



SUTURE

“BINDING SURGEONS TOGETHER”

**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF SRI LANKA
DECEMBER 2009**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

Looking back at our beginnings, many of you may be aware the original concept of a College of Surgeons was mooted by a handful of our senior teachers at the Consultant Lounge of the then General Hospital Colombo in 1971. Subsequently, we had our humble beginnings at a rented room at the Wijerama House. In the late 1990's with the increasing activities of the college, premises of our own became a necessity. Our search yielded results when we were successful in negotiating with the UDA for a property in Rajagiriya to put up our own premises together with the SAARC Surgical Care Society Head Office. In the mean time we were fortunate, thanks to the benevolence of the late Dr. Noel and Mrs. Nora Bartholomeuz so that today we have a priceless mansion to call our home. There was unprecedented enthusiasm by our members to develop the premises further, so as to keep pace with our expanding activities.

We had a busy and at the same time a productive and rewarding working schedule throughout the year 2009.

01. The monthly lecture program was well attended and highly appreciated by our Postgraduate Surgical Trainees.
02. There were over 10 Lectures by foreign resource personnel visiting us during the year.
03. We initiated the concept of a Master Class Program (i.e. the ongoing SETS programme) which was organized by Dr. Aloka Pathirana and his team, where for the first time in Sri Lanka, a program of this nature was linked to Kandy, Jaffna and Galle simultaneously via video link. Here, the trainees from those areas could interact with the lecturer concurrently. This program has a great potential in the field of expanding continuous surgical education to our Colleagues in the outstations.
04. The College sprang into action at a time of national need when a mass exodus in the form of “internally displaced persons” and casualties began pouring into Trinco, Padaviya, Vavuniya and Mannar hospitals in the early part of 2009. Our members stood up for a human cause, at very short notice and worked tirelessly with minimum facilities and under trying conditions in these difficult areas. Having provided the initial surgical care to these injured masses, the College continued to monitor their progress in the subsequent months. We would continue to monitor the development of HealthCare of the resettled population in collaboration with the WHO in hitherto inaccessible areas of Mallavi, Mulankavil and Akkarayankulum.
05. The Annual Scientific Sessions of the College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka, the International Conference of the SAARC Surgical Care Society and the Inaugural Scientific Conference of the Sri Lanka Orthopaedic Association were held concurrently at the BMICH. This was indeed a historic event and a major accomplishment, with the participation of a record number of foreign and local resource personnel and delegates. During this conference the presidency of the SAARC surgical care society was transferred to Sri Lanka from India. We were honoured by the visit of Mr. John D'Orr, the President of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, together with the Presidents of the Colleges of SAARC countries. An unprecedented number of symposia, workshops and plenaries as well as all 03 orations of the College and the SAARC oration were held during this period.

Cont., —>

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The year 2009 comes to an end with much achieved during this year for the College of Surgeons. Of the many of the events and activities, the opening of the SAARC Surgical Care Society headquarters at the Noel and Nora Bartholomeuz centre, finalisation of discussions regarding rational subspecialisation, progress regarding the incorporation of the College as a company, and inaugural official functions held at the Noel and Nora Bartholomeuz auditorium, are included in this newsletter. The year also ends on a sombre note with the demise of a doyen of the surgical fraternity, Deshamanya Dr. P. R. Anthonis LMS, FRCS, who is sadly though proudly remembered.

Ajith Malalasekera
Editor—'SUTURE'

