



GSE D9820 Australia - to D2430 Turkey, 2015 - Diary - Eric Neill, Team Leader

14/4/15 - we left Melbourne at 02:40 am, thanks to those that were there to say goodbye. On last leg of flight met a WA VSE Team who were doing an exchange in the Istanbul District. Arrived in Istanbul around 6:00 pm. Our booked driver did not show so we arranged our own bus to the Skalion Hotel, home for next 4 days, this was located in Kumkapi region of Old Istanbul, walking distance to most of city. Walked around Istanbul, had dinner and beers at Restaurant, ready for being real Tourists tomorrow.

15/4/15 Early start, sourced a Turkcell phone, did tour of Blue Mosque, then onto Ayasofia (Hagia Sofia) Museum, then to Topkapi - Sultanahmet - an Ottoman castle, amazing buildings and artefacts, also had new Facebook photo taken here. Walked to a local restaurant, near hotel and had seafood.



16/4/15 - Early start as picked up by RSL Tours to do day tour to Gallipoli, the following was included

- Beach Cemetery and the grave of John Simpson Kirkpatrick “the man with the donkey”.
- Anzac Cove and the Anzac Commemorative Site at North Beach where the Dawn Service is held on Anzac Day every year.
- Ari Burnu Cemetery, where the Dawn Service was held until 1999.
- Spectacular views of the Australian Memorial at Lone Pine.
- The Nek, where the tragic charge of the Light Horse took place.
- The New Zealand Memorial at Chunuk Bair.
- Visit the Turkish 57th Regiment Memorial.



We had lunch at Escabat, and dinner on way home to hotel at a roadside service centre and got in at about 22:30, a big 17 hour day, very emotional and informational (included info from the Turkish side) for all of team.

17/4/15 - Tour the Basillica Cisterns, built by Romans for water supply, then to Spice Market, Mich loved this, then walked to Golden Horn, where bridge connects to Northern part of Istanbul had lunch at floating fast food fish restaurants with the locals. In afternoon walked across bridge and ended up in Taksim Square, once back in old city walked through the Grand Bazar, many did some early shopping, for dinner beers and kebabs and to do some work on our presentation.



18/4/15 - Girls and Ray went walking in morning to Spice Market again, I stayed and rested, we then left for RI Peace Conference on North side of city by underground train. At conference we met many Rotarians, Turkish, Indian, New Zealand Australians, Tony and Carla, Nilay from Turkish GSE Team and John, the VSE team from WA and some exchange students. Dr Peter J Hollingsworth was a speaker along with Sir Anand Satayanand (Past NZ, GG), we met and had photos with Dr Peter and his wife, a wonderful man who spoke so well at the conference. A peace Declaration was signed.

They had music before and after, by Angela Akbar. Then got on buses and travelled to Asian side across the Bosphorus for a Peace Conference Dinner.

19/4/15 - 1st Day of exchange, but we got high jacked at 07:00 in morning by Nilay and partner John who arranged for us to travel to her apartment for breakfast on the Asian side, a wonderful breakfast on their Balcony overlooking the Sea of Marmara, but cold and in the rain. Went for a walk through local village Kudakoy.



The RC of Bolu then arranged for us to be picked up at Nilay's for transfer to Bolu. Met the club members at a restaurant out of Bolu and then went by bus to Lake Golcuk just out of city for lunch with many club members, Bulent Erbor (GSE Chair) and family and Umit Aktug the Turkey GSE Team Leader also met us for lunch, which was a great surprise. Met my Host - Enver Gunay (President RC of Bolu) and went home, his wife and daughter were in Istanbul and Envers English was as good as my Turkish so we had fun conversing.

20/4/15 As my host mother was away, Enver took me to a Hotel for breakfast, he filled my plate. After this we met with other team members and hosts and did tour of city, went to local market where you could buy anything, then to Bolu Museum, many more artefacts and history through the ages. We had a young American YE student from Ohio, Megan Hayden who became our interpreter, a lovely girl. In the city they showed us a club project where the club had relocated an old Fountain into the city. We then did a Vocational visit to a Rotarians Printing business in town and then to a local Hindi Factory (Turkey's) called Bolca Hindi, had tour through part of site and then lunch which included Hindi (Turkey). We later visited the Izzet Baysal University (Izzet Baysal was a local Philanthroper who had basically built half of the towns infrastructure, bridges, hospitals and universities.) That night we attended our first Rotary meeting, approximately 60 in attendance, started with a cocktail reception, then we had to have an interpreter, which extended our presentation to approx. 50 minutes (way to long) cut out our video, had a huge 4 course meal and live music and some dancing, got home at 1:00 am.



