

## **My Unforgettable time in the Lucky Country**

Over the last 7 years, The QEH Old Boys' Society has had the most impact on my career. Their generosity, and belief in my potential, allowed me to receive an excellent sixth form education at Queen Elizabeth's Hospital in Bristol. Their support continued with financial assistance in the form of an Undergraduate bursary. Without this assistance I would have found it extremely difficult to pursue my lifelong ambition of becoming a medical doctor.

I am currently in my final year of Medicine at Cardiff University and hope to specialize in Anaesthetics and Critical Care. To this end, I was very keen to spend my Elective in Melbourne, Australia. I had researched various hospitals and was sure that I would learn a great deal from working with the anaesthetic department at Austin Hospital. My apprehension regarding the cost was allayed by the Old Boy's Society who awarded me a Travel Grant.

On 19<sup>th</sup> February 2015, I was the most excited person on Flight QF10 from Heathrow to Melbourne. I settled in quickly and spent the following six weeks at Austin Hospital. The Austin Hospital is a major teaching hospital in North East Melbourne. The experience I gained was invaluable. I assisted initially, in the administration of anaesthetics in more general surgery such as appendix removal, and then moved on to more specialized surgery. On one occasion I spent 14 hours in theatre assisting the anaesthetic team with a liver transplant. It was hugely rewarding following up on the improvement to the patients' lives. I gained valuable practical skills on this elective such as learning how to intubate patients and ventilate them. I also spent some time out of the theatres on pain management rounds. I learnt a great deal about the analgesic ladder used to treat patients.



*The Austin Hospital Melbourne*

Needless to say it was not all work and no play. I enjoyed meeting fellow medical students from different parts of the world and we were able to share our experiences whilst taking in the wonderful sights of Melbourne or relaxing in the sun on the beach. I was able to attend a rugby match, an Australian Football League game and two cricket World Cup games and to be in Melbourne for the final was an added bonus. I went up Eureka Tower which is the highest public viewing platform in the Southern Hemisphere and travelled to Phillip Island where I was lucky enough to see a few penguins. I was even able to have a photograph with a kangaroo at Healesville animal sanctuary.



*At the Melbourne Cricket Ground*

It was with a heavy heart that I left Melbourne on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April but I looked forward to spending the following two weeks in Sydney. I had been invited to visit the Clinical Excellence Commission, where I met with their team. I was very interested to hear about the work they are doing on sepsis awareness. They were equally interested in my studies and impressed with the work I had done with the Institute of Healthcare Improvement, especially the study on “ Ask One Question “. I was very fortunate to have this opportunity to meet with such distinguished members of the Medical Profession. I learnt a great deal and was invited to return.

Whilst in Sydney, I was able to enjoy some of the sights including the Opera House, the Sydney Harbour Bridge and had an exhilarating climb to the top of the Sydney Tower Eye.



I also managed to visit the Hyde Park Barracks Museum, the Blue Mountains, the National Maritime Museum, Taronga Zoo, the Sydney Aquarium, Darling Harbour, Bondi beach, Coogee beach and went snorkelling just off Manly beach.



*In the Blue Mountains*



On the flight back to the United Kingdom I was able to reflect on how fortunate I have been and what I have learnt from my Elective. I have had the privilege of meeting and working with several highly talented and dedicated medical professionals and assisted in some complicated surgery which will be of immense benefit to me. I have made new friends and thoroughly enjoyed the sights and hospitality of Australia. I owe a great debt of gratitude to the Old Boys' Society for making this possible. They have put their trust in me and have always been my support.