



Meridian

Newsletter of the Australian Chinese Medical Association of Victoria
澳洲維省中華醫學會

30 November 2009, Volume 6 Number 4

ACMAV Charitable Grants Program

As you would have learned from the last Meridian, the ACMAV Foundation has established a Charitable Grants Program to promote the humanitarian efforts of its members. It is great to see that some members have already embraced this scheme and submitted applications for funding.

We are pleased to announce that Dr Benny Foo and Mr Andrew Bui were the successful applicants from our September round.



Tabitha Foundation also builds wells in Cambodia.

Benny was granted \$2000 for use towards the purchase of a replacement incinerator for Nyenga Hospital while Andrew was granted \$2000 towards a house-building project in Cambodia (a collaboration between Ivanhoe Grammar School and Tabitha Foundation).

Andrew and his family will visit Cambodia in 2010 and actually build some houses, so we wish them the best of luck! More information about this project is available on the web at <http://www.tabitha.org.au/cms/house-building.html>.

The next round of applications will be assessed in March 2010, so be sure to get your applications in on time! Application forms can be downloaded at www.acmav.org.

Other charitable activities include a raffle organized by Dr Siew Keng Chan at the annual conference in August. \$583 was raised and used towards the purchase of medications and medical equipment (including nebulisers and thermometers) for Starfish Foster Home in Xi'An. Siew Keng and her sister personally delivered these items to Starfish in September and revamped the home's medicine cabinet. Amanda de Lange, the manager of Starfish, passes on her heartfelt thanks.

We hope everyone is keeping an eye out for charitable activities – get active and lend a helping hand!

Jun Yang

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Meeting of ACMAV Minds

A vibrant crowd of 90 delegates packed the hall of the Stamford Plaza Hotel on 30 August 2009 to attend this year's ACMAV Annual Conference. In a year dominated by global factors such as the financial crisis and swine flu, this year's conference sought to give a fresh perspective on medical issues of world-wide significance with the theme being "Think Global, Act Local".

Our day was opened with an introduction by Associate Professor Ozanne-Smith from Monash University, a specialist on injury research in China. Dr Nathan Grills, public health physician with the Nossal Institute of Global Health, gave the opening lecture with an overview of global health. Professor Jennifer Hoy updated us on developments in

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A superb turnout at the ACMAV Annual Conference, hosted this year at the Stamford Plaza Hotel.



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President's Message

Spring has sprung, and with the change of season and the longer daylight hours comes a renewed sense of optimism. Just over 12 months ago the HSBC-sponsored financial seminar coincided with the relentless slide in equity markets and consumer confidence which accompanied the “GFC”, whereas this year’s HSBC seminar, held at the Taipan Restaurant in early October was an occasion to cautiously embrace the signs of recovery filtering through the Australian economy. As members of a privileged profession we will never know the angst of being unemployed, but we should not underestimate the impact of these hard times on our patients and our community.

The ACMAV has been fortunate not to have had its activities curtailed by the dampened economy. Sponsorship for our main educational events has been more difficult to secure, and it is a credit to the hard-working members of the ACMAV Committee and Annual Conference Committee that we have been able to continue to offer to our members these regular educational forums.

It was of particular pleasure to receive from a number of participants glowing praise for the quality of this year’s Annual Conference. There was widespread appreciation not just for the quality of the speakers – which was excellent – but also for the mix of public health, medical and surgical topics. The audience was inspired, entertained and educated in equal measure. The Conference Dinner, at Quanjude Restaurant was an enjoyable and memorable occasion, and I would like to thank once again the convenors, Jason Oh and Jun Yang, and the organising committee, Min Li Chong, Mee Yoke Ling, Theong Low, Michelle Mok, Salena Ward and Leona Yip

on their tremendous effort.

As we will be hosting our interstate colleagues at the combined ACMAV/Australian Council of Chinese Medical Associations Conference in early 2011, it has been decided that next year there will not be the usual conference held in August. Instead the hope is for the ACMAV to organise a charity (fund-raising) ball. This would be a huge undertaking for our association, as we have not so far had experience in hosting such events. However the Committee feels that this would be an appropriate step in the progress of the ACMAV’s charity-based focus. In addition to increasing awareness of the ACMAV Foundation and its purpose, the ball will be a highlight in our social calendar for late 2010.

Recently I had been invited to attend the Lions Club of Melbourne Chinese’s Annual Charity Ball and also the Chinese Association of Victoria’s Annual Gala Ball. These opportunities allowed me to renew friendships with some of ACMAV’s important partners (the Lions Club has previously raised a large sum for the ACMAV Foundation, and the CAV is a partner in the ACMAV’s Mandarin classes, which will resume early next year). It has also given me (and Committee member Sally Ng) an insight into the amount of effort required to conduct a successful event on such a scale. Any members who would be interested in joining the organising committee for next year’s ball should contact the ACMAV Committee.

