



? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

## NEWSLETTER

October 2003

*In this issue ...*

*Editorial*

**Council member 2003-2005**

**Message from the President**

*College Report*

**Board of Examination**

**Board of Accreditation**

**Board of Censor**

**Pain Management Committee**

*Interview (Father of Hong Kong Anaesthesia - Dr. Zoltan Lett)*

*Future Meetings*

*Website recommendations*

*Approved Formal Projects*

*Horace Wells Award*

*Editorial board 2001-2003*

## ***Editorial***

Congratulations to the newly elected Council board headed by our new President Professor Tony Gin. Much praise has to go to Dr TW Lee, the immediate past President, for his support and the degree of freedom granted to the newsletter editorial board to go forth with the new formats and contents.

Since our last issue in May, the whole medical field was hard hit by the SARS epidemic. Luckily, anaesthetic colleagues who had contracted SARS virus have made full recovery. Our condolence goes to colleagues who sacrifice their lives for their patients.

We are delighted to have Dr Matthew Chan as our next Editor-in-Chief. Keeping the newsletter running is not an easy task and we solicit your support in future to Dr Chan. In this issue, Douglas and Eric would present the interview with Dr. Lett, the father of Hong Kong Anaesthesia, which will be interesting to read.

I personally own much debt for all the advice, input and enthusiasm from every editorial member during the two years. My sincere gratitude also goes to the College Secretary Mr. Daniel Tso for his timely support in every aspect.

Timmy Yuen

---

### ***Instruction to Contributors***

We welcome contributions from invited guests and members / fellows of the Hong Kong College of Anaesthesiologists. Articles should be prepared with suitable word processing software. Figures, table, pictures and photo-micrographs should be saved in the same file. The file could be sent either by e-mail or by post (on a floppy disc or CD) to the Editor. Please indicate if the material has to be returned after the editing processing. The article would be printed in the same way as it is submitted. The accuracy of the materials published is the responsibility of the contributors. The contributors must ensure that the materials submitted do not infringe copyright. The board reserves the editorial right for selection of publication.

---

### ***Disclaimer***

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributed author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Council/ College.

---

### ***The Editorial Board***

Editor-in-Chief	Dr. Timmy Yuen	
Deputy Editor-in-Chief	Dr. Eric So	
Secretary	Dr. Edmond Chung	
Board Member	Dr. Douglas Fok	Dr. Anne Leung
	Dr. WH Kwok	Dr. Bassanio Law
	Dr. Carina Li	Dr. Matthew Chan
E Mail address:	HKCANewsletter@yahoogroups.com	

## **Council 2003-2005**

<b>President</b>	Prof. Tony GIN
<b>Vice Presidents</b>	Dr. Po Tong CHUI Dr. Theresa HUI
<b>Hon. Secretary</b>	Dr. Yu Fat CHOW
<b>Hon. Treasurer</b>	Dr. Joseph LUI
<b>Assistant Secretary</b>	Dr. Matthew CHAN
<b>Assistant Treasurer</b>	Dr. Simon CHAN
<b>Immediate Past President</b>	Dr. Tsun Woon LEE
<b>Council Members</b>	Dr. John LIU Dr. Tsz Yeung CHAN Dr. Po Wah CHEUNG Dr. Phoon Ping CHEN Dr. Edward HO Dr. Chi Tim HUNG Dr. Anne KWAN Dr. Gavin JOYNT
<b>Chairman, Board of Censors</b>	Prof. Michael IRWIN
<b>Chairman, Board of Examination</b>	Prof. Cindy AUN
<b>Chairman, Board of Accreditation</b>	Dr. John LIU
<b>Chairman, Board of Education</b>	Dr. CT HUNG
<b>Chairman, Manpower Committee</b>	Dr. John LOW
<b>Chairman, Guidelines Committee</b>	Dr. Anne KWAN
<b>Chairman, Intensive Care Committee</b>	Dr. Gavin JOYNT
<b>Chairman, Pain Management Committee</b>	Dr. PP CHEN
<b>Organizer, Basic Science Course</b>	Dr CH KOO
<b>Organizers, Clinical Anaesthesiology Course</b>	Dr Douglas FOK / Dr Eric SO
<b>Coordinator, Difficult Airway Management Workshop</b>	Dr KM HO



Room 807  
Hong Kong Academy of Medicine Building  
99 Wong Chuk Hang Road  
Aberdeen  
Hong Kong



(852) 28141029



(852) 28718833

# **Hong Kong College of Anaesthesiologists**

## **Message from the President**

# Board of Examination

## Intermediate Fellowship Examinations, August 2003

*Successful candidates:*

CHANG Hang Kwok	KWH
FUNG Chi Sum Winnie	QEH
KONG Kau Fung Vincent	DKH
WONG Kan Nam	PMH
LEE Ka Yee Phoebe	PWH
YEUNG Lok See Cheryl	PWH

The College is grateful to Dr. David Green of RCA, and Dr. James Love of ANZCA for their assistance as External Examiners during the examination.

## Final Fellowship Examinations, September 2003

The written section and viva examination was held at the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine Building. The OSCE was held in the Prince of Wales Hospital

*Successful candidates:*



(Left to right: Drs. David Chong, Winnie Chan, ....., Benny Cheng, Peggy Pang, ....., Lina ....., ....., ....., Peter Booker, David Scott, Cindy Aun, ....., Raymond Sin, SS Ho, Eric Ung)

The College is grateful to Dr. Peter Booker of RCA, and Dr. David Scott of ANZCA for their assistance as External Examiners during the examination.