06. The Opening of the Head Office of the SAARC Surgical Care Society at the premises of the CSSL took place in December 2009 with the participation of Diplomatic representation of the SAARC countries. This Office is to be shifted to the new building which is planned to be constructed at our property at Welikada Rajagiriya.
07. HSDP program while continuing to provide skills and knowledge to the trainee surgeons and healthcare staff in outstation hospitals, generated income to the college from the World Bank. Dr. Pradeep Fernando and his team were actively involved in covering hospitals in Hambantota, Trinco and Embilipitiya areas.
08. The College conducted a refresher course in Surgery for the benefit of foreign graduates who were sitting for the ERPM Examinations so as to qualify for registration by the Sri Lanka Medical Council.
09. Through amicable debate and dialogue a consensus was arrived at with regard to the long-standing subject of surgical specialization. The relevant policy document with regard to the successful consensus arrived at, was presented to the PGIM and the Ministry for implementation. This accomplishment portrays that it is the sincere desire of every member of the CSSL, that the College should serve as a parent apex body of the Surgeons of this country, for "in unity lies our strength."
10. The College took into consideration the problem of new surgeons leaving the country citing various reasons, mainly lack of facilities at the peripheral hospitals and non-availability of acceptable living conditions. The College devised a mechanism to liaise between the returning surgeons after completion of their overseas training and the Ministry for suitable placements with acceptable facilities. This will minimize the misunderstandings and unpleasantness resulting in some of these returning surgeons resigning from State service and opting to go back.
11. The visit of the President of the RCS Edinburgh, paved the way to re-establishing the links with the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. This was exemplified by the readiness displayed in agreeing to hold the MRCS Examination in Colombo beginning this September with a preparatory training course for the MRCS. This will benefit the the College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka both academically and financially, whilst at the same time Sri Lanka will serve as a hub of Post Graduate Surgical Education in the region and beyond. Sri Lanka will thus become the first country in the World to hold the MRCS Examination of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh as well as London in one Centre.
12. PGIM accepted the role of the CSSL in Post Graduate training in the country and agreed they would appreciate our mediation when it comes to inviting examiners for the MD Examinations in the future. Two senior examiners from the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh will be arriving in Sri Lanka for the Examination in July this year.
13. The College took necessary steps to incorporate the CSSL by an Act of Parliament by ratifying the Constitution in this regard at a special General Meeting. The relevant documents have been presented for processing.
14. As a sequel to the successful programme of Rehabilitation Care Management workshop held during our sessions, the College embarked on training Volunteer Care Givers who will be serving the community on a voluntary basis. These health care workers will be supervised by the College in association with an NGO Sri Lanka Nippon Cultural Centre. Already 37 caregivers representing all three communities and faiths have successfully completed their training in November 2009.

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15. The College of Surgeons in association with the Anaesthesiologists of Sri Lanka organized a very successful inaugural "Surg-An Dinner Dance" at Taj Samudra Hotel.

The journey of the CSSL to this day has been achieved through hard work and dedication of all my predecessors and their councils. It is from where they collectively left, that we took over. I would like to tell each and everyone of them - "Thank you for bringing us there !!".

During my tenure of Presidency, whatever we achieved, was through the sheer dedication of every member of my Council. Each member, senior or junior, and my teachers, contributed in no small measure, through this journey. My highest accolades go out to them!

I can see a dynamic and vibrant galaxy of surgeons enthusiastic to take up responsibility of this high office of the CSSL for the coming years.

It is my fervent wish, and I am certain this is shared by each and every one of you, that all our hard work, efforts and endeavours must continue to be directed to give our best to those who deserve our services – our Patients, our People.

May the CSSL grow from strength to strength in the years to come.

Thank you

Dr Narendra Pinto

President, The College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka

Deshamanya Dr. P. R. Anthonis LMS (Ceylon), FRCS (England)

Born 21st January 1911, Died 17th December 2009

It is difficult for the modern doctor to understand the ability and skills and achievements of medical practitioners of the era of Dr. Anthonis. He passed out as a doctor in 1936 when the pharmacopoeia consisted of lotions, powders and mixtures. Antibiotics were unknown (Penicillin was discovered two years after he went to UK to train as a surgeon). Intravenous anaesthesia was discovered only just (Chloroform was discovered in 1864). There were no Intensive care units (all postoperative care even for very major surgery was in a general ward), no monitors of any kind, only X-rays were available for imaging, no flexible endoscopes, blood transfusion was in its infancy, and all laboratory tests were carried out manually.

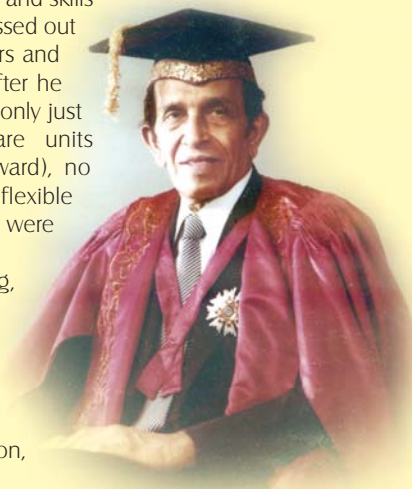
The era of antibiotics, intensive care, monitors, imaging, automation, and pharmacological advances burst into the medical scene from 1950 up to the present time. It is to Dr. Anthonis' credit that he kept pace with these advances, kept abreast of the literature and continuously updated himself with new techniques and operations.