We continue to have an excellent turnout at our regular dinner seminars, and it is always encouraging to meet new and returning members. As this is the last newsletter for the year, I wish all members a happy and healthy season’s greetings for the festive season ahead!

ACMAV Tennis Tournament

The ACMAV Tennis Tournament was held at Melbourne Park on October 25. Winners of the tournament were General Surgeon Michael Cheng and General Practitioner Theodore Tang.

Congratulations also to Douglas Gin (Dermatologist) and Trevor Lau-Gooey (General Practitioner) who were our runners up.



ACMAV Editorial Staff Changes

After editing ACMAV's Meridian newsletter for the last two years, spanning seven editions, I have decided to hand over the reigns.

It has been an enjoyable experience, and allowed me to meet many fellow colleagues and members. Until taking on this role and joining the ACMAV committee I did not appreciate how active an organisation it really is, how passionate its members and leadership team are about so many important causes, and how important the social interaction of this association is for both personal and professional development.

Unfortunately as family and professional life becomes busier, I have found less time to maintain Meridian, and sadly it must give way to other priorities.

Many of you will know Michael and Matthew Hong, sons of ACMAV member

Boon Hong. It is my pleasure to introduce them as your new ACMAV editorial team, while I gently step into the background to provide editorial oversight and support.

The team which has produced Qi over the last few years, headed by Alby Leung, is also changing, and I look forward to seeing the development of an editorial and publications team within the ACMAV which will produce the range of communication and promotional materials used by our association. If you have graphic design, layout, writing skills, or even if you are just an enthusiastic member, then feel free to volunteer your services. Failing that, do in someone you know!

Jason Chuen, Editor.



The Editor, when not working on Meridian.

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ACMAV Activity Reports

Cambodian Medical Assistance Mission

In July 2009, 11 intrepid team members journeyed to the Kingdom of Cambodia for 2 weeks. Four of us had already been to Cambodia last year, and were back for more!

We partnered with Community Enabling Healthcare, a non-government organisation which has been hosting overseas medical teams for 3-4 years. This year we were one of four teams to go. CEH's mission is to improve people's access to primary health care within local villages, and we were there to help out with the skills and training we learnt in Australia.

The first day was spent prepar-

ing equipment and medication for our village clinics. In excess of 1100 "show bags" were



Outpatient clinics are run a little differently out in the field!

packed, containing multivitamins, toothbrush, toothpaste and patient information leaflets. Funds raised in Australia went to purchasing large quantities of various medications including analgesics, antibiotics, antifungals, anti-parasitic agents, topical agents, PPIs and wound dressings.

CEH has a network of health-care assistants, reaching out to approximately 70 villages. These HCAs are involved in health education, first aid, primary prevention and facilitate access to further health resources.

Two days were spent in lectures and practical workshops with 18 senior



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healthcare assistants, who are in turn training the rest of the HCAs. Topics covered included first aid, paediatric respiratory conditions, back pain, diabetes, abdominal pain, hepatitis, family planning and women's health.

After the relative comfort of the classroom, it was time to cram ourselves into a small bus and hit the road. In total, we visited six villages across three provinces, seeing around 1200

patients. Most of the ailments were related to hard labour (musculoskeletal injury, arthritis), sun exposure (dehydration, cataracts), infections (wounds, tropical diseases, TB, poor hygiene) and psychological issues (PTSD, anxiety, depression).

Among the 1200-odd

patients we saw, there were a few who stood out for being sick and/or weird. Ms CM was one of the sicker ones. She is a middle aged lady who works hard on the farm to care for her 12 year old son. She presented with increasing shortness of breath on exertion and a "shaky chest." 3 months ago she was diagnosed as having heart failure at one of the metropolitan hospitals and placed on heart



The Cambodian Assistance Team on site.

failure medications. As is the case with most Cambodian villagers, she did not have enough money to continue with her medications. It was no surprise then that on examination she was tachypnoeic, with bibasal crepitations on auscultation. What was surprising however was her heart rate of 160.

We arranged for her to be transferred to Phnom Penh, where she was diagnosed with heart failure and thyrotoxicosis. She responded well to treatment and at the end, was able to go home after 1 week in the "Healing Home", a transition care facility of sorts run by another NGO.

Another patient who left a strong impression was a young child who had fallen off her house (3m above ground)



Ever tried teaching CPR in a foreign language?

3 days before she presented. Her parents had not brought her to a doctor as they had money for neither the consultation nor the transport to get there. When we saw her she was in significant pain and distress. Her left leg was visibly shortened and she was exquisitely tender over the thigh. We placed a makeshift cast over her left leg and sent her to a children's hospital in the city. We are still unsure about her outcome at this stage.