*Cindy Aun*  
*Chairman, Board of Examination*

**The OSCE ...**



**Regional** (Drs. YF Chow and Cindy Lai)



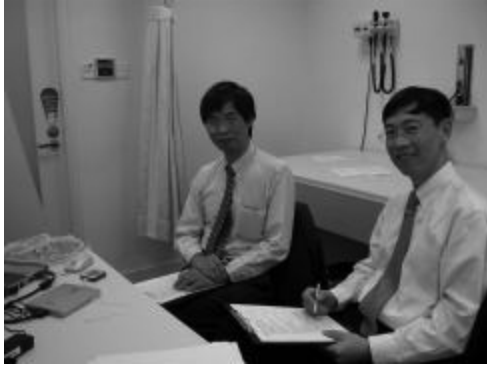
**Crisis** (Drs. Matthew Chan, David Scott and Steven Wong)



**Physical Examination**

(Drs. Simon Chan, Andrea O'Regan, Peter Booker and TW Lee)





**Procedure** (Drs. CT Hung and BH Yong)



**X Ray** (Drs. PW Cheung and CK Chan)



**Investigations** (Drs. Victor Yeo and Serena Fung)



**ACLS/ATLS** (Drs. Edward Ho and Anthony Ho)

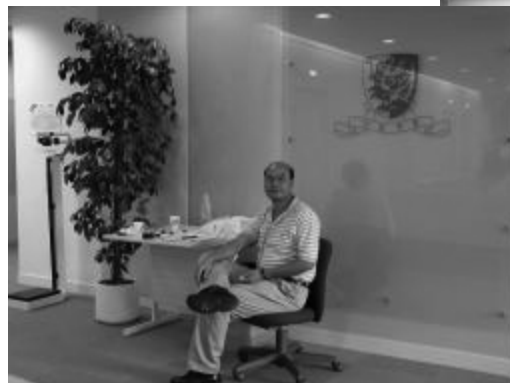


**Equipment** (Dr. Kevin Mui)

**Communication** (Drs. Theresa Hui and CK Koo)



**Mr Daniel Tso**  
*Administrative executive,*  
**HKCA**



**More happy faces ...**





## **Board of Accreditation**

The College has recently re-inspected Kwong Wah Hospital. The Council has resolved that the number of trainee positions be increased from 10 to 12 for 2 years. It is also recommended that the recognition of three months of intensive care component of anesthesiology training be continued.

*John Liu*

*Chairman, Board of Accreditation*

# Board of Censor

## ***New Fellows***

### **Admission to Fellowship by Examination, FHKCA**

King Yuen MAN

Karman Ka Lai NG

Ha Yun LEE

Joanne Chung Yin LEE

Man Shun LAW

Ching Yee KWOK

Eric Mo Chi LAM

### **Admission to Fellowship *ad eundem*, FHKCA**

Song Tuen TAN

Angel On Kei WONG

### **Admission to Fellowship by Examination, FHKCA (Intensive Care)**

Kenny King Chung CHAN

### **Admission to Fellowship *ad eundem*, FHKCA (Intensive Care)**

Judith SHEN

Anne Kit Hung LEUNG

## ***New Members***

Wing Yan LEUNG

CMC

Betty Wai Yee CHEUNG

QMH

Belinda Lai Yee WONG

PWH

*Michael Irwin*

*Chairman, Board of Censor*

## **Pain Management Committee**

The next Dip Pain Examination will be held on Oct 17<sup>th</sup> 2003. Dr Bruce Rounsefell, from Adelaide will be our external examiner. Details of the Pain Examiner's academic programme will be announced close to his visit. As SARS has abated somewhat, the Pain Management Committee is planning to resume its CME programme and organise a meeting sometime late in June or early July.

As mentioned in the President's message at the AGM, PYNEH has been accredited for six months of training towards Dip Pain Mgt. The other half of the training can be spent at another accredited local training centre or overseas. However, the accreditation of overseas training must be assessed by the Pain Management Committee, and approved by the HKCA Board of Accreditation. The overseas training centre must be accredited for Dip Pain Mgt training. It is advisable for all pain trainees to apply for training accreditation at the overseas centre prior to commencing of training. PWH and QMH will be re-inspected for Dip Pain Mgt training at the end of this year.

Douleurs Sans Frontieres (DSF) is an NGO based in France that aims to bring educational and clinical pain treatment programmes to developing countries. Its staff is entirely made up of volunteer physicians, nurses and psychologists who are specialized in pain management. It has an annual budget in excess of one million Euro. Current programmes include teaching medical students and training clinical staff in Mozambique, Cambodia, Angola, Marocco Et Tunisia, Armenia and Senegal. Pain management physicians, nurses and psychologists may be interested to know that DSF would welcome anyone who may wish to participate in their education programme eg in Cambodia. For further information, please contact Dr PP Chen at 2689 2730.

*PP Chen*

*Chairman, Pain Management Committee*

## History in the making:

### The Father of Hong Kong Anaesthesia – Dr. Zoltan Lett

Dr Zoltan Lett (or better known as 'Lefty' to his close friends) is familiar to his friends here in Hong Kong as well as abroad for his immense contributions in the development of anaesthetic services and the training of local anaesthesiologists. It was due to his positive influence that our specialty was able to reach the current standards, which are comparable to those achieved in the western countries. Quite rightly he deserved the honour of being named "the Father of Hong Kong Anaesthesia". With regards to this title of fatherhood, he responded light-heartedly, "it was very kind of them, but I have done no physiological duty as yet, or that I am aware of." However, Dr Lett is an unfamiliar name to many current trainees, we hope through this article, his work, his achievement as well as how our specialty evolve to the current position are better understood.

**Douglas FOK/ Eric SO**



*"The further you can look back, the longer you can look forward."*

*Winston Churchill 1944*

This was what Dr Lett wrote in my copy of "Anaesthesia & Intensive Care in Hong Kong: Evolution & Present Position." which he co-authored with **Dr Ronald JW Lo**. So first of all, let us look back at some of the important dates & events in the world history, the history of anaesthesia, as well as that of Dr Lett.

- 1846            Boston dentist, William Morton, successfully demonstrated and convinced the world of the anaesthetic properties of ether at the time when he was still a Harvard medical student.

