



# International College of Dentists Australasian Section

## Newsletter

Issue Number 18, December 2002

### President's message

A successful Convocation was held on Friday 20 September during the recent NZDA Biennial Conference in Auckland. Five new New Zealand Fellows were inducted at the luncheon, which was attended by 43 Fellows and their partners.

I was pleased to attend and renew some old New Zealand friendships. Other Australians present were Vice President Rob Butler, Registrar Braham Pearlman with wife, Deborah, and Fellow Jenny Smythe with husband, Jon. Fellow David Thomson, President of the Australian Dental Association, gave the occasional address. He was accompanied by his wife, Fellow Monica Thomson.

The organisation by Regent Clive Ross and former Regent, Tom Speed, was superb.

There will be a Regents meeting in Sydney on Monday, 17 March 2003, to finalise arrangements for the International Convocation on 17 September during the FDI meeting at Darling Harbour.

Please forward any nominations for fellowship to the Registrar as soon as possible. We need numbers to induct – our International Councillor, Geoff Hall, says that the Americans inducted 250 at the recent International Convocation in New Orleans.

I hope to hold a dinner for Fellows and their partners in Brisbane in early May 2003. Any Fellow is welcome, so please let the Registrar know if you can be in Brisbane at that time.

Further invitations will be sent to all Queensland Fellows shortly.

It is a big year in 2003 and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in September at our International Convocation in Sydney on 17 September.

Until then all my best wishes to you and your families for Xmas and the festive season.

**Neil Henry**  
**President**

**President:** Neil Henry AM  
**Treasurer:** Gerry R Dickinson  
**Regents:** Gerry R Dickinson  
**Registrar:** Braham Pearlman

**Past President:**  
**International Councillor:**  
Richard G Cook AM

Geoffrey C Hall AM  
Geoffrey C Hall AM  
Clive B Ross CNZM

**Vice President:** Robert Butler  
**Editor:** Robert Butler  
Peter Noblet

### Registrar's report

The Australasian Section remains strong with a membership of 437, including 61 Fellows from New Zealand, two from Fiji, one from Malaysia, and one at present residing in the UK. Some 25 Fellows from Australia and NZ have been awarded Life Membership status on their retirement from practice in the last 12 months.

It is with extreme regret that we have noted the sad passing since the last Convocation, of Fellows John Booth, Bob Carter, Bill Chalmers – former Regent and Treasurer, Neville Cox, George Gow-Gates, Cyril (Bill) Martin and Chris Somerville.

A number of Fellows have received national honours since the last convention:

Lloyd O'Brien AO  
Geoff Hall AM  
Bill Wilson OAM  
Vin Amerena PSM

Geoff Heithersay	DDSc
Peter Barnard	Hon Life Member ADA
Pat Colgan	Hon Life Member ADA
Jenny Smythe	ADA Service Medallion
David Thomson	Hon Life Member ADAQ
Don O'Donoghue	Hon Life Member ADAQ
Gerry Dickinson	Distinguished Service Award ADAVic
Brent Stanley	Member FDI Council
David Thomson	Member FDI Council
Brian Wheeler	SA Council of Professions award for service to the Flying Doctor Service
Martin Tyas	Recently awarded a personal Chair – Melbourne University
Barry Pratt	Honorary Life Member NZDA
Robert Max	Fellow of NZDA
Dexter Bamberry	Fellow of NZDA

Fellows are currently serving in high office in a number of organizations. These include:

Peter Noblet	President of the ADC
Stewart Edward	Head of the Lakeland District Health Board, NZ



David Marshall	Head of Hawkes Bay District Health Board, NZ
Clive Ross	Head of Ministerial Cttee to advise on Health workforce strategy, NZ
David Crum	President of the NZDA
Robin Whyman	Dental Practice Commission, FDI
Martin Tyas	Science Commission, FDI
Geoff Annan	Secretary General of the Asia Pacific Dental Federation

Most recently, five Fellows were amongst those honoured in the Queens Birthday awards list:

John Dale AO  
Patrick Colgan AM  
Rowan Storey AM  
Fred Widdop AM  
John Cooney OAM

A very successful induction and Dinner was held in Brisbane in May 2001 in conjunction with the ADA Congress. 30 new Fellows were inducted.

