

ASEAN Orthopaedic Association Travelling Fellowship 2023 (Australia-NZ) Report

1 Introduction (autobiographies of the Fellows)

A/Prof Denny Lie is a Senior Consultant with the Dept of Orthopaedic Surgery, Singapore General Hospital where he sub-specialises in Sports and Shoulder / Upper Limb surgery. He has been in practice for more than 20 years. He holds Associate Professor positions at the Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School, YLL-NUS Faculty of Medicine and at Nanyang Technological University, where he teaches both medical students and supervises engineering students. A/Prof Lie is passionate about teaching and is the Director of the SingHealth Orthopaedic Residency Program. He is also involved in research and is the Biomechanics Lead of the Musculoskeletal ACP. He has authored more than 100 papers, 3 books and several book chapters. He is also the Global Health Lead of the ACP. He is the immediate past Presidents of both the Singapore and ASEAN Orthopaedic Associations, and is currently the President of the Asian Shoulder & Elbow Association, and a member of the ISAKOS Shoulder Committee.

Dr Taufin Warindra is from Surabaya, Indonesia, where he is taking an orthopaedic training program in Dr. Soetomo Teaching Hospital-Airlangga University. After taking a fellowship abroad, he has practiced orthopaedic for almost 20 years in the field of sport, arthroplasty, spine and trauma cases. He is one among 1300 orthopaedics in Indonesia. At the present time, he is working at PHC Hospital Surabaya, a government owned private hospital, and also a lecturer at Medical School-Widya Mandala Catholic University. He loves to learn new things, building relationships and working with others. In his spare time, Taufin enjoys traveling, sport and spending time outdoors. He is very excited and proud to be part of the ASEAN Orthopaedic Association.

Prof Manohar Arumugam is a Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery and Senior Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon and head of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universiti Putra Malaysia. His previous appointments include Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon at the Ministry of Health Malaysia. He is actively involved in clinical work majoring in Hand Microsurgery. He started the Hand & Microsurgery service at Hospital Serdang. Currently, 4 surgeons in the Hand & Microsurgery unit at Hospital Pengajar Universiti Putra Malaysia (HPUPM) are providing service to patients with hand injuries and disorders. As a project leader and co-researcher, he is involved in research, especially in orthopedic and engineering-related projects. He had published in citation-indexed journals and had authored one book and five chapters in a book. He graduated Ph.D., MSc, and Master of Medicine (Orthopaedic Surgery) students. He is actively involved in training surgeons subspecializing in hand & microsurgery. He has been appointed by the Ministry of Health Malaysia as a trainer and examiner for the hand fellowship program. He was the past president of the Malaysian Society for the Surgery of the Hand (2015 & 2016). Internationally, he has collaborated with various institutions in developing hand questionnaires suitable for use in the local setting. He has been in contact with various experts in hand surgery to discuss the management and treatment of complex cases. Hand surgery and workshops have been conducted at the Faculty of Medicine & Health Science, Universiti Putra in collaboration with hand surgeons from international institutions. He has also been invited to give lectures in international conferences and symposiums.

2 Overview of the Travelling Fellowship

ASEAN fellows are scheduled to visit both the New Zealand and Australian Orthopaedic meetings and visit hospitals in these countries. In 2023, this travelling fellowship was resumed after a 3-year Covid hiatus. Each of us flew from our home countries to converge and meet in Nelson, New Zealand on

Sunday 5 Nov 2023. Our travelling fellowship consisted of three parts: from 5-7 Nov, we attended the NZ Orthopaedic Meeting in Nelson. From 8-10 Nov we were in Auckland visiting hospitals. We then headed to Melbourne to attend the Australian Orthopaedic Meeting from 13-16 Nov 2023.