- 1867 Establishment of Austro-Hungarian Empire that included Czech and Slovak territories.
- 1884 Carl Koller discovered cocaine as the first effective local anaesthetic.
- 1887 College of Medicine for the Chinese, where Dr Sun Yat-sen was one of the earliest graduates, was established in Hong Kong.
- 1898 Surgeon August Bier induced first successful clinical spinal anaesthesia.
- 1911 The University of Hong Kong was opened.
- 1912 Curare was first used in surgery by Arthur Lawen of Leipzig.
- 1914 World War I started after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife by Serbians at Sarajevo.
- 1916 **Dr. Zoltan Lett** was born in Czechoslovakia.
- 1918
- End of World War I.
  - Czechoslovak Republic (Czechoslovakia) was established as a national state of the Czechs and Slovaks.
- 1920 Ivan Magill devised the Magill angulated forceps.
- 1926 Arthur Guedel started a series of experiments that led to reintroduction of cuffed endotracheal tubes.
- 1927 Royal Australasian College of Surgeons founded.
- 1934 **Dr. Lett** commenced his medical training at Masaryk University in Brno, Czechoslovakia.
- 1937 Nuffield Department of Anaesthetics in Oxford University was established by the endowment from William Morris after his 'magic experience' with barbiturate anaesthesia.
- 1939
- World War II started.
  - Czechoslovakia ceased to exist after Nazi German occupation and Slovak declaration of independence.
  - In November, Adolf Hitler closed all universities in Czechoslovakia, imprisoned and shot their professors & students. **Dr. Lett** continued his medical training at the University College Hospital in London.
- 1942
- Oxford University acted as sponsor for the suppressed universities of Czechoslovakia & conferred degrees of Doctor of Medicine on 23 Czechoslovak students; **Dr. Lett** was one of them.
  - **Dr. Lett** volunteered for War Services in the free Czechoslovakia forces, later joined the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) as a medical officer serving in West Africa, Burma, India & UK till 1947.

- Robert Macintosh described his curved laryngoscope in Oxford.
- 1945 World War II ended and Czechoslovakia was reconstituted as an independent state.
- 1947
  - First clinical use of lignocaine.
  - Transistor was invented at Bell laboratory.
  - **Dr. Lett** returned to the UK to start his civilian medical practice in the South West Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board (London).
- 1948
  - **Dr. Lett** joined the National Health Service as Registrar in Anaesthetics, later appointed as Specialist in Anaesthetics in the Sheffield Area Hospital Board.
  - Communist Party gained complete power over Czechoslovakia and Stalinization followed.
- 1951 Andre Thomas devised heart-lung machine.
- 1952
  - A Faculty of Anaesthetists was formed within the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons. (FARACS)
  - Danish poliomyelitis epidemic aroused interest in mechanical ventilation and stimulated research in arterial carbon dioxide tension measurement.
  - The attested Apgar Score was published after its formulation by anaesthesiologist Virginia Apgar.
- 1953
  - **Dr. Lett** interviewed for the ‘Specialist Anaesthetist’ post in Hong Kong at the Colonial Medical Service.
  - Watson and Crick deciphered structure of DNA.
  - Hillary and Tenzing claimed Mount Everest.
- 1954
  - **Dr. Lett** arrived at the territory as the first Specialist Anaesthetist to the Hong Kong Government, and appointed a part-time Lecturer at the University of Hong Kong.
  - The Society of Anaesthetists of Hong Kong was founded by **Dr. Lett** and the late Dr. HPL Ozorio.
- 1959 Professor Robert Macintosh of Nuffield Department of Anaesthetics in Oxford University visited Hong Kong for the first time.
- 1961 Structure of DNA molecule determined.
- 1967
  - Dr. Bernard performed the first heart transplant.
  - First synthetic version of DNA produced.
- 1968 ‘Prague Spring’ movement in Czechoslovakia crushed by Warsaw Pact invasion.
- 1969 **Dr Lett** successfully introduced the first Australian College examination to be held in Hong Kong.
- 1975 Altair personal computer introduced by Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- 1977 **Dr. Lett** retired from the Government Service, and appointed a full-time Lecturer at

the University of Hong Kong.

- 1979 **Dr. Lett** was awarded the prestigious Pask Certificate of Honour by the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain & Ireland for “Distinguished Services to Anaesthesia in Hong Kong”.
- 1980 **Dr. Lett** was promoted to Reader.
- 1981
- Personal computer launched by IBM.
  - AIDS identified.
- 1983
- **Dr. Lett** retired from full-time service in the University and was invited to be the Consultant in Anaesthesia at the Caritas Medical Centre (CMC).
  - The opening of Prince of Wales Hospital with the real development of Intensive Care as a definite entity when Department of Anaesthesia (now known as Department of Anaesthesia and Intensive Care) was entrusted with managing and running the Intensive Care Unit of the hospital.
- 1984
- **Dr. Lett** was the Chairman of Hong Kong Society for Critical Care Medicine, and proposed mass training in Basic Cardiac Life Support to the public.
  - AIDS virus was discovered.
- 1989
- The Hong Kong College of Anaesthesiologists (HKCA) was formed.
  - Czechoslovakia ‘Velvet Revolution’ and Vaclav Havel became President.
- 1990 First formal anaesthesiologist - based Clinical Pain Management Service in Hong Kong was set up in Queen Mary Hospital.
- 1991 The Hospital Authority (HA) took over the management of all former Government and subvented hospitals and institutions in Hong Kong.
- 1992 The Australian & New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA) was formed in February.
- 1993
- HKCA established its own higher professional training programme and examination system.
  - **Dr. Lett** retired from CMC and joined Hospital Authority as clinical consultant at Duchess of Kent Hospital and QMH for three more years.
  - ‘Velvet Revolution’ with separation of Slovakia from Czechoslovakia.
- 1997
- China regained sovereignty over Hong Kong and HKSAR formed.
  - Scottish researchers created clone lamb from adult sheep DNA.
- 1999
- 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of HKCA with **Dr. Lett** as one of the honorable guests.
  - Czech Republic joined NATO.
- 2003
- SARS outbreak and identification of coronavirus as pathogen.



(Left to Right) Drs. Eric So, Dr Lett and Dr. Douglas Fok

We met up with Dr Lett two days before his 86<sup>th</sup> birthday, on a Friday afternoon in the canteen of Caritas Bianchi Lodge. As expected, Dr Lett was punctual & well dressed. I (one of the authors) had the fortune to start my anaesthetic training in his department a decade ago at Caritas Medical Centre where he was the Consultant at the time, so it was like meeting up with an old friend for a cup of tea. Talking to Dr Lett is as always, an enlightening experience, like talking to a portable history encyclopedia; and history it was, that we focused on mainly.