21/4/15 All met at Rotarian Hakan's restaurant called Massi Ciborek for breakfast (Girls looked through kitchen and saw some local food being prepared) and then got onto bus at 11:30 to head to Eskisehir, same driver that picked us up from Istanbul, Hussein. It was actually snowing on way through the higher country. Arrived in Eskisehir and met by my and Ray's host Engin (president of RC of Eskisehir - Yunus Emre) in his father's family cafe, some more food an Cay. Then to hosts lovely new apartment and met Engins wife Fisun and son Demir. Then to meeting of Eskisehir RC but prior to this went to a Cannakale War display put on by a private collector, an amazing collection, included 3 X kissing bulletts etc. Just introduced ourselves, no presentation.

22/4/15 All met in town and boarded a large Mercedes bus and were taken to A Metal fabrication plant, Kirak Elektrik where they made cable trays etc. had walk through and long discussions with Managers and of course more Cay. After that we went to a big park and met Engin, my host had lunch in a huge complex and ate Giborek deep fried with mince or cheese light pastry things, walked through park, fantasy castles, then he took us to where he works a Traffic Control Centre for the city and saw my first Data Centre, very small though only 3 racks. They control 17 City Intersections and are reducing smog and carbon levels in city. After that we went to a Wax museum, very interesting. Then we met with many at the family café again, went home and got ready for presentation. This club is young only 18 members and 5 years old, average age 32, we went and had a drink at Drunken Duck bar before, the meeting was in a hotel, nice food had Italian ravioli. Presentation took 40 minutes with interpretation, it went over OK and they liked the video which we showed at end. Then they all wanted to go to a bar so off we went and got home at midnight again. Snow is predicted today so will rug up.



23/4/15 Went to a local newspaper called Sakarya, owned by Rotarian - Ustun Unugar, family business founded in 1925, is in top 3 of Turkish local newspapers, sell 5000 daily. Had photo taken and will appear in paper. Went to old sector city walked around beautiful old market area with many Artisans. Then to Fun park for lunch at Kocatepe Restaurant and then walked through park, fantasy castles, rides etc. Presented at RC of Yazilkaya, President Haka Cukul, 28 members, 17 women, great night did not use interpreter, did it in 27 minutes.

24/4/15 Up early had breakfast with Engin and Fisun, got them to try Vegemite, pulled funny faces. We left Eskisehir at 9:00 on fast train, it was great, 255 kmh, excellent train and stations. Umit and Bulent met us at Ankara train station and took us to Bulent's office where we caught up on emails etc. Also met District Foundation chair Ufuk. They then took us to a nearby seafood restaurant where we met up and had lunch with 40 of the Rotary Friendship exchange, 8 Australian and Newzealand exchange students and New Generation Service team from Tassie, this is similar to GSE but have no leader. After a seafood lunch taken to airport and flew into Corlu at 5:30, met by 2 buses and all off group about 60 transferred to Hotel at Kesan, we got there at 8:30, and booked in and then went to find something to eat, found a Kebab place and 8 of us had a great meal for 10 TL (\$5 Aussie) so a very cheap meal. Got to bed at 10:30.

25/4/15 Anzac Day - Wake up at 1:00 to get on bus, did not sleep to well. Ray left us after dinner last night to try and get down to Anzac Cove, his father could not make it as he had a bike accident in Greece and ended up with a broken ankle, Ray in the end could not make it as he could not get lift / bus or taxi to take him there as area closed off, so he met us in lobby at 1:30 and joined us on bus. Got to Gelibolu at about 3:15, found a spot near stage and beside the VIP seats, we were given a breakfast pack and so we sat and waited. Ceremony started at about 4:30, it was cool but very solemn and no wind. Just before sunrise 30 aussie surf boats rowed to shore, reefs were laid etc. It finished about 5:45 as sun had risen. We wandered around had a hot drink and then got back on bus at 7:30 to go back to hotel, all had a sleep for about 2 hours and then went for walk around Kesan. Huge street market covering many city blocks we found a doner kebab place sat down and all had a chicken doner and yoghurt drink total cost for 5 was 17:50 TL, (less than \$10 Aus) very cheap but really nice. The bus takes us to a BBQ somewhere at 6:00 pm tonight.



