



Continental Connections – Visiting APPA International’s Counterparts in Australasia

By David Gray

I would like to express my appreciation to the APPA membership for allowing me to represent APPA International, as President-Elect, at the 2010 Tertiary Education in Facilities Management Association (TEFMA) Conference and at the National University of Singapore. Without exception, during my visit last September I was treated as someone special. Countless times individuals asked how certain past APPA Presidents were doing, and what the latest news was involving their work with our association. It was enlightening to spend time at the TEFMA conference with individuals in the Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE) and individuals with the Higher Education Facilities Managers Association of Southern Africa (HEFMA).

The visit to **Singapore** was outstanding. My presentations regarding Middle Tennessee State University’s “A Best Practice, *Summary of Services Leads to Informed Decisions*” and “APPA International’s Role as your Critical Resource,” were well-received. There were many good questions and excellent dialogue afterward. My hosts, Foo Tung Mooi (Foo) and P. Samynathan (Sam), were most gracious. Mr. Foo is looking forward to the APPA International 2011 Conference in Atlanta. The Vice-President for Campus Infrastructure, Dr. Young Kevet Yew (KY), took time to visit with me, and have lunch before I was treated to a busy afternoon of campus tours.

After arriving in **Australia**, I was able to visit a number of TEFMA members at their campuses, including Peter Hill of the James Cook University in Townsville. In addition, Darren McKee with RMIT

and Chris White with the University of Melbourne attended the TEFMA Conference and, after the conference, we spent considerable time together visiting the University of Melbourne.

The TEFMA Conference is held in conjunction with the Tertiary Education Management Conference (TEMC). TEMC is similar to the National Association of College and University Business Officers and the Canadian Association of University Business Officers. The day before the conference, representatives from AUDE, HEFMA, and I made separate presentations to the TEFMA Board of Directors. We also made presentations during breakout sessions during the conference. This year’s TEMC/TEFMA conference theme was “Future Directions.” Over 750 delegates attended the conference with a magnificent lineup of speakers and a variety of presentations. It was an outstanding program.

The TEFMA President, Matt Smith, of the University of Tasmania, served as a wonderful host during my visit. TEFMA has a position known as Patron, which resembles a university’s chair of excellence. In 2010, the President of the University of Tasmania, Professor Daryl La Grew, served in this role. Time spent with President La Grew and his wife at the TEFMA conference and later with Matt on the campus of the University of Tasmania gave helpful insight into their operations.

The University of Canterbury in Christchurch, **New Zealand** was the next campus to visit with Peter Molony, as host. The city and surrounding area was the site of an earthquake that registered 7.2

on the Richter scale earlier in September. Chris Hawker was key to the planning and execution of *crises emergency management* during the aftermath and clean-up of the university. Chris has traveled extensively in the United States, gathering information regarding emergency management. Many items he picked up as “best practices” were implemented in their recovery efforts. While in the Christchurch area, I was able to visit Lincoln University and walk the campus with Geoff Marks as my host.

The University of Auckland was the last site visit on this Australasian trip. Peter Fehl, organized a number of direct reports to share with me. The university is rich in history as conveyed to me by my several hosts.

TEFMA and APPA International have much in common in that their purpose is to provide services to their respective members and the facilities professional. It’s all about better facilities and the need for effective facilities professionals supporting better education for students. Are the facilities safe, clean, and functional? It’s also about increased appreciation for the role of the built environment in the instruction’s education mission. Visiting with TEFMA, the National University of Singapore, AUDE, and HEFMA has helped me realize just how similar we are in the challenges we face. APPA International provides the tools and resources to help us all. ☺

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