3 NZ Orthopaedic Meeting in Nelson, 5-7 Nov 2023

This year's New Zealand Orthopaedic Annual Scientific Meeting was held in Nelson, from 5-7 Nov 2023. It is combined with the Australian meeting every 3 years, otherwise it is held within a week of each other, as this year's meeting. On Sunday 5 Nov, social and sports activities were organised, ending off with the Faculty Dinner at the Car Museum. Only Taufin managed to attend the dinner; both Denny and Manoharan arrived late on Sunday night in Nelson. All 3 fellows stayed at the Quest Hotel in Nelson.

We gathered at the Rutherford Hotel at 0700hrs on Monday 6 Nov, for the opening ceremony at 0730hrs. The meeting started off with a solemn procession and entrance into the hall, after which the leader of the local Maori tribe held a respectful prayer and opening ceremony. Children from the local school performed a traditional Maori dance to welcome all of us. The president of the NZ association was Haemish Crawford, a paediatric spine surgeon trained in the US. He delivered the opening speech and his guests included presidents from the US, UK, Canadian (the ABC countries) and Australian societies, in addition to spine surgeons and fellows from ASEAN and the Pacific region. We were invited on stage and introduced to the society.



The morning sessions were all dedicated to general topics, philosophical in nature and covers a wide range of interests, none were technical nor too focused on any specific sub-speciality. These included:

- First plenary session for motivational inspiration: being excellent by Chris Ahmad, surgical safety by Mike Vitali, maintaining excellence by Felix Savoie, sustaining excellence by Stuart Weinstein
- After coffee, brilliant talk by Nick Petrie on preventing burn out and reducing stress in Orthopaedic career
- More general topics: women in Orthopaedics by Laurie Hiemstra, overcoming complications by Chris Ahmad, then surgical infections by Arthur Morris.

The afternoon was filled with various sub-specialty sessions. There was warm camaraderie that evening as men in bow ties and ladies in gowns gathered at Rutherford hotel for cocktail reception

that preceded the Gala dinner. The conference hall was transformed into a gala ballroom, with underwater sea theme. We met many local and international guests that evening, and enjoyed the fresh seafood and sumptuous dinner!



Taking a well-deserved coffee break in one of Nelson's many home cafes.



Reception of the Gala dinner, along with Dr Haemish Crawford, president of the NZ OA.

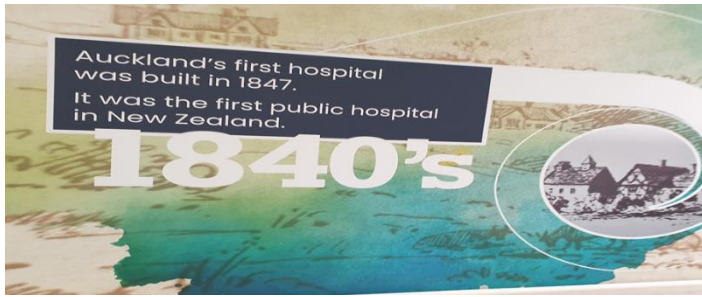
Tuesday 7 Nov started with more sub-specialty sessions. The Elbow session was particularly inspiring. Both Denny and Manoharan presented their talks during the Upper Limb session in the late morning; Denny's talk was titled "Shoulder Instability in South-East Asia: are we that different?" and Manoharan presented "Tuberculosis of the Wrist". Taufin delivered his talk on "Discoid Meniscus" in the afternoon Knee session. The ASM ended that evening and the ASEAN fellows took a flight to Auckland, checking into Nesuto St Martins that evening.



Walking around Nelson after our presentations, before our flight to Auckland.

4 Visits to hospitals in Auckland, NZ; 8-10 Nov 2023 (by Manohar Arumugam)

On Wednesday 8th November we visited Auckland City Hospital which is New Zealand's premier public medical facility and a hub for clinical research.