Each of us is participating and making our future history everyday. We may not anticipate or intend to accomplish anything great, but with dedication, passion, determination and the right opportunities, each of us may ultimately make unimaginable achievements, as we shall see in the history of Modern Anaesthesia.

The first use of anaesthesia is not known, one may consider with reference to the Book of Genesis, Ch 2 verse 21: *“And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh thereof.”* as the earliest account of general anaesthesia.

There were in fact a lot of dispute & claims over the question of priority for ‘inventing’ anaesthesia, and who should be given the credit. For instance, **Henry Hill Hickman** (1800-1830) experimented with ‘suspended animation’ on animals where unconsciousness was induced by asphyxia, and he received recognition for stressing that unconsciousness would enable surgery to be performed. **Humphry Davy** (1778-1829), a chemist, was amongst the first to suggest the use of nitrous oxide as an analgesic but failed to pursue the idea; however, **Horace Wells** (1815-1848)



successfully used it for dental extractions in many of his patients but his demonstration failed disastrously in Boston 1844. **Crawford Long** (1815-1879) used ether successfully as early as 1842 but only reported its use in 1849.

Officially, modern anaesthesia is recorded as being introduced by **William TG Morton** (1819- 1868) the dentist (once a pupil of Horace Wells), who publicly demonstrated the inhalation of ether vapour to relieve pain from excision of a neck tumour, at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston on Friday 16 October 1846 (the 'Ether Day'). Morton did not discover anaesthesia, nor was he the first person in history to achieve it. But his personal inspiration, his professional conviction, his successful administration of the right agent, to the right person, at the right moment in history, before the right crowd, ensured that the news of his success spread rapidly around the world. Therefore Morton made anaesthetic history. In science, the credit for a new discovery often belongs to the man who convinces the world of such discovery, not to the man to whom the idea first occurs.

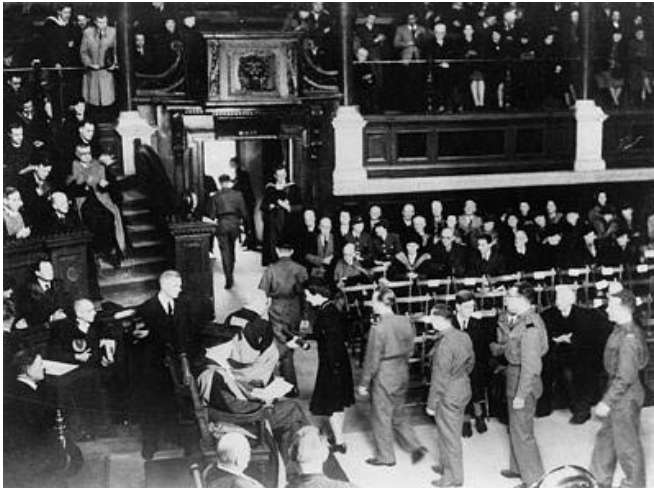
Beyond any doubt, there will not be any dispute over who the first most prominent figure was in the history of Hong Kong anaesthesia. As the late **Dr. George H Thomas**, one of the earliest practitioner and distinguished teacher in 1910s, wrote in his letter to Dr Lett in 1970, "anaesthesia in Hong Kong may usefully be classified as two distinct periods, viz. pre-muscle-relaxant & muscle-relaxant days; or more topically speaking, into pre-Lett and Lett days.....the muscle-relaxants era, introduced by your good self on your arrival in HK, has at one stroke, banished the rag-and-bottle method for all time" (Referring to the wide use of chloroform & ether dropped on an open mask technique). This was supported by **Professor MD Vickers** who credited Dr Lett as "**Mr Hong Kong Anaesthesia**".

So how did our "**Father of Hong Kong Anaesthesia**" started his anaesthetic career? During our long chat with Dr Lett, he recounted the old times with patience and with great detail. If it was not due to our need for dinner, we could have gone on until breakfast time the next day!

In 1939, when Dr Lett was a medical student in Czechoslovakia, **Adolf Hitler** suppressed learning & knowledge by closing down all the universities, prosecuting their professors and students. Little did he know that some of their dreams would continue to live on in another country. Dr Lett was amongst the 23 Czechoslovak students who received the degree of Doctor of Medicine conferred by Oxford University at the request of the Government of Czechoslovakia in 1942. Soon Dr Lett joined the **Royal Army Medical Corps** and served in Southeast Asia where he was able to apply his medical knowledge.



In 1942, at the request of the Czech Government, Oxford University conferred Czech degrees on 23 medical students (Dr Lett was on the far right).



The Vice-Chancellor (Sir David Ross) conferred Czech Degrees in the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford. (Dr Lett was the third on the right)

The brutality of war stunned everyone, and humanity was squeezed out of the battle fields. “There were a lot of casualties,” Dr Lett recounted, “killing, slaughtering and rescuing went ridiculously side by side. Stress was taken for granted and everyone became very accustomed to work under pressure.” Dr Lett joined the army as a Private and was promoted to Major by the end of the second world war. He was awarded the Star, Burma Star, Defence Medal, War Medal 1939-45, and Czechoslovak Military Medal (to name a few).

“It was in Burma early 40s,” Dr Lett recalled, “where a gynaecologist was operating on the wounded. As there were no anaesthetists available, I was forced not by personal choice but by circumstances, to take up the post – as an anaesthetist.” Such was how our living anaesthetic legend made his entry into the anaesthetic field.

In 1953, Dr Lett was persuaded by the good words of an advertisement in the British Medical Journal, recruiting for a post of ‘Specialist Anaesthetist’ in Hong Kong (created by the then Director of Medical Services, **Dr KC Yeo**). He went for the interview at the **Colonial Medical Service** in London, and was on the ship to Hong Kong the next year to become the very first Specialist Anaesthetist to the colonial Government.

