between 2 -10 years

Full details can be found on the AHSS [website](#). Next interviews are planned at the 2025 ASM.

I thank the board for their support to advance the traveling fellowship program. Special thanks to President David McCombe, Randy Bindra (Chair of Education Committee) and Tracey Richter (Education Secretariat).

Greg Bain

AHSS Travelling Fellowship Co-ordinator

Hand Surgery mentoring programme in PNG

by Peter Maloney

My involvement began in 2011 when Damian Ireland then surgical committee member with Interplast, suggested that I be part of a plan to try and establish a programme to improve hand surgery services in PNG, a high need Pacific Island neighbour. All visits and programmes have been run through Interplast a service that has been going for 28 years.

To that date, only one PNG national surgeon (John Maihua) had completed a supervised plastic surgery curriculum under the guidance and support of Simon O'Donohue (plastic reconstructive surgeon Melbourne). John's training was completed with a year at Flinders Medical Centre under the tutelage of Phillip Griffen.

James Masson continued to support John in Madang, with Doug When also visiting Port Moresby for teaching, and when I joined we included Hand therapy. Judith Morrin who had worked with James for many years in Liverpool, visited Madang twice and established (despite major barriers) a working arrangement with the Physiotherapy department in Madang to provide teaching, and ongoing support, instructions of splintage using local materials, and an understanding of the injuries and care they required. We developed a routine where the (interested) therapist would attend theatre for a hand case (eg tendon repair/reconstruction), put on the post op splint, see the patient on daily ward rounds, and care for the patient who agreed to stay in the community until treatment was finished and hopefully (!) return for us all to see them the following visit. Judith would via email continue the support.

This foundation has become a critical part of working at the Physiotherapy department, and has prospered with the mentoring of Penny McMahon (a Melbourne hand therapist who had worked with Tony Berger for a number of years) who has regularly visited Madang and Port Moresby since 2014.

Penny identified particular physios with the interest and commitment, and our "star" is Cathy a local PNG national from Madang, who has just finished a year studying in Perth !

The development of a reliable hand therapy service has (as everyone appreciates) vastly improved hand surgical care and outcomes in the Madang area. From the local surgeon point of view, this is a game changer for surgical outcomes in these impoverished settings.

Our current focus is Port Moresby, as a centre to teach selected surgical candidates, and set up a similar level of hand therapy service. Ultimately our aspirations are to see the nationals teach themselves so the basic level of hand surgery care and outcomes throughout PNG can be vastly improved.

I hope this stimulates other hand surgeons to be involved in these programmes.



Why AHSS needs an Advocacy Committee - Jeff Ecker

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Upcoming Meetings

FUTURE AUSTRALIAN MEETINGS

2023	Date	Location	Guest	Convenor
RACS ASC	May 1-5	Adelaide, SA		
AOA/NZOA Combined ASM	Nov 12-16	Melbourne, Vic	Scott Edwards AZ, USA	Avanthi Mandaleson & Peter Maloney
2024				
AHSS/ASSH Combined ASM	May 2-5	Westin, Maui, USA		Eugene Ek (AHSS) & Sanj Kakar (ASSH)
AOA ASM	Oct 19-20	Brisbane, QLD		
2025				
AHSS ASM	TBC	Perth, WA	TBC	Paul Jarrett & Sharon Chu

FUTURE INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

2023	Date	Location
APFSSH/APWA	31 May-3 Jun	Singapore
FESSH	10-13 May	Rimini, Italy
ASSH	5-7 Oct	Toronto, Canada
2024		
FESSH	June 26-29	Rotterdam, The Netherlands
APWA	Nov	
ASSH	Sep 19-21	Minneapolis, USA
ISSH	Oct 2-4	Bangalore, India
2025		
IFSSH	Mar 24-28	Washington DC, USA
FESSH	June 25-28	Helsinki, Finland
ASSH	Oct 9-11	Vancouver, Canada
2026		
FESSH	Jun 3-6	Basel, Switzerland



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Vietnam's Golden Bridge

Danang, Vietnam:

Nestled in the forested hills of central Vietnam two giant concrete hands emerge from the trees, holding up a glimmering golden bridge crowded with gleeful visitors taking selfies at the country's latest eccentric tourist draw. Designed to make visitors feel like they're taking a stroll on a shimmering thread stretching across the hands of gods, the "Golden Bridge" has attracted hordes of guests since it opened in the Ba Na Hills near Danang in June 2018.

Excerpt: Agence France-Presse (1 August 2018)

***AHSS is always interested in contributions from the membership.
If you would like to contribute to the AHSS Handshake, please contact the
Editor: Jennifer Green at Secretary@ahss.org.au***
