

LINGERING THOUGHTS ON THREE LYMPHATEERS*

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Mario Degni (1911-1996) - John R. Casley-Smith (1935-1997) - Carlos Grandval (1929-1997)

Three courageous gentleman who swashbucklingly championed lymphology, practiced their art and science with a chivalry and grace reminiscent of an earlier time, and, with uncommon valor, defended until death

their consuming passion—the lymphatic system. These three charismatic musketeers of lymph, i.e., “lymphateers” — Mario Degni of São Paulo (Brazil), Carlos Grandval of Buenos Aires (Argentina), and John Casley-Smith of Adelaide (Australia)— came in three different sizes and three different shapes and spoke three different tongues. But their humanity, intellect, and worldliness transcended geographical barriers and hectic

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times destining them to become a formidable triumvirate in the world of lymphology. Each had a keen irrepressible sense of humor, a love of mentoring, genuine humility in the face of ignorance, and an infinite capacity to adapt. They were trail-blazers, iconoclasts, change-makers, rebels with a cause. For each, the discipline of lymphology, as promulgated by Casley-Smith in his Lymphatic Manifesto [see Lymphology 29 (1996), 76-82] was the unifying force as they delved into the fundamentals of anatomy and physiology of lymph dynamics and also the management of patients afflicted with disorders of lymphatic blockade, maldevelopment, congestion, and reflux. Like a trio of honeybees, they buzzed around suckling sweet nectar out of the intricacies and complexities of the elixir “lympa” and, from the earliest days of the International Society of Lymphology (ISL), they cross-pollinated ideas and practices in their native lands and to the far corners of the globe on the Presidential wings of biennial ISL Congresses and the international journal Lymphology. This earthly world is the poorer

from their departure. But we can imagine them in the next world, all three reunited, reviewing the latest Progress in Lymphology, interrupting pure scientific banter with ribald stories and animated discussions of their patients and the latest theories on lymph and lymphatics in Portuguese, Spanish, and “Aussie” English. Indeed, the “Three Lymphateers” are probably right now organizing the First Celestial Congress of Lymphology with a link to cyberspace so that a well-organized lymphologic agenda will be ready and waiting when our time comes to join them.

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