Dr Lett joined the late **Dr HPL Ozorio** (another prominent pioneer in Hong Kong anaesthesia who once studied under **Sir Robert Macintosh**) to take charge and to organize the existing rudimentary anaesthetic services for both the Government and University of Hong Kong, which until that point was largely neglected and virtually non-existent. They both realized the immediate need for safe, sound, trouble-free anaesthesia and they accomplished this within a remarkably short period of time through devoted teaching of under and post graduates. They are the ‘Founding Fathers’ of the **Society of Anaesthetists of Hong Kong (SAHK)** in 1954, the first of the Specialist Medical Societies to be registered with the Hong Kong Registrar of Societies. Dr Lett always stresses the immense importance of international visitors and the SAHK played a paramount role in establishing and maintaining close friendly international connections. It provided the platform on which visiting experts kept the local anaesthetic community informed of the state-of-the-art at that time.

UNIVERSITY



OF HONG KONG

Tel. No. 37021

August 31, 1954

Ref. S/3/8/54-10.b.vi.

Dr. Z. Lett,  
Specialist Anaesthetist,  
Queen Mary Hospital,  
Hong Kong.

Dear Sir:

The Council of the University has pleasure in offering you appointment as Part-time Lecturer in Anaesthetics for the Academic Year 1954-55 at an honorarium of \$500 per month.

If you are willing to accept this appointment, I should be glad if you would kindly sign one copy of this letter as indicated below and return it to me.

Yours faithfully,

  
Registrar

/s/

cc: Bursar;  
Dean, Faculty of Medicine.

Registrar:

I agree to accept the above appointment.

Date.....

Appointee.....

Invitation from the University of Hong Kong to Dr Lett in 1954 to become "Part-time Lecturer in Anaesthesia"

Dr Lett was also the co-founder of the **Hong Kong Society of Critical Care Medicine** in 1983, he put forward the idea of training ambulance personnel in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and Basic Life Support (BLS), as well as mass training of the public. As early as 1960, Dr Lett recommended to the Hong Kong health authorities, to bring to the colony a course on resuscitation organized by the **National Resuscitation Society**, led by the one of the foremost American anaesthesiologist **Dr Paluel J Flagg**. This unfortunately was declined by the University of Hong Kong and the Government, deemed as "no good purpose would be served." It was not until some 20 years later, with the establishment of the Society, that the interest in this topic was reactivated. Once again this reflected the vision and foresight Dr Lett possessed.

There were no provision for formal or structured education and training in anaesthesia prior to Dr Lett's arrival. There were no formal examinations, let alone grant diplomas or accreditation. Trainees had to wait their turn to be sent to the UK. **The Faculty of Anaesthetists**

**of the Royal College of Surgeons (England)** were not prepared to conduct examination locally in HK. Dr Lett turned and negotiated with the **Faculty of Anaesthetists of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons**, and successfully introduced the first Primary Fellowship examination to Hong Kong in 1969.

Dr Lett also established the Faculty Tutor programme in 1976, where tutors from the Australian College were invited to run a 2-week crash course for the Part I FFARACS candidates. Furthermore, ongoing longer informative courses were arranged and conducted by local senior anaesthetists.

Dr Lett fought tirelessly and continuously for the welfare of our specialty. "In the past," he pointed out, "the University has shown a marked reluctance to establish Academic Chairs, or Department, in important medical subjects like Anaesthesia, ENT, Radiology, Ophthalmology, Clinical Pharmacology. The teaching of these specialties, both to the students in the Medical Faculty and to postgraduates has come to depend to a great extent on devoted but overworked government specialists." In 1982, **Professor MD Vickers** visited Hong Kong under the auspices of British **Council for International Cooperation in Higher Education (CICHE)**, he commended Dr Lett for his devotion and persistent hard work in establishing the high standards in teaching, research as well as clinical services. Professor Vickers recommended an independent Department to be created. The Chinese University of Hong Kong and its Medical Faculty were the first in Hong Kong to have an independent Department of Anaesthesia, first chaired by **Professor Andrew Thornton** in 1983 (he was succeeded in 1988 by **Professor Teik E Oh**). The University of Hong Kong did not have an independent Department until 1988 where **Professor Ross Holland** was appointed.

Dr Lett retired, after 23 years (1954-1977), from his post as the Consultant Anaesthetist in-charge of the Anaesthetic Service for the whole of the **Hospital Services Department**. He was succeeded by **Dr Justin Chan** (1977-1987), **Dr CS Chan** (1987-1990), and **Dr Ronald JW Lo** (1990-1991). In December 1991, the **Hospital Authority (HA)** was established to take over the management of all Government hospitals, **Chiefs of Services** were appointed thereafter to manage the anaesthetic services provided in each individual hospital.

After his retirement, he became a full-time Lecturer with the Department of Surgery for anaesthesia at the University of Hong Kong, and was promoted to Reader i/c of Anaesthesia. In 1983, Dr Lett retired from full-time services in the University, and was immediately invited to be the Consultant in Anaesthesia at the Caritas Medical Centre, where he worked for 10 years. (One of the authors had the opportunity to work with Dr Lett in his last years at CMC). He then joined HA as the Clinical Consultant at the Duchess of Kent Hospital and QMH for 3 more years.



Dr Lett & CMC staff in 1992

While the backbone and infrastructure of anaesthesia in Hong Kong was laid down by Dr Lett and a number of significant individuals and authorities, the establishment of the **Hong Kong College of Anaesthesiologists** in 1989 helped to catapult Hong Kong anaesthesia into the next millennium. It has induced revolutionary changes in the field, in terms of advances in monitoring and anaesthetic techniques as well as training and accreditation of local anaesthetists. The **Hong Kong Academy of Medicine** (HKAM) was established by the Government in 1993, to be responsible for the professional standards of medical care in Hong Kong. Our College fitted with ease into the framework of the Academy.

Ten years ago, Dr Lett has won my utter admiration and respect. At the age of 76, he was so energetic and enthusiastic in teaching trainees like me. For instance, he would jump into any opportunities to show me how to perform blind nasal intubations in awake or asleep patients, a skill that I am glad to have attained in my early years of training. “We should become proficient in fiberoptic endoscopic assisted tracheal intubation which was first used in 1978 at the Queen Mary Hospital,” he said, “but I would add my strong plea that our colleagues should also keep alive the art and skill of awake blind intubations. The availability of a fiberoptic laryngoscope in perfect working order cannot always be assured or taken for granted.”