On the whole the trip was an eye opening and humbling experience. We feel honoured to have been accepted by the Cambodian people and to be given an opportunity to share in their lives. This was all made possible in no small part by the generous contribution of the ACMAV Foundation.

Yuan Ling and Ben Wong



A makeshift pharmacy and medical supply distribution centre.



ACMAV Seminar Program

Navigating the GFC

How easy is it to chat, network, learn, ask intelligent questions and chow down a magnificent dinner at the same time? If you managed to do all of that, then you got your money's worth. And if you don't have a clue what I'm talking about, then you missed one of the best duck dinners of the year.

October 7 2009 saw the convergence of 100-odd members at Taipan Restaurant, Doncaster, for lessons in wealth management. It was pleasing to note the increased representation from the junior ranks. Thus the first topic of the evening was fitting – how to navigate the property market in its current state for those seriously contemplating the plunge down Mortgage Lane. The basic principles include avoiding main roads, situating yourself close to amenities, and finding that balance between sufficient initial outlay to justify future returns, and over-investing. Easy? Curly, actually.

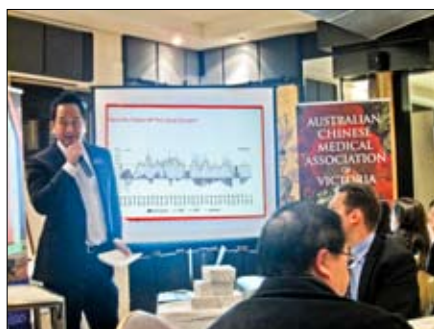
This was followed by a polished and most informative talk from Jason of HSBC Finance about complex derived investment products and their potential risks and returns. Naturally this aroused some passionate anti-profiteering sentiment from some members, but we know that business is business. No free lunches here.

Meanwhile, the duck dishes spilled forth from the kitchen, beginning with a cold assortment of feet, tongue and jellyfish. While the timid might have poked suspiciously at these gelatinous offerings, no one could resist the roasted and smoked duck, done Peking-style.

The pancakes were somewhat unusual,



ACMAV's younger members listen up.



A financial update from HSBC.

thick and spongy and reminiscent of 'injera'. The ramekin of duck soup looked straightforward enough, but the starchy floaters provoked much debate. Was it melon? Was it hairy? Or just plain old daikon? Whatever it was, the flavours blended well and warmed our bellies. The little dishes in between were inescapably ducky and well presented. In whatever guise or form, duck was in there

somewhere.

A personal highlight was the 8-treasure rice; a perfect clash of gamey duck meat, chewy sweet pearl barley, and a huge salted egg yolk. While the stomach dealt with this, the brain tried to digest an update on our economy. If the projection is correct, we should expect growth and a property market that looks far from slumping in spite of the global situation.

So armed with fresh perspective on wealth management and with satiety levels high, the evening drew to a close. Congratulations to the people who carted away lucky dip prizes. Many thanks to Vivienne Trinh and Karen Le from the HSBC team for their instrumental role in making this a successful night and a special mention also to the Taipan crew for delivering an absolute bumper dinner.

Nora Lee

Melanoma Hypothetical a Shining Success

A hot summer is around the corner, and the November Dinner Seminar provided a timely reminder that melanoma continues to be on the rise.

ACMAV President Adrian Mar conducted a "hypothetical" (Geoffrey Robertson style) with an expert panel comprising Associate Professor John Kelly, Dr Abe Dorevitch, Associate Professor Michael Leung and Dr Andrew Haydon.

The story of Ms Summer Byrne and her partner Mr Will Tan entertained, informed and captivated the audience. Topics discussed included the risk of melanoma in Chinese, the role of digital photography in surveillance, diagnostic dilemmas for the Dermatopathologist, the questionable value of sentinel node biopsy and the danger of amelanotic nodular melanomas.

This seminar made possible due to the assistance of Dorevitch Pathology and MoleMap Australia.



Top: Panel Members John Kelly, Abe Dorevitch, Michael Leung and Andrew Haydon with Adrian Mar. Above: An enthralled audience at the Melanoma Hypothetical at Shark Fin House.

Meeting of ACMAV Minds

Continued from Page 1

HIV management, and Associate Professor Mary O'Reilly provided a comprehensive and humorous coverage of the “most-hyped pandemic in history” – swine flu.

After morning tea, Mr Jason Chuen gave an update on advances in vascular surgery and Dr Jennifer Wong spoke about the latest in diabetes management. Professor Joseph Proietto then gave a thought-provoking and authoritative lecture on the physiologic basis of obesity and the challenges of weight-loss.

