

The largest and the oldest Sri Lankan organisation in the UK: non-racial & non-political



SLMDA UK

No. 42 March 2015

Newsletter

PUBLISHED BY THE SRI LANKAN MEDICAL AND DENTAL ASSOCIATION IN THE UK

Formerly known as the Sri Lankan Doctors' Association in the UK

Registered Charity No. 800821 Web site: www.srilankan-mda.org.uk

Imminent destruction of the NHS!

At the SLMDA Spring Event to be held in Manchester on Sunday 3rd May 2015, the Keynote address on the above topic will be delivered by a much sought after speaker Professor Raymond Tallis, Emeritus Professor in Geriatric Medicine and well known Author and Philosopher. This is a presentation that should not be missed by those working in the NHS and also those who are concerned with the future of the NHS.

The theme of the Scientific Meeting is "Global Health". Dr. Mahesh Nirmalan has put together an exciting programme to suit everyone with an abiding interest in current global health issues.

The Scientific Meeting will carry CPE credits.

After the Scientific Meeting, the Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held when the office bearers for 2015 – 2016 will be elected.

Please see the next few pages for further details.

Other speakers include:

Dr Dilip Wijeratne: Global trends in maternal Health; **Dr K Ranjababu:** HIV - Where are we today? **Dr Asanga Fernando:** CKD and mental health in Sri Lanka; **Professor J Hettiarachchi:** Pharmaceutical industry and global Health; **Professor Ranjan Ramaswamy:** Brackish water vectors - a neglected aspect in the Global control of dengue transmission; **Professor Athula Sumathipala:** Poverty, deprivation and health.

In addition, there will be presentations from junior doctors in training.

Attend the spring Event in Manchester and listen to world class speakers.

Also, experience the grandeur of the industrial and colonial past of the city as a bonus!

- Mahesh

Spring Event, Manchester

Recommended Hotels:

The Palace Hotel is in Central Manchester and there are many good hotels in the immediate vicinity. The following hotels are recommended:

1. **Palace Hotel** itself has 10 rooms allocated for the event at a concessionary price. Please contact the general reservations at the Hotel (0161 288 1111) and quote the following reference number: **SRIL030515** when you make the reservation. The quoted prices are £95 for a single person and £105 for a double room.
2. **Holiday Inn Express**, Manchester city centre (Oxford Road) is directly opposite the Palace Hotel and has good reviews. The room charges are variable depending on when the reservations are made.
3. **IBIS Hotel**, Portland street Manchester is about a 3 minute walk from the Palace Hotel. Again it has good reviews on Trip Advisor and the charges will depend on when the reservations are made.
4. **Travel Lodge**, Upper Brook street Manchester is approximately a 5 minute drive away from the venue. The room charges depend on the timing of the booking.

Parking:

1. **AGM and sessions:** The Central Manchester has staff and visitor car parking available. Please park in the Grafton Street car park (the entrance is via the main hospital). On Grafton Street, turn into the main hospital entrance (not the A&E entrance) and then drive towards the car park.
2. **Palace Hotel:** The Hotel provides concessionary parking for hotel guests at the Euro car parks on Pritchard Street, Manchester. M1 7DA. It should cost approximately £4 for 6 hours.

Joint Sessions with Sri Lankan Medical Societies 2015

SLMDA has accepted an invitation from the SLMA to their Annual Convention which will be held in Anuradhapura from 28th to 30th October. Further meetings will be held with the Jaffna and Kandy Medical Societies, dates are currently being finalised. Meetings will also be held with the representatives of the Medical faculties from Colombo and Galle.

In-between these meetings, the group will be touring Sri Lanka. A group of 28 (members and their spouses) have confirmed participation. Few more spaces available, if you haven't responded, do so now.

Please contact Dr. Ajantha Jayatunga for details: ajantha@doctors.org.uk
(This tour is open to SLMDA members and their families).

SLMDA ANNUAL SPRING MEETING 2015

Manchester - Sunday 3rd May



Please note the date and book your tickets early as you will be assured of a fantastic time

Tickets are priced at only £40 each for the Dinner Dance

An additional £10 for AGM and Scientific Session which includes breakfast, coffee and lunch.
There is no additional fee for Students.

The Keynote address is by a much sought after speaker

Professor Raymond Tallis

Emeritus Professor in Geriatric Medicine and well known Author and Philosopher.

