

IFSSH HAROLD KLEINERT VISITING PROFESSORSHIP

Dr Steven Moran: Australia, March 2020

It was a tremendous honor to be selected as the first Harold Kleinert Visiting Professor by the IFSSH. Dr. Kleinert is a pioneer and giant of our field, impacting so many aspects of hand surgery. One of his greatest achievements is training so many of the thought leaders of hand surgery today, including our meeting President Tony Berger. Kleinert Hand fellows have always exemplified the creativity and collaboration that have advanced the specialty. The impact of Kleinert hand fellows is far reaching and just one example is Dr. Michael Wood, who has served as one of my mentors since the start of my career. Dr. Wood's research and interest in vascularized bone provided the framework for the research I do today.

It was almost a year ago that I was in Australia, enjoying our time with the members of the Asian-Pacific Federation of Societies for Surgery of the Hand (APFSSH). The COVID pandemic was not the dire reality it is now. The convenors of the APFSSH Congress (Melbourne, March 2020) were kind enough to put my name forward for consideration as the IFSSH Harold Kleinert Visiting Professor. This congress was run in conjunction with the Asia-Pacific Wrist Association, the Australian Hand Surgery Society, New Zealand Hand Surgery Society, and their respective hand therapy societies and associations.

I arrived in Sydney on the evening of the 8th March and met my gracious hosts, Mark Ross and Nicholas Smith. The following day I gave late afternoon lectures on the reconstruction of the distal radial ulnar joint and complex wrist reconstruction to Sydney registrars and fellows. Later that evening, I attended the New South Wales Hand Surgery Association Clinical Meeting, where patients were invited for evaluation by the surgeons and a discussion of treatment ensued. The discussions surrounding carpal instability were most eye-opening for me as I learned the benefits of new arthroscopic based reconstructions. The session concluded with my presentation on the vascularity of the carpus. That evening, I was hosted for dinner by the Executive members of the New South Wales Hand Surgery Association.

The following day we traveled to Melbourne, where I lectured to both orthopaedic and plastic trainees at the proceedings of the 2020 Australian Hand Surgery Society Registrar Course. Here I reviewed the topic of scaphoid non-union. I also participated in case discussions.

The APFSSH meeting then commenced on the 11th March. The meeting was shortened by one day due to the COVID pandemic, having to close on the 13th. During this meeting I presented sessions run by the Asian Pacific Wrist Association and in general sessions on the vascularity of the carpus, decision making in scaphoid non-unions, pathomechanics of scapholunate ligament injuries, volar capsulodesis for scapholunate injuries, 20 years of experience with PRC and SLAC wrists, revascularization of the lunate for Kienbock disease, local flaps for digital coverage, and 15 years of experience with the Adams-Berger DRUJ reconstruction. I was also involved in four other discussion panels.

In total I gave over 16 talks and panel discussions, but I learned far more than I taught. The highlight of the meeting for me was the meeting gala celebrating both the APFSSH and the Australian Hand Surgery Society. At the conclusion of the gala, I was most humbled to receive an Honorary Membership from the Australian Hand Surgery Society. This honor was made even more memorable as it was bestowed on me by my friend and fellow guitar aficionado, Jeff Ecker.

In retrospect, the events of the past year have emphasized the value of science over conjecture, of inclusiveness over isolation and the benefits of in-person learning. While vast advances have been made to improve remote meetings and we have increased access to many countries who are unable to participate due to distance or finances, humans are social creatures. While the zoom format is wonderful, it can not take the place of coffee break chats, drawing ideas on napkins over lunch and lively discussions over cocktails. These are the places that have often lit the fires of inspiration leading to scientific advancement. I look forward to seeing you all in person in 2021. Thank-you again for this incredible honor.

*Steven Moran
February, 2021*