Lunch provided everyone with an opportunity to mingle as well as replenish our stores with the delicious Malaysian nasi-padang buffet. The afternoon session then kicked off with a discussion of the management of depression by Professor Eng-Seong Tan. Mr David Chong followed this with his account of cleft palate and facial reconstructive surgery in the Third World. In the final lecture of the day, Dr Joanne Gardiner shared her extensive experience in treating refugees with her coverage of Refugee Health.

In keeping with the global theme, the ACMAV's charity activities were highlighted on the day by our inaugural ACMAV Charity Stand, manned by Drs Benny Foo, Alby Leung, Peter Cheng and Hui-Li Wong. Via a raffle, they raised \$583.

The day ended with a memorable

9-course post-conference dinner at Quanjudé restaurant, a banquet which featured “the best duck wrap in Melbourne”, as reviewed by Masterchef's Matt Preston. 130 members and their partners packed the venue to capacity, many wearing their best cheongsams and changshans as per the evening's dress theme “A Touch of the Orient”. Dr Chin Hian from ACMA(SA) addressed the audience, giving an account of our South Australian counterparts' work with foster homes in Beijing.

Altogether it was an engaging and enjoyable day, and many thanks are due to the hard-working conference subcommittee: Jun Yang (co-convenor), Theong Low, Min Li Chong, Mee Yoke Ling, Michelle Mok, Salena Ward and Leona Yip, for their tireless work and support. Thanks also to the entire ACMAV committee who helped with

registrations and organising. We also would like to thank the many speakers for sharing their time and knowledge, and also gratefully acknowledge our gold sponsor Servier, as well as our silver sponsors CSL Biotherapies, Novo Nordisk, Pfizer and Schering-Plough.

The next ACMAV Conference will be in June 2011, when we will be hosting the National Conference of the Australasian Council of Chinese Medical Associations (ACCMMA) here in Melbourne. There will be no ACMAV Conference in 2010, but instead plans are underway for an inaugural ACMAV Charity Ball in September 2010. Planning for these events is already underway so stay posted for further details!

Jason Oh
Conference Convenor



ACMAV Annual Conference attendees at the conference dinner.

ACMAV Building Update

A few months ago during one of the dinner meetings I spoke of the need to decide the future of the existing building at 862A Canterbury Road, Box Hill. The building is beyond repair. We had sought a proper professional feasibility study on this site with the Herniman Architecture Group. With this report, the building subcommittee had come to the unanimous decision to go ahead with the construction of a new building, instead of renovating or selling the site.

The next stage in the evolving plan is

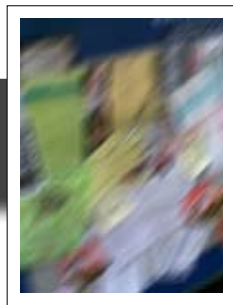


to convince the members of the need to build and to decide on the size of the building with costs ranging from \$2 million to nearly \$5 million. We propose a discussion night on-

site for anyone interested in the proposed building, whether for or against the idea. It is to thrash out any queries, misunderstandings, misinformation and reservations.

The meeting is to be held on an evening after the Chinese New Year. Then we will propose conclusions of the night to the AGM soon after.

Andrew Lim
Chairperson ACMA
Building Subcommittee



The Back Page

Mao's Last Dancer Movie Night



Movie nights are always popular social gatherings with ACMAV members, and true to form, a large turnout appeared for a viewing of *Mao's Last Dancer* at Balwyn Palace Cinema.

A unique true story about the famous and talented ballet dancer Li Cun Xi (李存信), the movie outlines his controversial defection from China to the United States after an exchange study placement with the Houston Ballet.

His remarkable career has subsequently led him to Melbourne, where he was a Principal Artist with the Australian Ballet before publishing his autobiography.

Li Cun Xi now works with a stockbroking firm and was named *2009 Australian Father of the Year*.

Classifieds

Meridian offers free short classifieds to members. For non-members or larger advertisements please refer to our rates card available from the ACMAV Website or the ACMAV Office.

ACMAV Calendar

For more details or to RSVP, please check the ACMAV website or call the ACMAV Office. ACMAV is always on the lookout for sponsors or event ideas. If you have a suggestion, please let us know!

Date	Event	Location
2 December 2009	Management of CAD in the Elderly	Dr Boniface Chan Quanjudde Restaurant, Melbourne CBD
27 February 2010	Chinese New Year Yum Cha	Taipan Restaurant, Blackburn
February 2010	ACMAV Golf Tournament	To be arranged - express your interest now!
24 March 2010	Back and Neck Pain - Current Management	San Choi Restaurant, Kew (to be confirmed)
3 - 5 April 2010	ACMA Conference	Auckland, NZ

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