To a large extent he was a self taught man. He spent the years 1945 to 1947 passing the Primary and soon after the FRCS examination, and working as a surgical registrar in hospitals in London.

On his return he was appointed surgeon to the General Hospital, Colombo (now The National Hospital of Sri Lanka), from where he retired in 1971.

The variety of surgical operations was wide as there were no "Finer specialists" at that time. Head and neck surgery including malignancies, thyroidectomy, oesophagectomy, chest surgery, surgery for portal hypertension, mastectomies, gastrectomies, cholecystectomies, colectomies, AP resections, all urological operations including open prostatectomy, pancreatic surgery etc were part of a routine surgical list.

Amongst his patients were Ambassadors and Diplomats, leading businessmen, politicians, Ministers and Heads of state and the common man. He claimed that he had operated on every head of state of Sri Lanka except the last two! He had his share of surgical rivals waiting to pounce on him in case of complications or deaths. At a surgical meeting he narrated how he had to re operate on the famed singer Sunil Shantha, who had developed hoarseness following thyroidectomy carried out by another surgeon. Mr. Sunil Shantha had expressed his gratitude in the newspapers for which Dr. Anthonis was reported to the Ceylon Medical Council! He later went on to become the Chairman of this Council.



There were many reasons for his success.

The first is undoubtedly his intellectual brilliance. At St. Peter's College where he had his primary education he carried away virtually every prize. At the University College (later the Colombo Medical Faculty), he again topped the batch at every examination and was awarded the Loos Gold medal (Pathology), the Mathew Gold Medal (Forensic Medicine), and the Rockwood Gold Medal (Surgery).

The next attribute was his picture book knowledge of the anatomy of the human form. This coupled with his avid reading of the surgical literature helped him to unravel the most complex surgical problems. His memory for surgical topics and procedures was also amazing.

The third attribute for Dr. Anthonis' success was his boundless capacity for work. He would often say "a mother will never forgive you if you refuse to see her son at night complaining of abdominal pain". He was available at all times to any patient. In the 50s and even 60s, he would travel to Galle or Kandy to operate on patients too ill to travel to Colombo. He also came to the rescue of many a surgeon who had complications following surgery. He probably has the largest series of corrections to surgical damage of the common bile duct. These were carried out without the second and third generation antibiotics, and endoscopic, stenting and imaging facilities that we now enjoy. Unfortunately these went unpublished.

And he had time. It is said that to the lazy man there is always no time but for the busy man there is always some time. He had time to consult, time to operate, time to attend weddings, funerals, meetings lectures, scientific sessions and time to do all this, often within the space of a day. He served as Chancellor of the University for a record period of 21 years. He had time to attend every convocation and to stand for hours wishing every graduate with a smile and a word of advice.



In a vintage car at the Surgeons Walk, December 2005.



Laying the foundation stone for the Noel and Nora Bartholomeuz Training Centre & Auditorium on 11th December 2005

He was President of the Sri Lanka Medical Association in 1967 and continued to serve the Association by attending most Orations and meetings, always giving that extra bit of encouragement to young orators for their scientific work. He was also Editor of The Ceylon Medical Journal.

The surgical fraternity has much to be grateful for Dr. Anthonis.

He was the Founder President of The College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka in 1974. Ever since the Primary FRCS examination was held in Sri Lanka it was traditional that the President of the Royal College of Surgeons of England came with the examiners or as one of them. It was also traditional that they would host all the Sri Lankan Fellows to a dinner. To reciprocate this and to host the visiting team to dinner was a prerogative of Dr. Anthonis. He invited all the Sri Lankan examiners

and even his circle of friends to these lavish parties which only he could afford to host. He had a wide circle of Surgeon friends from the UK as a result. He continued with this annual tradition till the mid eighties until Dr. Stephen, the Chairman of the Board of Study in Surgery and I, the then Secretary decided that it was unfair to let one person to foot the bill and it has since then been hosted by the Council of the College, in spite of Dr. Anthonis' protests. These dinners were very important because this gave us an opportunity to chat up these Consultants from the UK to get jobs and placements for our trainee surgeons.