26/4/15 We had long bus trip this morning, got dropped off at a seaside village/marina near the airport with 7 exchange students, we filled in time there had a late lunch and then got cabs to airport. Now in Ankara and Umit and Bulent picked us up, Ray and I are with Umit, wow she has a

monstrous house for herself only, it is great and she is going overboard for us. She actually is having all of the team and hosts at her place tomorrow night. She is a little lead foot with here driving.

27/4/15 Left Umit's at 9:30 for cultural tour of Ankara, to the amazing Andolou Museum, recently renovated and had wonderful artefacts from many ages. Then visited the Ankara Castle, amazing views over Ankara from this 2nd Century BC castle where many battles have been fought, visited Aslanhane Cami (Mosque) 1289 AD, then to a brand new modern Mosque called Kocatepe Cami. Then home to Umits where she put on a Turkish spread for all team members and Host families, a wonderful spread.



28/4/15 I did a vocational visit to Bilkent University where PP Gengiz runs a Software & Design consultancy called Pegasus Engineering, had look at small DC, 4 racks, UPS and University Generator backup, they build networks throughout the middle east, they employ 350 staff, then to their 2nd office E-nergi where they consult to Turkcell, employ 15 and have a small workshop where the develop and produce specialised cables.

We then went to RC of Ankara Baskent Umits club for lunch and did our presentation in English and nailed it in 25 minutes. They then took us to Ataturks Mausoleum where we had a guided tour and then I was asked to write in the honour book as we and the Rotaract Rotabus Rotaractors were going to lay a wreath at the Mausoleum, 3 Guards marched us up the stairs and laid the wreath, it was an amazing honour, we had to the go back to the tower and read what I had written and then sign it, a real honour.

We were then taken to the Australian Ambassador's residence and had afternoon with he and his wife, we all had a great chat and hopefully he enjoyed it as much as us.



They then took us to a University where we had some tea, beautiful Pida bread, pizza like and another really thin one we had with parsley and lemon, really nice Mich has the details. Then went out with Nilay and John, and caught up with Rotoractors, Asli and her husband Inanch and Onur and his wife Yasil, Asli drove us home at midnight, Bulent was there as well and we had a great chat, his is a man of surprises and keeps delivering all the time, we had a great time in Ankara.

29/4/15 We were picked up at 9:00 from Umits and taken to the Turkish Parliament building and where we were given a guided tour of the facility, a really impressive facility, and then went to the old parliament (1st building) which is now a museum, then off to a PDG who is a Volvo dealer and his son runs a restaurant next door where of course we had lunch, 3 course and beautiful doner, wow they are good. Then off to airport, we were a little late getting there but made it in time, except we were way over weight, we only had allowance for 15 kg and we were all over 26kg's, so between us it cost another 70 TL to get our luggage on, but got on okay and arrived here at 6:00.

We realised that this the club RC of Adiyaman - Nemrut needed to bring in their local English teacher to interpret, so we cut our presentation down and she did interpretation, it went over well and they had a great time, asking us questions.

We are in a hotel and many YE students are coming here as they run a Mt Nemrut project which breaks down boundaries for invalided people and they are helped by Rotary to climb Historic Mt Nemrut, so we are involved in assisting with this on Saturday. This town is older and only 200000 people but all again very friendly.



30/4/15 Did tour of Adiyaman, many markets with all the exchange students and other Rotarians from many clubs who are involved in the project and disabled people they had sponsored. We then met up for lunch and I was given the privilege of presenting a new wheel chair to a disabled person whose current wheel chair was 8 years old. we then did a Rally promoting access for disabled people through the streets with 300 others, Rotarians, Youth Exchange locals etc This project they have is 15 years old and on Saturday we assist disabled people to Nemrut Mountain, Need to look how we can support this in future from Australia.

After this we got home early and had a few drinks for Jen's birthday, was good fun, then were picked up and went to this restaurant for tea, more drinks and food. A late night and had to be going at 8:00 next morning.

1/5/15 A national Holiday for May Day, we were picked up in morning and taken to Ataturk dam, 6th biggest in world, and got shown through places normal tourists do not get, amazing and huge. Had lunch and then to a huge 12000 year old archaeology site only discovered in 1990, called Goktepe then to a late lunch and the Pond of Holly fish on the Difrat river in Sinilufar, walked through a wonderful market bazaar and then on to a Turkish restaurant with carpets and cushions on the floor, more food but amazing tastes, got home at 01:00.