Now at 86, **Dr Lett & his wife Hilde** still travel frequently between Las Vegas, the United Kingdom and Hong Kong. He was recently asked by a medical professor to retain his name on their staff list. “I am honored but it would be equivalent, my dear friend,” he replied, “to putting a dead man on your staff member list.” Contrary to what appeared to be a pessimistic statement, Dr Lett still has a busy schedule ahead. He is as energetic and enthusiastic in teaching as ever, visiting different hospitals to give lectures, sharing his wisdom and experiences. How does he see the future in our specialty? “I strongly believe that BACK TO THE BASICS should be the way to

go, that is the essence of anaesthesia,” he said, “of course, we must also stay in step with advances in technology, but it is something we can always fall back on when things goes wrong.”



Dr Zoltan and Hilde Lett

At present, Dr Lett & Hilde are both back home in East Sussex, UK. Only a few months ago in Manchester, Dr Lett delivered a talk on the history of anaesthesia in Hong Kong in a meeting organized by the **History of Anaesthesia Society**. For many years, Dr Lett showed immense interest in the history of anaesthesia and has been very conscientious in keeping records and accounts of important events and development in the anaesthetic field locally. He was the sole author of his first book, namely “Anaesthesia in Hong Kong: Evolution and present position” in 1982, and co-authored with Dr Ronald Lo in “Anaesthesia & Intensive Care in Hong Kong: Evolution & present position” in 1997. An update edition is currently under preparation by Dr Lett, Dr Ronald Lo together with **Dr CT Hung**. In addition, Dr Lett also collaborates with **Dr Noel Cass** (past Dean of Faculty of Anaesthetists, RACS and helped tremendously in the setting up of the refresher courses in Hong Kong) in compiling a more detailed & comprehensive timeline and important events between the Hong Kong and Australian anaesthetic training.

What are the secrets to keeping a sound mind, good health & life? “Being an anesthetist, I would say inhalation of gases over the years had done it....” Dr Lett never fails to add a tinge of humor to his answers. He continued, “food & drink activities in moderation, do not overwork your body, get sufficient sleep with a little bit of exercises like tennis would work wonders. And try not to be serious all the time, but to see the light & funny side of life.” Sounded simple does it not? Just about everything that I am not doing. We asked Dr Lett for a contact number, he replied wryly, “I will give you a direct number only if and when you inherited 10 million dollars and would like to give away a small portion of it.”

That evening before we parted, Dr Lett gathered all his papers, press clippings, personal letters and a fascinating collection of irreplaceable photographs scattered over the table into his briefcase. They were collected over the years, giving a sense of nostalgia; each contained a piece of history, and each a testament to Dr Lett's achievement, dedication and passion for Hong Kong anaesthesia. The anaesthetic fraternity in Hong Kong benefited in an incalculable manner by his life. His always cheerful, friendly and unassuming nature leaves a lasting imprint to all his friends. We shook his hands to bid farewell, and cannot help but pondered about the impact of the evening: The history of the future has not been written yet, perhaps with selfless dedication and passion, and given the right opportunities; we can all take part and fill in those empty pages.

What furthermore can one say to this gentleman, but to salute to this dear friend of our specialty, a living legend.

### **References**

1. [www.hyperhistory.com](http://www.hyperhistory.com)
2. Lett Z, Lo RJW. Anaesthesia & Intensive Care in Hong Kong: Evolution & Present Position. Centre of Asian Studies. The University of Hong Kong, 1997.
3. Lett Z. Forum: Anaesthesia in Hong Kong. Its history and present position. *Anaesthesia* 1980; 35: 993-998.
4. Z Lett. Anaesthesia. Hong Kong University Press, 1983.
5. Ten Years and Beyond (1989-1999). The Hong Kong College of Anaesthesiologists, 1999.
6. Healy TEJ, Cohen PJ (ed). Wylie and Churchill-Davidson's: A Practice of Anaesthesia. Edward Arnold, 1995.
7. Atkinson RS, Rushman GB, Lee JA. A Synopsis of Anaesthesia. Wright, 1987.

# Recent Meetings: Anaesthesia, Intensive Care & Pain management

## Hong Kong

### COMBINED SCIENTIFIC MEETING ON ANAESTHESIOLOGY 2003

26 - 28 September Theme: In conjunction with the 4th Congress of the Asian Oceanic Society for Intravenous Anaesthesia. Venue: Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel and Towers. Contact: Ms Sandy Chung, The Federation of Medical Societies of Hong Kong. Tel: 852 2527 8898 Fax: 852 2866 7530 Email: [cos@fmshk.com.hk](mailto:cos@fmshk.com.hk) Website: [www.aosiva.org](http://www.aosiva.org)

## Yarra Valley

### VIC SIMULATION AND SKILLS TRAINING SIG 2ND CONTINUING EDUCATION MEETING

29 - 1 October Theme: "ADVANCING EDUCATION THROUGH HUMAN PATIENT SIMULATION". Venue: The Sebel Lodge, Yarra Valley. Contact: Ms Helen Morris, ANZCA, 630 St Kilda Road, Melbourne VIC 3004. Tel: 03 9510 6299 Fax: 03 9510 6786 Email: [hmorris@anzca.edu.au](mailto:hmorris@anzca.edu.au)

## Melbourne

### VIC ACUTE PAIN SIG/FPM COMBINED CME MEETING

30 - 1 October Theme: "Crossing Boundaries". Venue: Grand Hyatt Hotel. Contact: Ms Helen Morris, 630 St Kilda Road, Melbourne VIC 3004. Tel: 03 9510 6299 Fax: 03 9510 6786 Email: [hmorris@anzca.edu.au](mailto:hmorris@anzca.edu.au) [Further Details](#)

## Melbourne

### Vic 2ND NEUROANAESTHESIA SIG CONTINUING EDUCATION MEETING

1 October Theme: "An Update on the Anaesthetic Management of Head Injury". Venue: ANZCA House. Key Speakers: Michael Todd, Editor in Chief Anesthesiology, USA. Contact: Ms Helen Morris, ANZCA, 630 St Kilda Road, Melbourne VIC 3004. Tel: 03 9510 6299 Fax: 03 9510 6786 Email: [hmorris@anzca.edu.au](mailto:hmorris@anzca.edu.au)

