



COMSAA NEWSLETTER



September 2014
Volume 3: Issue 4

Message from the President – Prof Lalitha Mendis

The year as President CoMSAA has passed quickly.

We have addressed all objectives of the organization such as assisting the Faculty and its students and fostering goodwill and fellowship.

An institution such as the Faculty of Medicine, Colombo should have a detailed recorded history. As a contribution towards existing records, the 2013/2014 committee published a book “Glimpses of Time” which is now available on sale.

It has been a great pleasure to work with the 2013/2014 Executive Committee. I take this opportunity to thank them one and all for their commitment, hard work and good cheer. We enjoyed our meetings while planning and plotting.

I wish the 2014/2015 committee especially the capable, committed, energetic, and lively Dr BJC Perera who will be President, the very best in the coming year.



Annual General Meeting

The annual general meeting of the Colombo Medical Students’ Alumni Association will be held on the **7th October 2014** at the **Auditorium Sri Lanka Medical Association** at **2.00pm**. Your presence at this meeting is greatly appreciated. The call for applications and application forms are given below and can be downloaded from the CoMSAA website at www.comsaa.org.

Colombo Medical School Alumni Association (CoMSAA)

Call for Applications for Office Bearers for the year 2014/2015

Applications are called for the following posts of Colombo Medical School Alumni Association (CoMSAA) for the year 2014/2015 from members of CoMSAA.

1. President elect
2. Three Vice Presidents, at least one of whom shall be from among the present or past academic staff of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo
3. Two Co-Secretaries, one of whom shall be a member of the academic staff of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo.
4. Treasurer
5. Assistant Treasurer
6. Editor
7. Assistant Editor
8. Social Secretary
9. Ten members of the executive committee

The nominations should be proposed and seconded by CoMSAA members.

Send in your application by completing the application form annexed to Dr Sameera Gunwardena, Co Secretary, CoMSAA, Faculty of Medicine, Kynsey Road, Colombo, **before 30th September 2014.**

Dr Sameera Gunawardena

Co Secretary, CoMSAA



Colombo Medical School Alumni Association (CoMSAA)

Application Form

Office Bearers and Executive Committee Members 2014/2015

Post applied for:

Name of applicant:

Address:

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.....

Telephone number:

E mail Address:

CoMSAA Membership No:
(if available)

Signature of applicant:.....

Proposed by:

Name:

CoMSAA membership No:
(if available)

Telephone number:

E mail address:

Signature:

Seconded by:

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COMSAA Reunion 2014

Dr. Theekshana Pathirana (Preintern COMSAA) & Dr. Sameera Gunawardena (Co-Secretary CoMSAA)

The 7th of September 2014 heralded the 3rd annual reunion and academic sessions of the Colombo Medical School Alumni Association (CoMSAA). It was a much awaited event that reawakened the sweet memories of faculty life.

Many alumni members and their families had already checked in at the Hotel Blue Water in Wadduwa on the evening of 6th September. They gathered at the Hotel Lobby around the legendary “Sam the man” who set the tone for a glorious night of socializing replete with singing and dancing.



Singing the night away.....

Early morning the next day, over 200 attendees gathered at the main ballroom of the hotel for the opening ceremony of the academic sessions with Prof Priyani Soysa gracing the occasion as the chief guest. After a warm welcome by the President and the address by the chief guest it was time to launch the book “GLIMPSES OF TIME”, which was the brainchild of the President of CoMSAA, Prof. Lalitha Mendis.



The chief guest – Prof Priyani Soysa

The president elect Dr. B.J.C. Perera introduced the book and maiden copies of this masterpiece were handed over to the chief guest, and the senior most alumni present that day. All the contributing authors and members of the executive committee also received a free copy. Dr. Sameera Gunawardena, Secretary of CoMSAA brought the opening ceremony to a close by thanking all those who contributed to the event.



***Dr. Sameera Gunawardena,
Co-Secretary CoMSAA***



Afterwards the attendees were treated to a diversity of academic presentations starting off with sexuality in the elderly by Dr. Lasantha Malavige, the doctor's role as a teacher by Prof. Joachim Perera, how to fight aging by Dr. Chamila Dalpadatu, medical tourism and ethics of organ donation by Dr. Chula Herath, and the spectrum of Lichen Planus by Dr. Lakshman Ranasinghe. It was a wide variety of topics which attracted all and gave everyone much to reflect on.