As President of the Medical Specialists Association he fought by the side of the Government Medical Officers Association and won the right to private practice, a privilege all doctors should be grateful to him for.

He has been awarded the National honour of Deshamanya by the President for service to the country, the Vishwa Prasadini award by the Prime Minister and an International Award, The Order of the Golden Peacock by the Emperor of Japan. The Japanese community in Sri Lanka held him in high esteem. A Japanese mother once brought her son to me with abdominal pain. He had all the symptoms, signs and haematological evidence to support a diagnosis of acute appendicitis. This was also confirmed by the resident Japanese embassy doctor. When the mother was told that her son needed an operation, she asked through the interpreter where Dr. Anthonis was. She was told that he was out of Colombo and would not be available for another couple of days. Her immediate reply was "in that case I am taking my son to Japan for the operation"!

The amazing list of his achievements is but a few. His knowledge of the History of Sri Lanka, History of medicine, of antiquities, wildlife and the postwar personalities of Ceylon enabled him to hold his own with the scholars at any conversation.

We have lost a skilful surgeon, an ambassador for the surgical fraternity and a surgeon and friend to the highest and to the lowest.

May he be granted his rewards in the hereafter.

Deshamanya Prof A.H. Sheriffdeen FRCS

Past President of the College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka
And Emeritus Professor of Surgery, University of Colombo

The International Society of Surgery



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF SURGERY (ISS) SOCIETE INTERNATIONALE DE CHIRURGIE (SIC)

Introduction

In 1902 at the congress of Belgian surgeons, with guests from France, Germany and Switzerland, it was decided to establish an international surgical society. The original organization was called "La Société Internationale de Chirurgie" (SIC). Due to legal constraints the Society was dissolved and reconstituted as the International Society of Surgery/ Société Internationale de Chirurgie (ISS/SIC). The organization has members in over 119 countries worldwide.

Aims:

The ISS/SIC functions with mainly two aims in mind:

- Function as a very benevolent "umbrella organization" to keep the "house of surgery" together for all problems of general interest to all surgical specialties.

- Vital interest in up keeping general surgery as an important training base.

For the implementation of the advancement of the science and art of surgery, the following functions are provided:

- World Congress of Surgery - the International Surgical Week
- Regional Postgraduate Courses under the auspices of the Society
- World Journal of Surgery
- Newsletters and other publications

4 Global organizations are Integrated within the ISS/SIC

IAES- international Society of Endocrine surgeons

IATSIC- international Association for Trauma Surgery and Intensive Care (IATSIC)

IASMEN- International Association for Surgical Metabolism and Nutrition

BSI- Breast Surgery International

The organization in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka so far has 2 active members and one senior member. The country representative is Prof Ranil Fernando. If 10 members can be recruited a chapter could be formed, which will be of benefit to surgery in Sri Lanka.

Joining the Organization enables you to be:

- A member of the most prestigious and oldest global surgical organization and provides opportunities to meet world leaders in various surgical specialties.
- Receive the World journal of surgery and have electronic access to several other journals.
- Contribute to the development of surgery in Sri Lanka.

The ISS Foundation

ISS Foundation has been formed so that funds can be sought and channeled for charitable, scientific and educational purposes. It provides means of furthering professional training, developing technical background and promoting education of individuals in training, through seminars, special courses, granting of scholarships, travel and research fellowships. Applications may be received from all member nations, but surgery students from underdeveloped nations will be encouraged to apply for study in those areas which are more developed and advanced. There has been one recipient of a travel Scholarship from Sri Lanka (1997). All young surgeons are encouraged to apply for travel fellowships.

Membership is NOT a requirement to apply.

ALL THE DETAILS CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE WEBSITE- www.iss.ch

Prof. Ranil Fernando MS FRCS, Department of Surgery, University of Kelaniya

News in Brief

Rationalization Policy on Surgical Specialization

Initially a questionnaire survey was conducted by Professor Arjuna Aluwihare on the matters related to surgical specialization among the College memberships. Findings of the survey were presented and discussed at a special session held during the Annual Academic Sessions of the College in August 2009.