## Melbourne

### VIC 62ND NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS OF THE AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF ANAESTHETISTS

2 - 5 October Venue: Hotel Sofitel, Melbourne. Contact: Jonathan Ricketts, Organisers Australia, PO Box 2393, North Brighton Vic 3186. Tel: 03 9595 0259 Email: [melbourne@orgaus.com.au](mailto:melbourne@orgaus.com.au)

## Amsterdam

### The Netherlands MICROCIRCULATION AND MITOCHONDRIAL DYSFUNCTION IN INTENSIVE CARE MEDICINE

4 October Venue: Okura Hotel, Amsterdam. Contact: Departments of Anesthesiology and Physiology, Academic Medical Centre, University of Amsterdam, M.0-010, Meibergdreef 9, 1105 AZ, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Tel: 31 20 56 65242 Fax: 31 20 69 79004 Email: [info@microsymp.org](mailto:info@microsymp.org)



**Caribbean**

**PRACTICING ANESTHESIOLOGY 2003**

*4 - 11 October* Venue: Cruise on the Carnival Triumph. Contact: Marie Brown, National Conference and Incentives, 45 Exhibition Street, Melbourne VIC 3000. Tel: 03 9654 4000 Fax: 03 9654 7333 Email: [marie@nntravel.com.au](mailto:marie@nntravel.com.au)

**Amsterdam**

**Netherlands 16TH ANNUAL CONGRESS OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIETY OF INTENSIVE CARE MEDICINE**

*5 - 8 October* Venue: Amsterdam. Contact: European Society of Intensive Care Medicine, Congress Secretariat, 40 Avenue Joseph Wybran, B-1070 Brussels. Tel: 32 2559 0350 Fax: 32 2527 0062 Email: [public@esicm.org](mailto:public@esicm.org) Website: [www.esicm.org](http://www.esicm.org)

**San Francisco**

**USA SOCIETY FOR PEDIATRIC ANESTHESIA 17TH ANNUAL MEETING**

*10 October* Venue: San Francisco, California. Contact: SPA, PO Box 11086, Richmond VA 23230. Tel: 1 804 282 9780 Fax: 1 804 282 0090 Email: [spa@societyhq.com](mailto:spa@societyhq.com) Website: [www.pedsanesthesia.org](http://www.pedsanesthesia.org)

**San Francisco**

**USA AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CRITICAL CARE ANESTHESIOLOGISTS 16TH ANNUAL MEETING**

*10 October* Venue: San Francisco, California. Contact: ASCCA, 520 N. Northwest Highway, Park Ridge, IL 60068 2573. Tel: 1 847 825 5586 Fax: 1 847 825 5658 Email: [asca@asahq.org](mailto:asca@asahq.org) Website: [www.asccagq.org](http://www.asccagq.org)

**San Francisco**

**USA SOCIETY FOR EDUCATION IN ANESTHESIA ANNUAL FALL MEETING**

*10 October* Venue: San Francisco, California. Contact: SEA, PO Box 11086, Richmond VA 23230 Tel: 1 804 282 5427 Fax: 1 804 282 0090 Email: [sea@societyhq.com](mailto:sea@societyhq.com) Website: [www.seahq.org](http://www.seahq.org)

**San Francisco**

**USA SOCIETY FOR AMBULATORY ANESTHESIA MID YEAR MEETING**

*10 October* Venue: San Francisco, California. Contact: SAMBA, 520 N. Northwest Highway, Park Ridge, IL 60068 2573. Tel: 1 847 825 5586 Fax: 1 847 5658 Email: [samba@asahq.org](mailto:samba@asahq.org) Website: [www.sambahq.org](http://www.sambahq.org)

**San Francisco**

**USA SOCIETY OF NEUROSURGICAL ANESTHESIA AND CRITICAL CARE**

*10 October* Venue: San Francisco, California. Contact: SNACC, PO Box 11086, Richmond VA 23230. Tel: 1 804 673 9037 Fax: 1 804 282 0090 Email: [snacc@societyhq.com](mailto:snacc@societyhq.com)

**San Francisco**

**USA AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ANESTHESIOLOGISTS ANNUAL MEETING**

*11 - 15 October* Venue: San Francisco, California. Contact: ASCCA, 520 N Northwest Highway, Park Rodge, IL. Tel: 847 825 5586 Fax: 847 375 6315 Email: [ASCCA@ASAhq.org](mailto:ASCCA@ASAhq.org)

**Brisbane****QLD 7TH ANNUAL QUEENSLAND REGISTRARS MEETING**

25 October Venue: College House, 50 Water Street, Springhill. Contact: Ms Joyce Holland, Qld Regional Committee, 50 Water Street, Springhill QLD 4000. Tel: 07 3831 6686 Fax: 07 3839 5604 Email: [qld@anzca.edu.au](mailto:qld@anzca.edu.au)

**Sydney****NSW NSW ANAESTHETIC CONTINUING EDUCATION MEETING**

1 November Venue: Sydney. Contact: Ms Jan Taylor, NSW Regional Administrative Officer, 117 Alexander Street, Crows Nest NSW 2065. Tel: 02 9966 9085 Fax: 02 9966 9087 Email: [nsw@anzca.edu.au](mailto:nsw@anzca.edu.au)

**Bangkok****Thailand 7TH BIENNIAL CONGRESS: ASIAN AND OCEANIC SOCIETY OF REGIONAL ANESTHESIA AND PAIN MEDICINE**

5 - 8 November Venue: Royal Golden Jubilee Building, Bangkok. Contact: Secretariat 7th AOSRA, 39 Pradipat 10 (Paholyothin 11), Phyathai, Bangkok 10400. Tel: 66 0 2615 7301 Fax: 66 0 2615 7309 Email: [aosra@cdmthailand.com](mailto:aosra@cdmthailand.com) Website: [www.cdmthailand.com](http://www.cdmthailand.com)