Then came the second highlight of the day. A hot topic was brought to an open forum for a war of words between two teams, to argue out if *"Private medical schools were harmful to the state medical schools providing free education"*.



It was truly an exhilarating display of verbal and nonverbal retaliations between the teams. The proposition comprised of the witty and creative Prof. Saroj Jayasinghe and the eloquent and erudite Dr. Ashwini Abrew, whereas the opponent camp was led by the formidable and



veracious Prof. Narada Warnasuriya who teamed up with the constructive and calculated debater Prof. Ananda Samarasekara. Prof Carlo Fonseka brought a fitting end to the academic sessions by providing a colourful review of the debate and paid the ultimate compliment to the speakers by appreciating that *"there was a younger generation in the medical profession much more brilliant than those that were!"*

With these words resonating in the minds of the alumni the rhythm of the musical bands and the exquisite array of food and beverages slowly took over the proceedings.



A scrumptious buffet



Come on let's dance



Prizes galore



The Baila Dancing Competition



Alumni Talents on display

Gradually the attendees moved on to the lighter side of life as the social program provided an assortment of games and dancing competitions along with of course, many prizes! For many alumni it was the ideal opportunity to showcase their talents... some long forgotten...some perhaps newly found...ranging from singing to stand up comedy to baila dancing; all blending beautifully between the older and younger generations.

All in all, it was a most enjoyable day and one that ended too soon for many with the eventual realization that all good things must come to an end. As the merry crowd slowly dispersed with hugs and goodbyes all around, one fact was all too obvious...everyone had silently vowed to themselves that they would return again next year!

COMSAA Book Launch – “Glimpses of Time”

“Glimpses of Time” a Book of Reminiscences was published by CoMSAA and launched at the 3rd CoMSAA reunion held in September 2014.



***Dr. BJC Perera, President-elect
introducing the book***



***Presenting a copy to the most
senior alumnus – Dr. Bhuran***

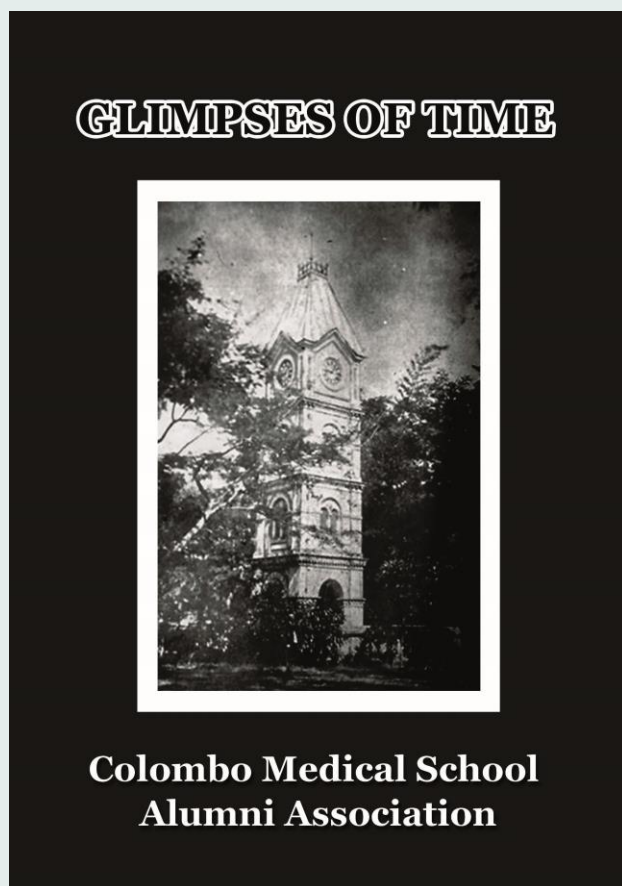


***Prof Priyani Soysa and Prof Carlo
Fonseka, two illustrious alumni
who contributed to the book***

As at 2014, our Faculty is 144 years old. The Colombo Medical Faculty has from 1870 to the present day witnessed, absorbed and survived the changes and effects of a transition from colonial times to independence, the stresses of two world wars, two southern terrorist insurrections, a harrowing thirty-year northern separatist war, a change in language policy, a change in nomenclature of the Colombo medical degree, standardization of entry into Universities, the introduction of a District Quota System, the common merit list for granting

internship and post-intern appointments, issues following the opening of a private medical college, closure of universities, curriculum change and the prospect of unemployment.