A Special Forum to discuss the rationalization policy was held at the Noel and Nora Bartholomeuz Foundation on 20th November 2009. Presentations were made by Dr ASK Banagala (general surgery), Dr Indranee Amerasinghe (surgical oncology) and Dr TG Amal Priyantha (surgical gastroenterology). The issues were discussed in detail at the Forum and it was decided unanimously to appoint a Committee to go into the matter. The Committee comprised of Dr Narendra Pinto (President), Professor Mohan De Silva, Dr BGN Ratnasena, Dr ASK Banagala, Dr Indranee Amerasinghe, Dr Upali Banagala, Dr Naomal Perera and Dr Ishan De Zoysa (Secretary to the Committee)

The Committee in its report states that the College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka has the responsibility to recommend changes in the training programme for all surgical specialties. The following proposals suggested by the Committee were approved by the Council at its meeting.

- All gastrointestinal surgeons and oncological surgeons should do on call duties with regard to accepting general surgical emergencies on the same on call rota as general surgeons. These patients should be under the care of the admitting surgeon until the time of discharge and during follow up. Beds for surgical emergencies should be shared between the surgeons.
- All general surgeons should be given an opportunity to declare an area of special interest.
- The College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka supports the advancement of general surgery with areas of special interest as specified in the curriculum and syllabus for general surgery.

Incorporation of the College of Surgeons by an Act of Parliament

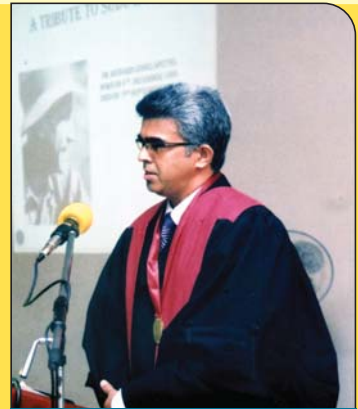
A proposal has been presented for the incorporation of the College by an Act of Parliament. At present the Colleges of Physicians and Ophthalmologists have been incorporated in this fashion. This proposal was unanimously approved by the Council of the College. Subsequently a Special General Meeting was held on 20th November 2009. It was unanimously approved at this meeting. Currently steps are being taken to present the incorporation Bill in the Parliament.

Dr Satish Goonesinghe MS FRCS,

Hon. Secretary of the CSSL 2009, Consultant Urological Surgeon,
Teaching Hospital Karapitiya

Dr RL Spittel Memorial Oration

The RL Spittel oration for the year 2009 was delivered by Dr Prasanna Gunasena MS FRCSEd, Consultant Neurosurgeon, Teaching Hospital Anuradhapura, on December 18, 2009. The event was held at the Noel and Nora Bartholomeusz Foundation. Dr Gunasena presented his experiences on "Minimally invasive laminoplasty for symptomatic lumbar canal stenosis" to a captive audience.



RL Spittel orator
Dr Prasanna Gunasena
delivering his lecture

SAARC Surgical Care Society headquarters

The opening of the SAARC SCS headquarters took place at the Noel and Nora Bartholomeusz Foundation on December 18, 2009. The ceremony was attended by dignitaries representing the SAARC countries, and many past presidents, council members and members of the CSSL.



The founder president of the SAARC SCS Prof APR Aluvihare unveiling the plaque along with the incumbent president of the SAARC SCS, Dr

Enteroscopy (live demonstrations) & Endoscopic Management of Hepatobiliary & Pancreatic diseases (Lectures & Video demonstrations). Main session was held at the newly built Auditorium of the College of Surgeons premises. The Nihal Marcus Oration & the Annual dinner were held at Waters'edge, Battaramulla.

(Editors note: The Gastroenterological & Digestive Endoscopic Society donated Rs 100,000/= from its earnings at the Annual academic sessions to the CSSL)

Annual Academic Sessions of The Gastroenterological & Digestive Endoscopic Society of Sri Lanka

The Annual academic sessions of the Gastroenterological & Digestive Endoscopic Society of Sri Lanka was held on 6th & 7th November 2009. Two pre congress workshops were conducted on Double balloon



The incumbent president of The Gastroenterological & Digestive Endoscopic Society Dr Amal Priyantha at the inauguration, along with Dr KL Fernando, and the founder president Prof Dayasiri Fernando.

New Members

Dr. C.W. Weerasinghe

Dr. J.M.N.R. Jayasundare

Dr. S.D. Perera

Dr. LKDCR Karunathilake

Dr. L.N. Seneviratne

Dr. H.J. Suraweera

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