

Atlantic City and the Annual Scientific Meeting

David P. Gradwell, BSc, PhD, MB ChB, DAvMed, FRCP, FRCP Edin, FRAeS, FASMA

Each year our Annual Scientific Meeting marks the beginning of the annual cycle of the Association's business, including all that relates to its administrative functions, and the running of its Committees and those of its Associates and Affiliates. The huge professional value of the network of colleagues simultaneously presenting at the meeting must never be under-estimated. Whilst the plenary lectures and the scientific sessions constitute the obvious professional content of the meeting, the ability to discuss matters of the moment in aerospace medicine with so many experts and authorities adds much to the intellectual merit of attendance. This year was no exception. Although we have seen attendance grow in the last couple of years there is potential to widen our audience and increase delegate numbers still further.

Like many of you, I have just returned from Atlantic City and have had a chance to reflect on the high points of the 87th annual meeting. We opened with a moving, unaccompanied, solo rendition

of the U.S. National Anthem, beautifully sung for us by Dr. Daniel Hohman, to whom we are very grateful. Then to have Congressman Frank Lo Biondo welcome us to his constituency and the following day Mayor Donald A. Guardian welcome us to Atlantic City emphasises the value others see in AsMA "coming to town". As an Association we should be proud of the impact we have and seek to develop it, so cities and conventions centres across the land become ever more keen to host our meetings.

There will be reports on this year's meeting elsewhere in the journal, newsletter, website, and photo galleries. However, I would like to make a few general comments. We were very fortunate to have three outstanding, varied plenary lectures. Lt. Gen. Doug Robb gave a stirring presentation in the Bauer Lecture, outlining many of the changes in aviation and the delivery of aerospace medicine over the decades. He left an unequivocal message for all of us: adapt to changing circumstances or perish, and the valuable guidance to see challenges as opportunities. This is what we, as an Association, must strive to do for the benefit of those we serve.

Overall, the population we serve grows larger every day. In the military sphere the number of aircrew in flight reduces as technology advances, but the requirement for operators to understand aeromedical requirements that arise in world-wide operations grows. There is also continued growth of traffic in the commercial areas of aviation. We must communicate with our partners and translate best practice from all areas into our recommendations and guidance. This point was also made in CAPT Butler's Reinartz lecture. He gave a very clear description of the 10 most important changes in clinical practice that have advanced and improved combat casualty care and transfer from the point of injury to definitive treatment. We are also very grateful to M. Desjardin, who came all the way from Paris to deliver the Armstrong lecture. M. Desjardin is leading the investigation conducted by the Bureau d'Enquêtes et d'Analyses (BEA) into the loss of Germanwings Flight 9525. His careful description of the investigation, the circumstances of the tragedy, and signposts to the lessons that can be learned were all powerful messages. He was also generous in his recognition of the contribution of the AsMA Pilot Mental Health Working Group and its recommendations. The work of this group is on-going, but its value to individuals and to flight safety are clear.

One look at the range and depth of the abstracts published in the March edition of this journal provides a reminder of how far



WELCOME TO ATLANTIC CITY—(left to right) Harriet Lester, Arrangements Chair, Jeff Svntek, Executive Director, Congressman Frank LoBiondo, and Kris Belland, AsMA President. Congressman LoBiondo welcomed the Association to Atlantic City.



THANKS FOR COMING TO TOWN—Atlantic City Mayor Donald A. Guardian thanked the Association for coming to town and encouraged us to enjoy all that the city has to offer.

CONTACT DETAILS:

Email: President@asma.org • **Web site:** www.asma.org • **Facebook:** Aerospace Medical Association • **Twitter:** @Aero_Med

Reprint & Copyright © by the Aerospace Medical Association, Alexandria, VA.
DOI: 10.3357/AMHP.07PP.2016



reaching and varied our community is. There was a very strong representation within the programme from human performance presenters, but there were also submissions covering clinical medicine, physiology, and much more. At the meeting I met several engineers and we should remember that aeromedical input is valued, and often key, in the design and operation of flight equipment. Aerospace medical specialists work in partnership with other professional groups and we should always invite them and encourage them to attend our meetings as this may broaden their experience and we will certainly gain from their presence and input.