The Auckland City Hospital was first established in the 1840s. It was the first public hospital in New Zealand. Its unwavering dedication lies in delivering exceptional patient care, advancing research, providing top-notch training, and contributing to the community insights into the hospital's operations,

medical practices, and the overall healthcare environment. In New Zealand ACC (Accident Compensation Corporation) covers everyone in New Zealand who is injured in an accident. The scheme covers children, beneficiaries, and students if they're working, unemployed or retired. It also includes visitors to New Zealand if they're injured while they're here. The cost of healthcare in New Zealand varies. The public healthcare system in New Zealand operates as a single-payer healthcare system. The government pays for the majority of healthcare costs using public tax money – up to 9% of New Zealand's GDP.

To be an orthopaedic surgeon in New Zealand trainees must complete a five-year Surgical Education and Training (SET) Program and succeed in the Fellowship Examinations before being eligible to be awarded the Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (FRACS).

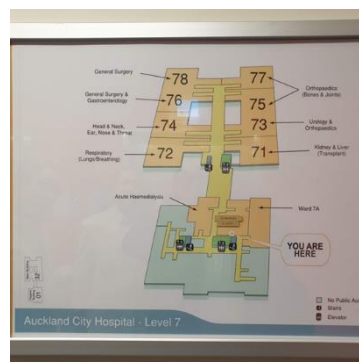
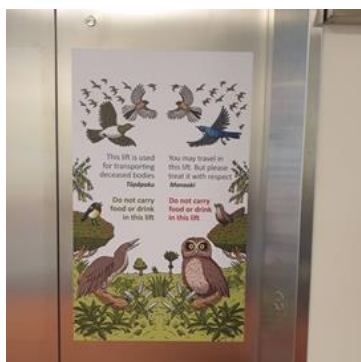
Level	Level	Level
Information & Reception	2 to 3	Way out to Carpark A
Emergency Departments	2 to 3	Way out to Carpark B
Adult & Children		
Clinical Services		
Medical Units	1 to 11	1 to 11
Specialist Services	1 to 11	1 to 11
Emergency Departments	1 to 11	1 to 11
Other Services	1 to 11	1 to 11



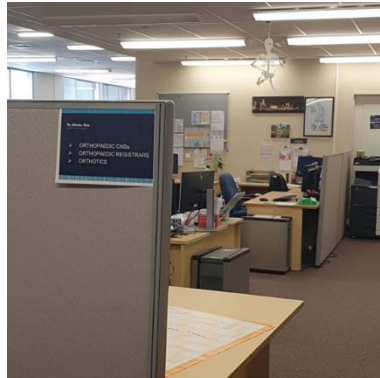
Mano, Tautin, Rupesh and Denny

The directory at the entrance of the Auckland City Hospital indicates the various specialities and services the hospital provides. We were met by Dr. Rupesh Puna the Consultant Foot and Ankle surgeon who took us around the hospital. We stopped at Planet Espresso to have some coffee.

We were given a brief tour of the hospital and then went to the orthopaedic wards. The presence of Maori culture and tradition could be felt everywhere. On the way up to the orthopaedic ward, I saw this rather interesting notice on the lift door which reflected the local culture.



The orthopaedic ward was located on the 7th floor. There were 2 wards ward 75 and 77. The welcome notice at the reception counter at the orthopaedic ward reflected the various ethnic groups living in New Zealand. Note the “Selamat Datang”. The set-up is something similar to our wards.



A view of the orthopaedic ward at Auckland Hospital. Not much different from the wards in our hospitals.

We then went to see the workstations and offices of the nurses and doctors. Note the word orthopaedic CNS. CNS stands for clinical nurse specialist. The nurses are empowered to initiate treatment for example wound care. The orthopaedic medical officers' workstation is somewhat similar to our workstations. The consultants do not have individual offices but use an open space area. They have a small library with a good collection of journals and other reference books.



This is the Orthopaedic Department library where a large collection of journals was kept.

The hospital provided most of the subspecialty services, except for paediatric orthopaedic services which are provided by the Starship hospital next door. We did not attend any orthopaedic operating theatre sessions.