2/5/15 we had to leave at 08:30 to go to Nemrut Dagi (mountain 2200 meters high to assist many of the disabled to conquer the mountain with their disability, what an amazing day, I assisted with 3 other young turks to help carry, push and pull a young girl in a wheel chair up there, there was snow, cold and everything but so worthwhile, all of team helped others as well. An amazing project. Team got on super well with a young blind girl Binay who we assisted to get up and down the mountain. After this we then bussed down mountain to where a Roman Bridge was built and had a late lunch, it is now 7:15 pm and are being picked up shortly for tea with the District Governor and others, more food and drinks some fun dancing with the disabled and others.





What a fantastic project and one all of team would like to do something for, either raise money for wheel chairs, do a Foundation Grant or whatever and possibly a VTT on Disability Services.

3/5/15 On private bus early to Gazientep, arrived about 14:00 and met host club members, booked into hotel and had this amazing Kebab lunch, had free time in afternoon and then out to a modern Tennis club for dinner. A young club 1 year old on 7/5/15 and all young Rotarians, many ex Rotaractor's.

4/5/15 Did Vocational visit, I went with Mitch to a cooking Museum and cooking school with Mitch, she had a ball, we met with a Rotarian who has written culinary books has had a 66 program TV show etc. he gave Mich a signed copy of one of his books, she was very excited. We then went to the kitchen where there were 9 students cooking and we got to taste their work, it was again very tasty. Ray went to large Biscuit producing co. Erika got involved on a fire call, Jen went to waste Management, water treatment and a Methane producing from waste establishment which produced power.



Then off to lunch, I tried to eat a little and also did not like the soup type meal they gave me. We presented at Gaziantep - Ikeliyou club, it was a great night we did short version and are slowly adding bits we have done, showed a slide show during meeting that is a summary of all we have done and been, and movie at end of night got back to hotel at 12:00. Met president of Rotaract and will see if we can set up a sister relationship with our Rotaract clubs.

5/5/15 Late start this morning at 10:00 a cultural day we had a guide with us and we walked all through the Bazaars, all of the team bought different types of stuff, Mich is the big spender and has

just sent a box home. I bought bracelets for the 2 little girls, I will get some spices later on and will get Mich to help me. Went to a Baklava restaurant for morning Cay and then a Baklava kitchen and tried some more, We then toured a private museum collection and the off to the Master Kebab chef in Gaziantep, wow it was great but now looking for something other than Kebab. After lunch we walked to the Zeugma Mosaic Museum, this was unbelievable all dug up and transported in slabs to the museum from 50 k's away where they were found only 20 years ago. These are 3rd 4th and 5th century AD, really enjoyable. Then off to the Bayazhan Restaurant, owned by one of the Rotary members, of course we had Kebab, salads etc. and Raki, I paced it well and one of the guys likes it with a coke follower and this was good. They had live music that went around the tables and everyone was up jiving and singing along, there were about 30 there all together and all had a great night.



6/5/15 Went to a restaurant for breakfast had had Beyran, it is a soup like meal, with lamb and Rice, and a fair amount of fat included, more like mutton stew, then went to another place for coffee then to bazaar and a baklava shop and had a huge slice of Baklava which has 20 sheets of pastry on bottom and 25 on top, including pistachio, very nice.

Then visited old church which had bullet holes in it from 1920 salvation war, then of course to another restaurant for lunch to have a speciality called Iskenderun which is doner lamb spread over a base of pide bread, with tomato paste type and then melted butter poured on the top, was very nice but could only finish half of it, then got on bus and went from Gaziantep to Iskenderun this took about 3 hours, met the Iskenderun Rotarians and they took us another 30 kms to Asuz for afternoon tea, that is drinks, on way back we visited a beautiful Orange orchard and then back to Iskenderun for tea at the sailing club, we had seafood and I passed on the fish main as had plenty with Calamari and prawns entree. Then went home to a young Rotarians place, Ali who lives with his mother and father down by the beach in a 3 story Villa.



7/5/15 Met Ali's mother and Father, went for walk down the beach and had a cay with them and then off to breakfast at a seaside restaurant for some local speciality, which included liver kebab, which I got through along with other bread etc., I am learning to pace myself. After leaving breakfast we were involved in a car accident a bus run into back of car, no real damage so just moved on. We then went to a Naval Museum and the on to bus to Antakya. Got to Antakya, met several Rotarians and walked into city to a roof top restaurant for some more kebab, this time chicken and all that goes with it including a lovely local sweets.

