

Choo Jim Eng,*PPA, FAMS* (20 May 1923 – 20 March 2003)

Mr Choo Jim Eng, or Jimmy as he was fondly known by his friends, colleagues and students, had a very illustrious career. He dedicated his whole life to the service of medicine in general and surgery in particular.

Jimmy was born in 1923, and completed his Senior Cambridge School Certificate with distinctions at the tender age of 14 at the Raffles Institution. Too young to enrol in the University, he had to wait until he was 17 before being admitted to the King Edward VII College of Medicine. However with the Japanese Occupation, Jimmy could only complete his medical studies after the War, when he was among the first batch of MBBS graduates from the then University of Malaya.

He then went on to a very distinguished career in public service. In 1957, he obtained his fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (RCSE), and trained under illustrious names such as Professor D E C Mekie and Professor Yeoh Ghim Seng. After working at the Singapore General Hospital (SGH), he became foundation head of the Department of Surgery at Toa Payoh Hospital (the forefather of the current Changi General Hospital) from 1961 till 1973. He was also the Medical Director for several years. He was then seconded to the Singapore Armed Forces to start up the Medical Corps.

He returned to SGH in 1973 to head the Department of Surgery, a post he held till 1985, when he retired. He continued as Senior Surgeon, and subsequently was posted to the Ministry of Health to serve as its medical advisor and to the Central Provident Fund Board as its auditor.

Throughout his career, he held numerous outstanding portfolios.

He was a loyal Academician, having served the Academy of Medicine for some 20 years in various positions, including Chairman of the Chapter of Surgeons, Scribe, Bursar and Council Member.

He was deeply involved in the joint M Med/FRCS (Edin) Examination from its very beginning, and was Chief Examiner from 1977 to 1986, and he was the Postgraduate School's Chairman of Surgery from 1983 to 1986. He was also a true friend of the RCSE.

Jimmy also believed in service to his fellow doctors. He was a longstanding member of the Singapore Medical Association's Council and its President from 1974 to 1975 and from 1977 to 1979. In 1980, he was President of the Singapore Medical Alumni Association.

His contribution to the medical community was tremendous. He trained several generations of surgeons, many of whom have become professors, heads of department and prominent figures themselves. Jimmy is well known for his humility, friendliness and was always approachable.

For all his dedication and contributions, he received many honours. The most outstanding was the *Pingat Pentadbiran Awam (Emas)* or Public Administration Medal (Gold) from the Government of Singapore.

His passing on 20 March 2003 is a great loss to our community, and we will all miss him dearly.

Chew Chin Hin,*PPA, FAMS*
Tan Ser Kiat,*PPA, FAMS*
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