

Report - EFORT Travelling Fellowship

Belgium
21 – 27 April 2013

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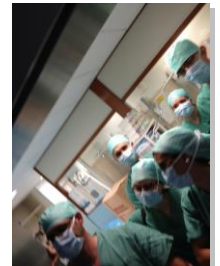
Roermond, The Netherlands, 01-05-2013

The EFORT Spring Travelling Fellowship is a great opportunity to meet colleagues from all over Europe and in the meanwhile hear and learn from the best the guest country has to offer.

Our Fellowship contained eleven persons with eleven nationalities. Fortunately everybody had an adequate knowledge of the English language so we were able to communicate. And communicate we did.

On Sunday we arrived in Brussels where the presidents of the Belgian Association of Orthopaedics and Traumatology, Dr. van den Daelen and the president of the Royal Belgian Society of Orthopaedic Surgery and Traumatology, professor Schuind welcomed us. Together we shared a meal consisting of typical Belgian dishes and discussed numeral issues.

The first morning we head of to Gent, where professor Victor was our host. We were invited to theatre and asked to present ourselves in the afternoon. During different procedures prof. Victor explained continuously about what he was doing and why, which we all thought was very educational. Unfortunately we missed out on his talk on guided osteotomies because of lack of time. After the obligatory part we head off to explore the beautiful city of Gent with a guide. Afterwards a wonderful diner in an excellent setting was arranged. The day ended too soon for our taste, but the mini-bus was waiting to take us back to Brussels.



KU Leuven arranged day number two with prof. Bellemans as our host. The day started with a tour that showed us an impressive array of research facilities and optimized patient care. When the tour ended we were allowed to visit the theatre where interesting cases were shown to us. In the afternoon we meeting were tantalizing cases encouraged to actively take part. All in all it was a great and dinner could not be skipped, and Faculty Club we sat, ate and staff. At night we were told not which we did not.



were invited to join the staff were presented and we were in the discussions that followed. educational day. Of course what a dinner it was; in the talked together with a part of the to miss out on Leuven's nightlife:

Wednesday our group was split up in to three. Four of us drove to St.Luc Hospital, a part of the New Leuven University (Louvain la Neuve). Maybe this is would be a good time to explain to you the difficulties that exist in Belgium, concerning the division of the country between the Flemish Dutch speaking part and the Walloon French speaking part, but after a week of explaining I still did not get the whole idea. Anyways this is how I remember it: after the (Dutch speaking) university of Leuven decided to exclude the French language, the French speaking decided to built a new city (New Leuven) just outside the original. This resulted in St.Luc, a modern and nice hospital with an impressive amount of room for their patients in the wards and a big theatre complex. Dr. Putineanu was so kind to guide us. The

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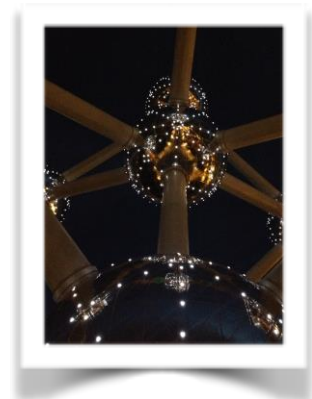
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bone bank was impressive. Also worth mentioning: we stumbled upon an anaesthetic technique that applied hypnosis instead of hypnotic medication. Of course with a paravertebral block and painkillers, but still.

That night we ate in the Atomium, with a superb view on Brussels. The next day we woke up at Spa, where the annual meeting of the Belgian Orthopaedic Societies was held. Internationally renowned speakers educated us in the latest strategies to treat peri-prosthetic joint infections. Again the standard was high, this time within the beautiful scenery of the Belgian Ardennes.



My new friends and me had a great time together, and we are going to see more of each other in the future (firstly Slovenia in 2014). It has been good, excellent even on a social level. We have learned many things. In Gent we had learned that in the past it was more important. We were also taught to how to recognize the building period of structures by looking at the colour of the bricks. Also the city of Leuven has not lost its grandeur from the past, the same with in Brussels. And although history tells us where we are coming from, which is important to bear in mind, bricks are static and to be honest a bit boring to watch. It is the hands that build and yield them and the plans that guided them that makes in interesting. Where we are and where we are going is depends on those things. And for what I have seen, Orthopaedics Belgium is going places. Also Orthopaedics in Europe has a great future ahead with talented people residing in many countries, I know; I met them! Bringing those people closer together with initiatives like this Travelling Fellowship is paramount. So they (we) can make plans and start building.

Kind regards,

Richard de Jong, The Netherlands

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