Then wandered around town, visited an Orthodox church, through markets again, then a plant museum (mostly used for medicinal purposes) and then to another restaurant for a special called Ayran ice cream with rose water and a pudding base, very nice.



Then to meet host at their place, had a shower and others were going to a tennis club but as my hosts had not eaten I decided to stay and talk to them, they both speak English and we had a wonderful night, they have invited us both back here if we can make, they are really nice, she made some specialities of the region for our dinner and you will be surprised what I am eating.

My hosts, Erdal and Yildiz, they are both Doctors and their 2 Children, aged 11 and 7, what a lovely night showing them photos, where we live the grand kids etc. They have a super apartment in Antakya which is on the top level of an apartment block and they have 2 levels, has been refurbished and have the first double bed I have had since coming away.

8/5/15 Breakfast at home with hosts really nice and simple, had them try Vegemite, both being Doctors they were reading the label but then did not mind it. Picked up at 10:00 and then met rest of guys in a café for Coffee etc. then left at 11:00 for a Flour Manufacturing plant, a Rotarians Family

business which has been going for 50 years. Walked through the plant and looked at how all different types of flour were produced from the wheat, Ray was in his element and Mich enjoyed it re her cooking.

Then went and visited a Church in a Cave - St Pierres . After that of course we had lunch, another amazing feast called Tepsi Kebab, I will put a photo of it up and a sweet called Tatlisi which was similar to the Pumpkin sweet that we had but better, only had one piece but the meat dish was great. In afternoon went to another Museum the Hatay Museum, had one of the Rotarians English teachers who is now retired as a guide again some amazing artefacts all from around this Hatay region and more mosaic floors. Then we all went to a bar before going home to go to Rotary meeting.



Had 3 clubs, Eskinderun, Atakya and Antakya Defne, were about 50 in attendance, we had an interpreter and again all did very well and took about 26 minutes, showed them video at end during meal, all went well. Got home at about midnight, the young ones all went out but I decided to stay in as my hosts were not going, as if I got back late I would have to wake them up to let me in.



9/5/15 Had breakfast with Erdal and Yidiz, got them to try Vegemite again, packed and ready to go. Got Bus to travel to Adana, arrived around 1:00 went to Kebab place for lunch, did city tour to oldest bridge 384AD (Roman Empire) called Taskopru - Stonebridge, then to old Adana, mosque and old house 1495 had Cay and Turkish delight, then to huge Mosque - Sabanci built 1988 - 1999 financed by Sabanci family (Hoteliers), went to bar had few beers and lovely meal and home to Goonca's and Hyros late.

10/5/15 Had a very quiet day slept in to 8:30 had breakfast with hosts and then at 10:30 left to catch up with rest at Local Adana Horse Club where there was show jumping on, watched a bit but had

very relaxing day, came back to hosts house Goonca and Hyro where they were preparing meal for team and others, Mich got involved and helped prepare which she enjoyed, Jen went to Hamman and Ray and Erika went to meet with US Fire chief at the NATO base, later Jen and I were driven around and looked at lake, University and then picked up Ray and Erika to come back for dinner, it was a great dinner and Mich enjoyed herself. Tomorrow we do some Vocation stuff all separately.



11/5/15 - Visit to Cukorova University where Hyro and Goonca both are Mathematics Senior lecturers, 40000 students, 800 staff and 800 live in, large medical and agricultural faculties. Went to another Rotary project at a High School in Adana called The Seyhan Rotary High School, which was created by the RC of Seyhan in Adana starting in 1998, they have constructed the school and now have over 900 students attend yearly, with excellent results and many students wanting to attend, met with Director, we swapped pins kangaroo for Ataturk signature, then went to a class room where all the students uniforms have Rotary on them, a great advertisement for Rotary. In the last year they have built a Gymnasium / basketball hall. Another amazing example of Rotary at its best in Turkey. Funda then took me for lunch and we picked up Mich who had been at a patisserie, then went to old Girls school where they teach craft - for maturity - called Gunslasma Enstitute - Maturity Institute, we then presented at RC of Curkova and did short presentation.



