

Canada

Toronto 2016

This first visit of the TSS to Canada took 28 of us to Toronto, its largest city, under the Presidency of Terry Irwin for a programme meticulously organised by our Secretary Brian Ellis in conjunction with Dr Jim Rutka, Professor of Surgery for the University of Toronto. Our Price Thomas Fellow was plastic surgeon Joe Hardwicke. Colorectal surgeon David Evans, from Blackburn, was elected a full member. Both gave presentations, as did our President, Secretary and others.

The modern main hospitals were all within walking distance of our Chelsea Hotel (the largest in Toronto) and on three consecutive days we visited Mount Sinai, St Michael's and the Princess Margaret Cancer Hospitals part of the University Health Network, where the chiefs of surgery were respectively Dr Zane Cohen (standing in for Dr Carol Swallow), Dr Ori Rotstein and Dr Allan Okraniec. At each hospital there was a well-organised programme of presentations and demonstrations, including contenders for the TSS Registrars' Prize (\$100), now adapted as the Residents' Prize. The winners were respectively Dr Emily Partridge (artificial placenta), Dr Stephanie Mason (burns) and Dr Andrea Covelli (mastectomy). The formal presentations included the local sarcoma and hereditary gastric cancer programs, colorectal cancer, GISTs, neuro-endocrine pancreatic tumours, anal cancer, hyperthermic intraperitoneal chemotherapy (HIPEC), malignant melanoma, liver transplantation, drug smuggling in the gut, abdominal wall closure, and the Birmingham Burn Centre Archive. There were lessons learnt from the Falklands Conflict, Afghanistan and Camp Bastion. At the Princess Margaret Hospital we had a mini-debate about whether doctors should ever strike.

At Mount Sinai we saw students in the Skills Laboratory practising a variety of procedures, and impending operations could also be rehearsed here. At St Michael's Hospital, basic life support and ATLS measures could be practised on a lifelike simulated mechanical *moulage*. At the end of our third day we visited the Research Institute where *ex vivo* pig lung was being ventilated and perfused experimentally as part of the transplantation programme. In 1972 Toronto was the site of the first lung transplant. Here Banting, Best and co-workers isolated insulin, and stem cells had first been identified. The quality of our scientific programme was in keeping.

We saw most of Toronto's top ten sights, and dined magnificently in the CN Tower and at Canoe, both with fabulous views over Toronto. We visited Niagara Falls (ninety minutes away by coach) and Trius, one of the forty nine Niagara wineries, and went on to perhaps Canada's prettiest township, Niagara-on-the-Lake. Our hosts gave us dinner at the Adegas Restaurante, and we reciprocated with the TSS Dinner at Vaughan House on the Sunnybrook estate. Jim and Mari Rutka not only entertained us right royally in the week leading up to the Queen's 90th birthday

celebrations, but his assistant Stephanie Nielson assured our every comfort. This was a remarkable week and a wonderful introduction to Canada for the TSS.

Tim Williams