His chosen topic is

“The imminent destruction of the NHS”

Scientific Meeting will be at
The Postgraduate Centre
Manchester Royal Infirmary
From 8.30 am to 4.00 pm
Address: MRI, Oxford Road,
Manchester M13 9WL

The Dinner Dance will be at
The Palace Hotel, Manchester
From 7.00 pm to 1.00 am
Address: Oxford Street,
Manchester
M60 7HA

Live music provided by **Breeze**

Street,

The Dinner Dance dress code: lounge suit

M60

For tickets, please contact any of the following:

Mahesh Nirmalan 079299 78456 mahesh.nirmalan@manchester.ac.uk;

Ruwan De Soysa 07974722745 rdesoysa@toucansurf.com;

Supul Hennayake 07931596054 supul@talk.talk.net

Charity Ball 2014

The Annual Charity Ball was held on 18 October 2014. The venue was the beautiful Belton Woods Hotel set in the tranquil Lincolnshire countryside.

Guests were welcomed to a Champagne and canapé reception, with the lingering strings of a guitar in the background; they mingled with friends and acquaintances. It was the perfect start to what was a fabulous evening. The ladies in their dazzling array of sequins and sparkles and bright coloured silk saris and evening dresses, the men in jazzy bow ties some even colour coordinated with their partners, it was all glitz and glam on display. Professional Photographer Sisira who was in attendance, captured the special moments.

The President Dr Allistair Solomonsz and the committee together with their spouses greeted the guests as they were ushered to their seats for the formal proceedings and dinner. Addressing the gathering, the President focussed on the main objectives of the Association, which is, providing Medical & Dental Education to Sri Lanka.

He also highlighted the ambitious new initiatives and research projects that they have undertaken this year and the remarkable progress that has been made. "The benefits" he said "will be immense to further the objectives of the Association, and the committee is working actively to achieve this".

Light music was played and Dinner was served. In true Belton Woods's style, the meal was splendid!

Raffle tickets went on sale and as the music started in full swing, guests were ready to take the floor. The Sri Lankan Band hit the right beat, whether it was music from the 60's or 90's, Baila or Bangaraya, they kept everybody on their toes. The atmosphere was electric with singing and dancing non-stop. Indocean Developers (Pvt.) Ltd, Sri Lanka, promoting ALTAIR apartments in Colombo 2, were Gold Sponsors of the event. Raffle Prizes galore with a return Air Ticket to Colombo as the top prize, and a surprise Auction saw a record sum raised to make it a very successful fund raising event. Thank you to all who supported the event.

Events Diary

- Spring Concert 2015: **Saturday 28th March 2015 at Billericay**. This is a concert in two halves: first half will be a variety entertainment led by Thushara. The second half will be a music session by Lanka and his Band. Be sure to be there! (Open to all)
- Annual Spring Meeting and Dinner Dance: **Sunday 3rd of May**. (See other pages for details).
- **Annual Law-Medical Cricket and Netball encounter**: usually first weekend in July. If you are a doctor, a dentist or a medical student and interested in playing for the SLMDA team, please contact Ajantha Jayatunga <mailto:ajantha@doctors.org.uk>. Netball players (females only), please express your interest to Melanie Weerasuriya. <mailto:melanieweerasuriya@yahoo.co.uk> (Open to doctors, dentists and trainees only).
- **Annual Charity Ball: Saturday the 3rd October**. Please keep the date free. (Open to all)

- **Joint sessions with Sri Lankan Medical Societies: 23rd October to 8th November.**
SLMDA has already confirmed a joint meeting with SLMA Anuradhapura Branch from 28th to 30th October. Further meetings are being planned with Galle, Kandy and Jaffna Medical Societies. In-between the meetings, the group will be touring Sri Lanka. There have already been several expressions of interest. If you haven't responded, please do so now. Please contact any Council member for details. (This event is open only for SLMDA members).

Photo Gallery

Charity Ball 2014









**An invitation to all junior doctors in training:
Apply for a SLMDA research grant to carry out a project of
interest to you and strengthen your career prospects in the
process. Please visit the SLMDA website for details:
www.srilankan-mda.org.uk**

An Appreciation

Dr. Bandula Wijetunga

Dr. Wijetunga was educated at Nalanda College, Colombo. A graduate of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, he trained as a surgeon and obtained the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons. He then joined St George's as a Consultant in A&E.

He was a very enthusiastic member of the SLMDA and worked hard in the committee and became the President in 1993. He was instrumental in pushing forward some key changes to the constitution and promoting some important objectives of the Association. He worked tirelessly with the help of his wife Indra to raise funds. They were delightful hosts for innumerable meetings held at their House.

I will always remember Bandula as a charming man with impeccable manners. He had a brilliant analytical mind and a strong diagnostic ability. He was a very good speaker who understood the audience.

He leaves behind his wife Indra and one son who is a psychiatrist. One of his children a doctor herself pre deceased him. In later stages in life, he became a devout Christian with a strong faith.

May he rest in peace.