12/5/15 - Met at railway station to travel to Mersin / Tarsus by bus, arrived at 11:00 and went to Berdan Bolt Factory, had lunch there and toured bolt factory, then to a System Mould plant where they moulded irrigation connections, pipes etc. as well as display pistols, walked through another bazaar, saw St Pauls well (christian) and then to Tarsus Waterfall on the Berdan River (falls were created by Romans, then taken to the Churchill Peace Park where Sir Winston Churchill visited in 1943, his train was there and we planted a tree each for Peace, a lovely feeling and honour. Went back to host- Sirin's where Erika and I stayed, had dinner at home.



13/5/15 - A huge breakfast at Sirin's, Ray joined us then visited War display - Nurset a German minelayer used in Cannackale war, then to the Arbel Group a supplier of Pulse' (lentils etc.) and staple foods such as pasta., they are a global company and grow in USA, Canada, Australia, South Africa, is the biggest Pulse co. in the world did tour of Pasta Plant, biggest pasta making machine in world can produce 8 tons per hour, 40% for Turkish consumption, they have own gas powered electricity to run plant, visited Ataturk House then Mersin District Fire Department, Ray and Erika enjoyed this and swapped flags etc. 140k's away Russians are building nuclear PS and will train local fire fighters in handling nuclear / fire issues. Then to Mersin Marina for beers, then presented at joint meeting of 7 clubs, they were first meeting to include our national anthem, at end of meeting they presented a peace cake for us to blow candles out and cut cake with some fireworks. amazing.



14/5/15 - to bus depot and got bus to Cappadocia - Bus trip from Tarsus to Nevisher which is in the region of Cappadocia, arrived here at about 4:00 pm, a long trip with several stops on way, a lot cooler here, we were met and drove to Urgup and had a drink, but amazing sites on way, this and is place is unbelievable, taken to one of the Rotarians Sadi's Hotel, a quaint 33 rooms in caves etc. on a hill, cobbled stones etc. and had refreshments there and our hosts arrived. We met other Rotarians and discussed plans for Cappadocia, very exciting. They asked if we wanted to go up in a balloon and of course we all said yes and it has been booked after calling 6 different balloon companies. Went home with hosts and met Family, Korkmaz, Ilknur and Nurbanu (daughter), lovely family in a level 1 apartment. Had a lovely dinner with a bottle of Red and then reasonably early for bed. One of the Rotarians is from RC of Camberwell who is in Turkey for a year with his family as he runs a tourist business Fairy Chimneys, a wonderful couple and children, need to follow up with him on his return to Australia in 2016.

15/5/15 - Up at 4:00 am Picked up by Bus at 4:30 am after host drove to a nearby Hotel and met others and were taken to another village where the balloon companies have their offices and plan where the flight will start, all boarded a mini bus and went to start area, down in valley's amongst the amazing chimney type structures. Balloon was being prepared and we were in a group of 16 and the pilot, met a young Aussie family from Red Hill and another couple from Elsternwick. The Balloons are huge and many were getting prepared, got on board and then just floated away, it was amazing, very smooth and Balloons everywhere, pilot advised that only 100 balloons are licensed to fly and I reckon they were all up there and therefore 2000 people going up that morning, it was amazing and the photos are unbelievable, after an hour we landed the basket onto the trailer, got out and celebrated with champagne, cannot explain how amazing this was.

After balloon ride went back home had breakfast with family and off again at 10:00, we had 3 tour guides, Marcus the Turk Australian who is here for a year with his wife and 2 children and 2 other locals who are connected to the Rotarians, so plenty of info. We visited the Fairy Chimneys (they are everywhere and over the years the locals have dug caves into them, then went to Gozeme Museum of Churches, there are 365 churches built into the Chimneys and rocks, from 10 to 11 Century AD.



Then went to Avanos where we had lunch at local women's community restaurant, then to a Ceramics/Pottery place where a couple of team had a go on pottery wheel and then to a carpet place where Korkmaz is the GM to look at carpets, Erika purchased one, home for a shower and then to Sadi's hotel for dinner, some more amazing and tasty food, home in bed by 11:00 and slept to 8:30.