5 Australian Orthopaedic Meeting in Melbourne, 13-16 Nov 2023

The Australian Orthopaedic Association has almost 1800 members, and its national meetings are usually large with a theme of common interest to the speciality societies. This year the meeting was organised in Melbourne from 13-16 Nov, with a focus on Rural Surgery. This theme was selected by the president Dr Chris Morrey who practises in Cairn and is familiar with medical and surgical care in the rural areas of Far North Queensland (FNQ). Over the weekend of 11-12 Nov members of the AOA had many business and trainee meetings which did not involve the ASEAN fellows, who thus had the weekend off. We were invited to the Welcome dinner on Sunday 12 Nov, where we met many faculty and guests from the Asia Pacific region.



The ASEAN fellows welcomed by AOA president Chris Morrey on the opening ceremony.

The AOA meeting kicked off with an opening ceremony on Monday 13 Nov at about 1000hrs, during which the AOA president welcomed the presidents from the USA, UK, Canada and S Africa (the Carousel group of presidents) and the Asia Pacific guests. Then there were several lectures: an inspiring talk by RADM Sonya Bennett, who grew up in a rural farm; Anthony Ward, on Trauma and use of AI; and Bryan Ashman, on review of training in Australia. The afternoon was left to the sub-specialties. The ASEAN fellows took the opportunity to visit the National Gallery of Victoria, and the city centre.

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At the National Gallery of Victoria



The ASEAN fellows walking along Flinders Street

Tuesday 14 Nov was busy for the ASEAN fellows. We started off listening to the talks of the Shoulder and Knee sessions. The afternoon APOA session started off with a talk by Dr Nicolaas from Indonesia. Then a panel presentation hosted by Dr Ted Mah and discussion on rural surgery in the Asia Pacific region followed. A/Prof Denny Lie gave an overview of the state of Orthopaedic care in the rural areas of several ASEAN countries viz Brunei, Cambodia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Representatives and presidents from Australia, India, Malaysia then shared their country narratives. It was interesting that despite the different levels of development and wealth, the challenges facing rural orthopaedic care in our countries are similar. It was on this note of shared problems, and realising the potential opportunities for projects that we ended the fruitful discussion. The APOA dinner that night



was hosted by the president Chris Morrey and Ted Mah, ex-APOA president at Sake, a Japanese restaurant.



The highlight of Wednesday 15 Nov was the Presidential Plenary on Rural Surgery. There were many great and interesting talks, summarised below:

- Rural Orthopaedics in the carousel countries – NZ, Canada, UK, AOA, S Africa, AAOS.
- Richard Murray, dean of James Cook Uni, on how medical education in rural areas leads to rural practice
- Excellent talk by Michael Shuetz from Jamieson Institute on the future of AI in trauma care in Queensland
- Royal Australian College of Surgeons and how they are supporting higher training for rural areas
- A school project in Cairns to interest school children to study orthopaedics and practise in rural areas
- A volunteer grass root effort to help rural children.

Overall, it was a great plenary that looked at the problem of orthopaedic care in the rural areas in a comprehensive way. Encouraging surgeons to work in rural areas does not involve the surgeon alone, which already was challenging. Effort must be made to support the working spouse and the education and aspirations of the children. The plenary offered a multi-faceted effort to support rural surgery, and we were impressed with many inspiring stories.

The Gala dinner on the night of 15 Nov was held on an old Victorian-era theatre converted to a dining hall. Many speeches and tears flowed as the President Chris Morrey thanked the AOA society and welcomed Michael Johnson the new President. The food was excellent and so was the music that followed; almost all guests, including the ASEAN fellows, hit the dance floor to end the rousing evening!

All 3 ASEAN fellows departed Melbourne on Thursday 16 Nov, at different departure times, to our respective home countries.



