

Dowling Club Overseas Trip Fellowship Report
Dowling Club Overseas Trip – Malta and Gozo, May 2018

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I hadn't applied for any travel bursaries or fellowships prior to this trip and I had heard from others that attending the Dowling Club Overseas Trip was always an educational and enjoyable experience. Knowing this was my last chance to apply as a trainee, I applied and eagerly awaited the outcome. I was lucky to be awarded £500 from the BAD Fellowship Awards Committee and I would like to extend my gratitude to this committee, as the fellowship provided me with the financial support with which I was able to attend this trip and give an oral presentation at one of the organised dermatology meetings.

Our first day in Malta was spent exploring the capital, Valletta. I was immediately struck by its Baroque architecture, cathedrals, palaces, museums, gardens and fortified city walls overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. Valletta is a small capital city which has a population of only 6000 inhabitants, which is why UNESCO have named the whole of Valletta a World Heritage Site and described it as "one of the most concentrated historic areas in the world".

The next two days were spent attending meetings held by the Maltese Association of Dermatology and Venereology. There was a day of oral presentations covering topics such as cutaneous leishmaniasis, which is still endemic in Malta as well as a presentation on how to manage jellyfish stings (vinegar and hot water do the trick!). The following day was an impressive clinical meeting with 18 patients attending at the Department of Dermatology, Sir Paul Boffa Hospital. Of particular interest was a case of Gricelli Syndrome type 2, two cases of cutaneous leishmaniasis and two cases of classic Kaposi sarcoma. Following this meeting there were oral presentations given by the Maltese dermatologists accompanied by a review of the relevant dermatopathology.

The last two days of the trip were spent in the neighbouring island of Gozo. We took the ferry to Gozo, which is the second largest island in the archipelago. It was visible from the ferry that this was a quieter, more rural island (see picture).



Whilst in Gozo, Professor Joseph Pace presented his experiences of working as Chief of Dermatology at a hospital in Saudi Arabia in the 1980's and more recently his experience working with displaced Syrian refugees in the Middle East.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time at the Dowling Club Overseas Trip. As well as being able to visit a beautiful country and attend educational meetings, it was an excellent way to meet trainees and consultants from both Malta and from around the UK, I would therefore recommend to both trainees and consultants to attend a meeting in the future if possible.