

## **19<sup>th</sup> International Causse Otology Course and Observership at the Causse Clinic, Béziers, France - July 2017**

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I would like to take this opportunity to thank the TWJ Foundation for providing me with an educational grant to attend the Causse Clinic for a stimulating and enjoyable course followed by the chance to observe surgeries performed by Dr Robert Vincent and Dr Thibaud Dumon.

The course was well-organised and took place in a brand-new auditorium that had just been completed next to the Causse Clinic. The facilities were excellent and the faculty came from all parts of the world providing a balanced view on the surgical management of middle ear disease, hearing loss with ossicular chain reconstruction, otosclerosis and implantable devices.

I particularly enjoyed the lively round table discussions pertaining to the treatment of otosclerosis and retraction pockets with minimal hearing loss. As I am a newly-appointed Otologist I also found the live surgeries extremely helpful, as it was interesting to note how highly experienced surgeons dealt with challenging anatomy and pathology. Anyone who was there would admire how Dr Dumon calmly dealt with the recurrent cholesteatoma, which had caused a cochlear fistula in a teenage patient with no associated vertigo or subjective hearing loss afterwards - all on live TV!

The following week was equally enjoyable when with colleagues from the UK, Europe and South America I was allowed to observe live surgeries. Due to the theatre set-up we could easily move between cases and I observed numerous ossiculoplasties and tympanoplasties as well as revision mastoid surgery with obliteration. I also had the the pleasure of watching Dr Vincent perform primary and revision stapedectomies as well as his malleus repositioning/replacement techniques.

I came away with a wealth of newly acquired surgical knowledge and numerous small tips that I will be applying in my theatre to hopefully improve my outcomes.

The doctors at the Causse Clinic and their staff were gracious hosts. Dr Vincent and Dr Dumon spoke excellent English, which was useful for everyone including myself with limited French.

Béziers was very easy to get to with a direct flight from Manchester (in my case). The hotel attached to the Institute was clean, comfortable and within easy walking distance of Colombiers, which had small restaurants, bars and boat/bike hire to explore the Canal du Midi and the immediate surroundings.

There was plenty of free time in the afternoons and evenings to explore the surrounding region (Languedoc/Herault Department) with its beautiful vineyards, villages, castles and beaches. For those more adventurous the Pyrenees, Provence, Girona and Barcelona are a few hours drive away (car a must).

All in all I had a fantastic 10 days. This is a definite must for all senior trainees, Otology/Skull Base Fellows and Junior Consultants.

Thank you once again to the TWJ Foundation and Dr Vincent and colleagues at the Causse Clinic.