16/5/15 I was picked up by Sadi at 9:00 and taken to a Barbers then to a Horse Ranch for a Brunch, was in an amazing place with caves buildings, we then went for a 90 minute work through a valley. After this drove to Nevisher to meet with PE Melvet who is a Archaeologist heading up a new dig, this was another super experience being taken through caves etc. where only archaeologists have been, will eventually be a museum. The site was only discovered 12 months ago, 450 hectares and digging for last 3 months at Nevsehir, amazing many cave dwellings including large stables, at least 10 years work, not many people have seen this a we had a guided tour thanks to Rotary. After this we went for drinks and nibbles to watch sunset at Uchisar castle and then were taken to a live music concert with local music and a Whirling Dervish, after that the club members wanted to kick on which we did at Marcus's brothers small vineyard, with singing and drinking, then went to a Church cave under the vineyard called Sarila Kilise for more singing, dancing and drinking, then they wanted to have hangover cure soup (like tripe with heaps of garlic and got home at 3:00 am. Turks know how to party.



17/5 Late breakfast at Hosts Korkmaz and Ilknur, sad to leave got on bus to Konya from Nevisher at 11:30, met Rotarians and booked into hotel, then did tour of Sille Valley, churches etc. Went for evening meal at restaurant on hill over looking Konya.

18/5 Visited Catalhoyuk, which is 9000 year old buried city, that was found in 1959 and are still digging up, then to lunch at Tuba Firin Kebab where speciality was lamb cooked in oven for 12 hours, they had reserved the neck part, the flavour was great, then to the Mevlana Museum, 13th Century AD, where the Whirling Dervish came from. Then presented at RC of Konya meeting and swapped banners, they gave us each a ceramic whirling Dervish.



19/5 on bus at 8:00 and on way to Alanya, a great resort by the sea, met Rotarians, had lunch and then ice cream and then home for rest before we go out.

Mich and I are being hosted together in this magnificent property that overlooks Alanya, we have the lower level which has 2 X Guest rooms own shower etc, also swimming pool kitchen lounge etc, under us is huge Garage, and above us 2 floors where Hosts Kerem and Esra live with their 2 Boys, views are sensational, and of course there is a house maid, both are Lawyers. Went to one of the Rotarians restaurant on the beach called Latino, nice food and home by 11:30.

20/5 Up late and went to a new University - Alanya HEP, all instruction is in English, they do Architecture, Cooking and Art, Uni is supported by a Foundation and the Alanya RC supports as well. Then went to old Alanya ship building yards 13th Century, then went inland to a restaurant on the Dim river, on way back visited a Banana Plantation, they use hot house so plants do not freeze during winter and hot house produces a greater yield up to 80kg per plant. Home for a swim and beer and then to Restaurant overlooking harbour to do our last club presentation, also were involved was a new club RC of Alanya International, they only speak English and this was their 6th meeting.



21/5/15 - Late start, big breakfast with host family, many of the others met us at Kerem's and we all travelled to the Conference at Antalya. Hotel Titanic, very large, and is totally inclusive, ie. all you can eat and drink, has many restaurants, bars and the biggest swimming pool in Turkey.



The conference started at 4:00 pm, and wow what a fan fare, lots of loud music, club presentations galore, the RIPPR spoke and after this about 8:30 went for dinner and many drinks at a bar.

22/5/15 Friday morning we were to give our presentation at 10:30 for 8 minutes, due to speakers going overtime and so many presidents families etc. on stage to receive presentations we did not get on until nearly 1:00 pm, Umit followed us but unfortunately none of her team could make it and she went straight back to Ankara after. We had the afternoon off, so swimming, drinking and water slides. I also went down to beach by boat and had swim, again a late night with drinks and they also have live shows in the outdoors around the pool, singers, dancers etc.



23/5/15 Saturday morning we went to conference and saw the Youth Exchange presentations, they were really good, had afternoon around pool. Asu (from Turkish GSE Team who lives and works in Antalya) called me and was able to visit us for 30 minutes, so we all had a quick catch up with team before she had to go back to her hotel and work, then got ready for Gala dinner on that night, again a huge production with orchestra, dancing and singing, as well as wonderful food, about 800 attended. more drinks after.

24/5/15 Pack up day and get ready to travel home, as the conference was at the end of our exchange it was really good to catch up with many of the Rotarians and Families we had met along the way, quite sad to say good bye. Got bus at around 1:00 pm for flight to Istanbul and then home.

Arrived home at 00:20 in Melbourne on 26/5. What a trip, absolutely amazing and some wonderful gifts.



Within Turkey we visited 15 Cities, made 12 Rotary Clubs and 1 Conference Presentation, had 2 Rotary Club meetings without presentations, but were involved with a total of 26 Rotary Clubs. We travelled by 4 internal flights -2000km, Fast Train - 250km, 16 x Public Bus and private vehicles - 3000 km

