

94TH ANNUAL CLINICAL CONGRESS OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS FROM 12-16 OCTOBER 2008 AT MOSCONE CONVENTION CENTER, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Trip Funded by:	College of Surgeons Travelling Fellowship Fund
Attended by:	A/Prof Low Yin Peng
Reported by:	A/Prof Low Yin Peng

Trip Report

I arrived in San Francisco, USA at about 12.30 pm (local time) on Saturday, 11 October 2008 after a gruelling 17 hour flight from Singapore, via Seoul, Korea. I represented Dr Chan Heng Thye, President, College of Surgeons, Singapore, as one of the special guests and representatives of English speaking Colleges and Associations of the American College of Surgeons. I was housed at the San Francisco Hilton Hotel which is a 30 minute taxi drive from the International Airport.

My first official function was the President's Dinner, held at 7.00 pm on the same day. It was a black tie affair. It was held at the Continental Ballroom of the Hilton San Francisco Hotel. The President, Dr Gerald B Healy and his wife Mrs Anne Healy were the hosts. The invited foreign guests included the Presidents from the Royal College of Surgeons of England, Edinburgh, and Ireland and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, the Philippine College of Surgeons and West African College of Surgeons. There was lively social discussion among those present.

The next day was Sunday, 12 October 2008. I registered for the Congress at the Moscone Convention Center, a popular sprawling complex of buildings designed for large meetings like the ACS Annual Clinical Congress. In the evening, there was a Convocation Ceremony of new fellows and honorary fellows of the American College of Surgeons in the evening. There were much pomp and circumstance, starting with the Processional of fellows, honorary fellows and representatives of English-speaking Colleges (including myself) & Associations, in their academic regalia, to the music of Elgar, Verdi and Handel.

The Convocation of new fellows of the American College of Surgeons was followed by the reception of the new President of the American College of Surgeons, Dr John L Cameron and new Fellows of the College at the Arand Ballroom, Hilton San Francisco. It was an enjoyable evening with good food, free-flowing spirits and entertainment provided by the fellows themselves. I mingled with the Fellows as well as the guests from national and international medical and surgical organizations. It was during this occasion that I presented the Singapore College of Surgeons memento to the new President ACS, Dr John L Cameron.

On the next day, Monday 13 Oct 2008, at 8.30 am, I was invited as a special guest to the Opening Ceremony of the 94th Annual Clinical Congress of the American College of Surgeons at the Ballroom, 3rd Floor Moscone Convention Center, West. I was one of the international guests in the stage party. The stage seating was specially configured so that each person who was introduced can be seen by the audience on the video enhanced screen. At the end of the introductions, the Martin Memorial Lecture was delivered by Mr Peter Neupert, MBA of the Microsoft Corporation, Redmont, WA. The lecture was entitled, "Translating the Power of Software for Optimal Patient Care".

From 9.30 to 12 noon on the same day, I attended the International Relations Committee / International Surgical Societies Meeting at the Moscone Convention South, at Room 256 Mezzanine Level. The guests were welcomed by Dr John L Cameron, President, ACS. The meeting was chaired by Hugo V. Villar, Chairman of the IRC. Among the international participants were:

- James A. Miller, President, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons. Glasgow
- Prof Eusebe Alihonou, President, West African College of Surgeons
- Dr Armando C. Crisostomo, President, Philippine College of Surgeons
- Dr Ahmad Abdul Hai, President, Association of Surgeons of India.
- Dr Ian Gough, President, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons.

Among the topics discussed were:

- ATLS courses
- Commission of Cancer courses
- Web Portal
- Operation Giving Back
- International Guest Scholarship
- ACS Travelling Fellowship to Japan
- ACS Travelling Fellowship to Germany
- ANZ Chapter of the ACS Travelling Fellowship
- International Relations Panel

Concerning the International Guest Fellowships (IGS):

- Applicants must be graduates of schools of medicine.
- Applicants must be at least 35 years old, but under 45, on the date that the completed application is filed.
- Applicants must submit their applications from their intended permanent location. Applications will be accepted for processing only when the applicants have been in surgical practice, teaching, or research for a minimum of one year at their intended permanent location, following completion of a formal training (including fellowships and scholarships).
- Applicants must have demonstrated a commitment to teaching and/or research in accordance with the standards of the applicant's country.
- Applicants whose careers are in the developing stage are deemed more suitable than those who are serving in senior academic appointments.
- Applicants must submit a fully completed form provided by the College on its Web site. The application and accompanying materials must be typewritten and in English. Submission of a curriculum vitae only is not acceptable.
- Applicants must provide a list of all their publications and must submit, in addition, three complete publications (reprints or manuscripts) of their choice from that list.
- Applications must submit letters of recommendation from three of their colleagues. One letter must be from the chair of the department in which they hold academic appointment, or a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons residing in their country. The chair's or the Fellow's letter is to include a specific statement detailing the nature and extent of the teaching and other academic involvement of the applicant. Letters of recommendation should be submitted in envelopes sealed by the recommenders.
- Applicants are required to submit a curriculum vitae of no more than 10 pages.
- Applicants may submit a photograph. (Passport size is preferable.)
- The International Guest Scholarships must be used in the year for which they are designated. They cannot be postponed.
- Applicants who are awarded scholarships are expected to provide a full written report of the experiences provided through the scholarships upon completion of their tours.
- An unsuccessful applicant may reapply only twice and only by completing and submitting a current application form provided by the College, together with new supporting documentation

The scholarships provide successful applicants with the privilege of participating in the College's annual Clinical Congress in October, with public recognition of their presence. They will receive gratis admission to selected postgraduate courses plus admission to all lectures, demonstrations, and exhibits, which are an integral part of the Clinical Congress. Assistance will be provided in arranging visits, following the Clinical Congress, to various clinics and Universities of their choice.

ASEAN Federation of Surgery

Following the meeting, I have met separately with the President of the Philippine College of Surgeons, concerning the setting up of the Asean Federation of Surgery, the proposed Constitution and by-laws. A hard copy of the Constitution would be submitted to each proposed member organization for vetting and approval.

Lectures

With the limited time available, before my flight home, I managed to attend two named lectures:

- Excelsior Surgical Society Lecture: Plasma and Red Blood Cell Resuscitation for Trauma Patients by John B Holcomb, MD, FACS, San Antonio, Texas.
- Scudder Oration on Trauma: Blood and War – Lest We Forget by David B Hoyt, MD, FACS, Orange, California.

Scientific Exhibition

I also managed to visit the exhibition area of the Congress with its extensive coverage of the latest in technology, surgical instruments and devices and textbooks.

Return to Singapore

I returned to Singapore by SQ1, leaving San Francisco at 0120hrs on 15 Oct 2008 and touching down at Singapore on 16 Oct 2008 at 1140 hrs

Usefulness of Event to Self & College of Surgeons

The meeting has enabled me as representative of the College of Surgeons to meet with my counterparts in the USA and all English-speaking Colleges of Surgeons.

The personal friendship fostered helps our College to play a meaningful part in the dialogue with surgeons from all over the world.