6 Reflections

6.1 Reflections of the NZ and Australia OA annual meeting

- Both had formal opening ceremonies, with pomp, formalities and speeches. NZ had traditional performances and respect of the Maori traditions. The Australian meeting was evidently larger, with more concurrent sessions and free papers, hence more in-depth scientific sessions.
- There are sub-speciality sessions but with the limited time, only selected topics could be discussed.
- AOA made use of many panel discussions with differing opinions shared.
- AOA symposium sessions combined both invited lectures and free papers.

6.2 Reflections of the ASEAN – Aus NZ Travelling Fellowship

- Should it continue? Strategic benefits
 - ASEAN region has diversity, that remains our strength and weakness
 - Academic benefits are mutual and fellows from both sides can reciprocally learn from each other, though the sub-specialty interests may vary
 - The true value of this fellowship is the networking, and forging of friendship
 - Fellows from both sides learn and better understand each other's hospital systems, health economics, challenges and strengths of each other's health care systems – these are generic topics common to all specialists and rise above the nuances of specific surgeries
- Feedback from NZ & Australian fellows

Rupesh Puna and Warren Leigh were the fellows from New Zealand. Rupesh has Indian heritage and was thus selected in 2019. Warren has always to travel, and explore; thus, he was selected to travel in 2017. We managed to speak to only one ex-fellow from Australia, Juliet Gentle. She too has always liked to travel, and did not hesitate when selected to travel in 2019. Their feedback is summarised as follows:

 - All felt the thrill of discovering new cultures in the Asian region, the excitement of travelling to new areas and meeting new friends, tasting new cuisines.
 - It was felt that 3 weeks was too long. A little over 2 weeks would be ideal, as many of them would have just started their private practice.
 - The period of Oct-Nov is also a difficult time for many of them, as it is the period of their regional conferences.
 - Short breaks (half-days) in each country were also requested, to allow them to rest and explore the city at their own pace.
 - Some highlighted they would enjoy teaching or engaging residents in these countries.
 - Rupesh would have liked to visit the Philippines.
- Feedback from ASEAN fellows

	What was well done and should be maintained?	What could be improved?
Duration of trip	Duration and dates in NZ were just right.	3-4 days in Melbourne would be ideal, instead of the 6 days.

Accom / Food	Accommodation at the Crown Promenade Melbourne was excellent. Food was great!	Hotel accommodation in NZ is preferable to the apartment type of accommodation as more services will be available. Food was good.
Transport	Melbourne hotel and conference centre were walking distance away.	No transport to conference in NZ.
Academics	We had a chance to present at one of the sessions and to visit a hospital in NZ.	There was no opportunity for us to present and no chance to visit any hospital in Melbourne.
Interaction / Social	Good and was able to network with a few people. The NZ President acknowledged our presence. Dr Rupesh and Dr Warren Leigh were both very friendly and hospitable.	There was no host in Melbourne to guide us, take us out or show us around.

- Making it better – some ideas
 - Aus & NZ fellows should be exposed to some high-level academic centres comparable to those found in Australia & NZ
 - Should add an educational component into the fellowship: workshops, residents' engagement, teaching seminars
 - 3 days per country, covering 3-4 countries, hence less than 2 weeks in total. Build in social / rest half-days in each country.
 - Consider the possibility of including a less commonly travelled country like Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam to do the educational component.
 - Try to avoid middle of year (many international meetings) and end of year (Pacific group meetings). Ideally end quarter 2 to quarter 3.
 - **Possibilities in 2024: Fellows visit Singapore (hosted by Denny) then either Surabaya (Taufin) or KL (Mano). Then an educational outreach trip to Cambodia or Vietnam, followed by the Philippines (POA in Manila), during which we can conduct the ASEAN Residents Course with the fellows' participation. About 15-16 days in total.**

Prepared by Denny Lie with contributions and help from Manohar Arumugam and Taufin Warindra, 4 Dec 2023.