Dr. Veerasiri Punchihewa

Book Donation Scheme

The Council decided to increase the amount allocated to each faculty from £1000.00 to £1500.00 from 2014 onwards. The faculties were delighted with this increase. According to the library sources, the books donated by the SLMDA are in great demand by the students. With the cost of textbooks being what they are, a vast majority of students cannot afford to buy any books. The 2014 round was completed recently.

Bursary Awards

After this scheme was made more flexible, some faculties have continued to seek bursaries for their deserving students whereas other faculties have opted to receive a lump sum equivalent to the annual cost of a bursary to enhance their respective student support funds. These funds disburse smaller awards to students in financial difficulty and are therefore able to assist a greater number of students needing help.

STOP PRESS

Sri Lanka High Commission: On the invitation of the Acting High Commissioner, Dr. Chanaka Talpahewa, President Dr. Alistair Solomonsz and Vice President Dr. Mahesh Nirmalan represented SLMDA at a reception in honour of His Excellency Maithripala Sirisena, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka on his recent visit to the UK. The reception was held on 10th March at Lancaster Hotel in London.

Tenth Anniversary of the Tsunami

December 2014 marked the tenth anniversary of the Boxing Day Tsunami in 2004. SLMDA did a lot of relief work to help the victims at the time, establishing a separate relief fund to do so. The fund raised £50,000.00 which was spent on helping the victims in a variety of ways. The relief fund was managed by Dr. Ajantha Jayatunga. One of the knock on effects of the tsunami was an amendment to the SLMDA constitution to enable it provide assistance to Sri Lanka

following any natural or man-made disaster.

The Sri Lankan High Commission in London marked the anniversary with an exhibition featuring relief work done by UK based Sri Lankan charities. The SLMDA was represented by Dr. Allistair Solomonz and Dr. Cyril Pattapola who created the exhibits featuring its relief work.

Reproduced below is the Special Edition of the SLMDA UK NEWS published in January 2005.

Preserving the unity of all Sri Lankan doctors and dentists in the UK



Number 15 ♦ January 2005

Non-racial ♣ Non-political

SPECIAL TSUNAMI DISASTER EDITION

Going from strength to strength

NEWSLETTER OF THE SRI LANKAN MEDICAL AND DENTAL ASSOCIATION IN THE UK

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DISCO? WHAT DISCO? IT IS A WARE HOUSE!

Those who were not in the know and arrived at Dulwich College were in for a surprise. The whole dance hall had been converted to a warehouse for receiving, sorting and packaging the items donated to the Tsunami disaster victims in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lankan Medical and Dental Association in the UK used to hold a disco to raise funds for its projects supporting medical dental education in Sri Lanka. The disco in 2004 was scheduled to be held at Dulwich College. However, following the tragic events of the Tsunami aftermath, the organisers were faced with a dilemma. They came up with an ingenious solution: to go ahead with an event on the date as advertised but in a different format. They asked their guests to bring donations to be sent to Sri Lanka. The organisers contacted their medical counterparts in Sri Lanka and obtained a list of most urgently needed medical, pharmaceutical and surgical items. The President Dr. Nihal Herath also got in touch with the SL High Commission in London, Glen Carriers, Sri Lankan Air Force and the Sri Lankan Airlines to airlift the urgent supplies and distribute them to the needy without any delay.

In the event, there were six truck loads of supplies collected at Dulwich College valued at over £20,000. The guests who had been informed of the change of plan came armed with empty boxes, tape, scissors, labels, marker pens etc. to sort and pack the items into boxes ready for immediate dispatch. Glen Carriers sent two trucks free of charge for the goods to be transported from the venue. The attendees were in a sombre mood and wore black armbands supplied by the Association. They also donated over £6000 in cash that evening. At the stroke of midnight, they held a candle light vigil and observed a minute's silence in memory of the victims.

The goods were airlifted to Sri Lanka the next day, as speed was of the essence.

Young SLMDA members did a street collection the next day in London and raised over £3000. Other donations made by the members now total nearly £30,000.

In addition, two truckloads of clothing and other essentials were delivered to Glen Carriers to be shipped to Sri Lanka. Few more truckloads of hospital equipment are awaiting dispatch soon.

Having responded magnificently to the supply of urgently needed medical supplies, the SLMDA is now turning its attention to intermediate and long-term needs of Sri Lanka. The SLMDA Council is due to meet later this month to decide which projects the Association should fund.

The following pictures show the work in progress at Dulwich College Hall.



Visit the special website:

www.sldisasterfund.co.uk

You can pledge donations via this site.

Special account:

Name: SLMDA Disaster Fund

Bank: HSBC

Address: 66 High Street

New Malden

Surrey KT3 4HD

Account No. 11441965

Sort code: 40 - 34 - 24