The richness of the history, ethos, contributions and travails of an institution nearly one and half centuries old is captured in this book through the reminiscences of former students and teachers. This book contains such recollections of certain critical periods in the life of the Faculty. Two of our most illustrious alumni, Professors Priyani Soysa and Carlo Fonseka share their memories of Faculty life. Parents and offspring illustrate how our faculty has evolved over a generation. A potpourri of spontaneously generated articles and poems from alumni bring to life different experiences of faculty life over a period spanning six decades. The book provides the reader glimpses of time like the catch of a song. After all, we all remember in different ways as we slowly forget.



*Get your copy of
"Glimpses of Time"
from the COMSAA Office,
Faculty of Medicine,
University of Colombo.*

*Price Rs. 1000/=**

'Glimpses of Time' is available for sale at the CoMSAA Office at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo. *Please contact Dr. Sameera Gunawardena on 0714958897 or Dr. Romain Perera on 077 3412975 for further details. Postage can be arranged for a fee for overseas orders.

COMSAA News and Projects

Activities carried out

Donation of stethoscopes and textbooks for 2nd /3rd year students

Stethoscopes and clinical textbooks worth Rs 300,000 were donated to 45 students in the 2nd and 3rd year through CoMSAA. We wish to acknowledge Dr. Sujatha Maligaspe Lena for her kind donation of 5000 Canadian Dollars towards this worthy cause. A fund has been setup as the “CoMSAA Book and Stethoscope Fund” and alumni members are kindly invited to contribute to this fund which will sustain the program annually for needy students.

Funding of students to attend Physiology Quiz 2014

CoMSAA sponsored the air fare of four medical students to attend the Physiology Quiz 2014 held in Malaysia. Our students progressed to the quarter finals.

Contributions from our members

Rampaging Lady Nicotine

(By Dr. Nanda Amarasekera, Council Member, CoMSAA)

Making entry into the unsuspecting world feigning ignorance
Winning over millions by claiming only beneficence
Over many decades across countries rich and poor
Lady Nicotine embarked silently on a conquering tour

Boredom and fatigue making workers to suffer
Here is a simple remedy, is there anything safer?
Light a cigarette for a life of reflection and relaxation
What joy and relief-what a revelation!

The numbers of innocent victims and the gullible increased
The wily marketers making millions charmed and fleeced
Nobody realised that the lady's grip is tightening
And the long term consequences ever more frightening.

Problems of cough and difficult breathing felt by some
Were dismissed as due to vehicles and dust-nothing awesome
Don't we see them on cold wintry days
Not of a magnitude that we cannot face!

Dealers of Death relentlessly pursued their course
Targeting even women and children showing no remorse
'Wait till you are grown up for this adult activity'
Which child will comply and refrain- is that reality?

By the year 2030 the single killer world wide
Says the World Bank, don't be taken for a ride
Cancers, strokes, lung and heart disease
Being highly addictive, once hooked there is no release

Effective pictorial warnings by law should be tightened
Awareness of individual's right to smoke free space, heightened
Concerts, discos and competition among youth-the vulnerable
Should have no inputs from Lady Nicotine, however justifiable

Repeated price increase is a deterrent and it works
Marketers may boost sales resorting to hidden perks
They made their money but humanity had to dearly pay
A similar noxious product today would not see the light of day

CoMSAA's professionals, promoters of health and well being
Witness to much misery, disability and suffering
Waiting for the end of lady Nicotine's guile and lure
Hope that we don't have long to endure!

Editor: Dr. Indika Karunathilake Asst Editor: Dr Harshima Wijesinghe