We also benefit from those who come to provide exhibits at our meetings. Each exhibitor provides financial support to the Association, but additionally they value their interaction with us.



PRESIDENT'S CITATION—(Left to right) AsMA President, CAPT Kris Belland presented the president's citation to AsMA staff members Pamela Day, Sheryl Kildall, Gloria Carter, Gisselle Vargas, Rachel Trigg, and Jeff Svntek.



PLENARY LECTURES—(Upper left) Genie Bopp representing the sponsor Wyle, with Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Douglas Robb, the 62nd Bauer Lecturer, and Kris Belland, AsMA president; (upper right) Dr. Belland with CAPT (Ret.) Frank Butler, 3rd Reinartz lecturer; (lower left) Dr. Belland, Arnaud Desjardin, the 51st Armstrong lecturer, and Bob Laurent, representing the sponsor, ETC.

Everyone should make time during the annual meeting to tour the exhibition hall and meet the aeromedical equipment suppliers, training providers, universities, and publishers who support us. In Atlantic City it was gratifying to see that Hall so full and the stands so busy. By making exhibitors welcome we can express our appreciation for their contribution.

Honors Night provides an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of AsMA members and to mark, in a variety of ways, the contributions individuals and groups make to our Association. Much of this was recorded in photographs taken on the night and these photographs, along with others showing Exhibitors, receptions, and the general meeting are contained in albums on social media (Smug-Mug and Facebook pages) and some are also used here.

The unsung heroes of our Association are the AsMA Home Office staff. They were recognised this year by the award of the President's citation at Honors Night. They bring many years of experience and corporate knowledge to the running of our Association and its journal and we rely on their enthusiasm and dedication to deliver AsMA's value to the membership.

In 2016, 15 skilled and gifted individuals joined the ranks of the Fellows of our Association. Awards were presented to 19 outstanding members of the aerospace community. Each has a story to tell of their contribution to the science and practice of aerospace medicine, as well as to AsMA. A short biography of each, similar to that used at Honors Night, is given at the back of the Journal. The award of Fellowship of the Association is earned on merit and it should be the aspiration of all committed practitioners in the field to achieve this status. In the wider context, the AsMA awards provide an opportunity to recognise outstanding contributions across the breadth of aerospace medicine and there will be reports of these elsewhere.

However, collectively the recipients represent role models for our young members and contributors. We are very grateful to all those who sponsor our Awards.

Finally, the passing of the gavel: CAPT Kris Belland was presented with his Captain's clock from AsMA, marking his stewardship throughout his Presidency. Each president, on leaving office, is presented with a Past President's lapel pin. Kris received his from Pamela, his wife, and was then surprised by the announcement of a generous donation to establish an Endowed Fund in his name, made by Pam. Finally he was given a Bosun's call as a personal gift from his successor and was piped off through a Side Boys Honor Guard. I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to CAPT Joe Dervey and his colleagues from the U.S. Navy for supporting this ceremony so enthusiastically. It was a memorable occasion for all who witnessed it and especially for Kris and Pam.



2016 FELLOWS—The new Fellows for 2016 are: Nader Abou-Seif, Stephen A. Bernstein, Desmond M. Connolly, Steven J. Gaydos, Rajib Ghosh, Brenton E. Haskell, Nora R. Johnson, Vivienne M. Lee, Richard Leland, Ian A. Mollan, Patrick C. Rodriguez-Redington, Lina M. Sanchez Courtney D. Scott, Philippe A. Souvestre, and Jeffrey P. Sutton. Those who were present at Honors Night are pictured here with CAPT Kris Belland (far left) and James Vanderploeg (far right), Chair of the Fellows Group.



PASSING THE GAVEL—CAPT Kris Belland, outgoing President of AsMA, passes the gavel to incoming President, Prof. David Gradwell; Prof. Gradwell presents CAPT Belland with a clock and Bosun's call; Pam Belland pins her husband with the Past President's pin; and a Side Boys Honor Guard escorts CAPT Belland from his post.