**Perth****WA EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF ANAESTHETIC CRISES**

13 - 15 November Venue: Clinical Training & Education Centre, University of Western Australia. Contact: Training Co-ordinator, Centre for Anaesthetic Skills and Medical Simulation. Tel: 08 9380 8044 Fax: 08 9380 8045 Email: [amanda@casms.uwa.edu.au](mailto:amanda@casms.uwa.edu.au) Website: [www.ctec.uwa.edu.au](http://www.ctec.uwa.edu.au)

**Melbourne****VIC ROYAL MELBOURNE HOSPITAL ANNUAL ANAESTHESIA REFRESHER COURSE**

21 November Theme: "Procedures in Anaesthesia". Venue: Royal Melbourne Hospital. Contact: Ms. Diane Lyons, Anaesthetic Department, Royal Melbourne Hospital. Tel: 03 9342 7540 Fax: 03 9342 8623 *This Meeting has been approved for 10.5 QA and 2 CME points under code 700 of the ANZCA MOPS Program. The approval number for this meeting is 03105.*

**Sydney****NSW NSW ANAESTHETIC CONTINUING EDUCATION**

29 November Theme: 'Anatomical Workshop'. Venue: School of Anatomy, University of Sydney. Contact: Ms Jan Taylor, NSW Regional Administrative Officer, 117 Alexander Street, Crows Nest NSW 2065. Tel: 02 9966 9085 Fax: 02 9966 9087 Email: [nsw@anzca.edu.au](mailto:nsw@anzca.edu.au)

**New York****USA NEW YORK STATE SOCIETY OF ANESTHESIOLOGISTS 57TH POSTGRADUATE ASSEMBLY IN ANESTHESIOLOGY**

12 - 16 December Venue: New York Hilton Hotel, New York. Contact: NYSSA, Kurt G. Becker, 360 Lexington Ave, Suite 1800, New York NY 10017. Tel: 1 212 867 7140 Fax: 1 212 867 7153 Email: [kurt@nyssa-pga.org](mailto:kurt@nyssa-pga.org)

# Website Recommendation:

## COLLEGES

ANZCA

<http://www.anzca.edu.au/>

HKCA

<http://www.hkca.edu.hk/>

The Royal College of Anaesthetists

<http://www.rcoa.ac.uk/index.asp>

## ASSOCIATIONS & SOCIETIES

The Australian Society of Anaesthetists

<http://www.asa.org.au/>

New Zealand Society of Anaesthetists

<http://www.anaesthesia.org.nz/nzsa/default.asp>

American Society of Anesthesiologists

<http://www.asahq.org/>

American Heart Association

<http://www.americanheart.org/>

## EDUCATION

ECCG

[http://endeavor.med.nyu.edu/courses/physiology/courseware/ekg\\_pt1/ekgmenu.html](http://endeavor.med.nyu.edu/courses/physiology/courseware/ekg_pt1/ekgmenu.html)

<http://endeavor.med.nyu.edu/student-org/erclub/ekghome.html>

MEDICAL MNEMONICS

<http://www.technion.ac.il/technion/medicine/Students/Mnemonics.htm>

An Approach to the Analysis of Arterial Blood Gases and Acid-Base Disorders

<http://www.vh.org/adult/provider/internalmedicine/bloodgases/index.html>

SARS

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/whatsnew.htm>

<http://www.who.int/csr/sars/en/>

<http://www.info.gov.hk/info/sars/eindex.htm>

[http://www.ha.org.hk/sars/sars\\_index\\_c.html](http://www.ha.org.hk/sars/sars_index_c.html)

<http://www.hku.hk/ctc/>

[http://www.phls.co.uk/topics\\_az/SARS/menu.htm](http://www.phls.co.uk/topics_az/SARS/menu.htm)

## Miscellaneous

### Approved Formal Projects

**Dr. Angel OK Wong**, Kwong Wah Hospital,  
Spinal Anaesthesia for Emergency LSCS in a Morbidly Obese Patient with Acute Asthma

**Dr. Karman Ng**, Prince of Wales Hospital,  
A randomized comparison of the strategies for emergency airway management during cardiopulmonary resuscitation in human patient simulator model

**Dr. Libby HY Lee**, Queen Mary Hospital,  
The Effect of Celecoxib on Intrathecal Morphine Induced Pruritus in Patients Undergoing Caesarian Section

**Dr. Eric MC Lam**, Caritas Medical Center,  
The split airway comparison of the William Airway Intubator and the Ovassapian Intubating Airway and an assessment of their function during fiberoptic intubation

**Dr. ST Tan**, Queen Elizabeth Hospital,  
Case Report: Acute on Chronic Subdural Haematoma: a rare complication after spinal anaesthesia

**Dr. Peggy Pang**, Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital,  
The effect of an alveolar recruitment strategy on oxygenation during laparoscopic cholecystectomy

**Dr. Alice KW Man**, Prince of Wales Hospital,  
Watching videos intraoperatively reduces patient anxiety

**Dr. Rochelle WW Cheung**, Queen Elizabeth Hospital,  
A crossover comparison of the Flexiblade and the Macintosh Laryngoscopes for laryngeal exposure in anaesthetized adults

**Dr. CY Kwok**, Queen Elizabeth Hospital,  
The clinical experience obtained by the trainees of the Hong Kong College of Anaesthesiologists- logbook analysis

**Dr. Bonnie PG Cheng**, Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital,  
Celecoxib premedication in post-operative analgesia for laparoscopic cholecystectomy

**Project Assessor: Chandra Rodrigo**

# Congratulations

## **Horace Wells Award**

The above award was presented by the International Federation of Dental Anesthesiology Societies at the 10th International Dental Congress on Modern Pain Control meeting held in Edinburgh, UK in June 2003 to **Associate Professor Chandra Rodrigo** to acknowledge his contribution to sedation and anaesthesia in dentistry.



President of the International Federation of Dental Anesthesiological Societies Eliezer Kauffman with Dr Rodrigo.

## The editorial board 2001-2003



Left to right: Drs. Carina Li, Bassanio Law, Anne Leung, Eric So, Douglas Fok and Timmy Yuen.  
(Dr Edmond Chung and Dr WH Kwok were unable to attend for phototaking)