The Australian Dental Association has launched its new web site this year, and this includes an information page provided by the International College of Dentistry.

Through the good offices of our Fellow Dr Tony Mc Laughlin a donation of 50 Kavo high speed handpieces has been made from the IDC to the Samoan Health Service. The handpieces were provided by the NSW Government Employees Health Clinic.

An ICD Convocation has been held in New Orleans USA on 16/17 October 2002, in association with the American Dental Association annual meeting.

An international meeting of the ICD will be held in Sydney in September 2003, in conjunction with the FDI Congress. This will be held at a separate venue to the Darling Harbour location, but within the Central Business District.

**Braham Pearlman**  
Registrar

## Dental erosion and athletes

A study carried out by researchers at the University of Melbourne has identified dental problems arising from the consumption of acidic foods and drinks among several sporting groups.

Damage to tooth enamel by acid erosion was reported by 25.4% of respondents to a survey, with athletes competing in martial arts being particularly affected (37.4%). The consumption of acidic foods and drinks was frequent among most athletes. These included spicy foods, fruit juices, sports drinks and soft drinks.

The researchers conclude that athletes may be placing themselves unintentionally at risk for dental erosion. They suggest that there is a need for preventive programmes and dietary counselling for young athletes

to control and reduce the effects of acidic foods and drinks. Such advice could be given by dentists to patients who are at risk in competitive sports, and also by dental professionals working in conjunction with organisers of sports groups.

The study was reported in full in the September 2002 issue of the Australian Dental Journal.

## ICD Convocation in Sydney - September 2003

In September next year, there will be a Convocation of the Australasian Section of the International College of Dentists and Induction of a number of new Fellows. In addition, the world body of the International College of Dentists will be holding its business meetings in Sydney also during this period, which is immediately prior to the FDI World Dental Federation Congress, scheduled for the 18-21 September 2003. It is hoped that as many Australasian Fellows as possible will attend the College Convocation and consider attendance also at the international Congress of the FDI.

Details will be issued in due course but early bookings have been made for the Convocation and Luncheon to be held on Wednesday, 17 September 2003. Please mark your diaries now.

## Nominations for Fellows

At its meeting scheduled for March next year, the Board of Regents of the College will be considering nominations for Fellowship in the College. Any Fellow may nominate a candidate whom they consider deserving of consideration by submitting details and a brief CV on the standard pro forma, available from the Registrar, Braham Pearlman. He may be contacted by fax: (612) 4946 6111 or email [brahamp@bigpond.com](mailto:brahamp@bigpond.com).



# Auckland Convocation

The following address was given by the President, Dr Neil Henry A.M., at the recent Convocation in Auckland.

"Fellows, inductees, guests – it is my pleasant duty as President of the Australasian section of the College to welcome you all to this afternoon's convocation on this occasion of the NZDA Biennial Convention.

This year is the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our incorporation as the International College of Dentists – an honour society which is recognised by all the dental associations and governing bodies in dentistry – national and international.

The ICD is representative of the top 5% of our profession and stretches across many countries and all dental disciplines.

Fellowship is by invitation only offered to those members of our profession who have distinguished themselves through leadership, scholarship, and the ethical performance of their dentistry.

By their election to fellowship of the College they are recognised and honoured by their peers, who look forward to their continued leadership and dedication.

This then is our International College of Dentists.

We consolidate our standing in the worldwide dental community by encouraging graduate and post graduate education in our countries and by assisting other countries and peoples to improve their level of oral health and dental treatment. This has become difficult of late, in our South West Pacific area, due to political instability, however we are still trying to help, as you will hear from our Registrar when he makes his report.

Before asking him to do this I would like to convey to you the following message from Vic Lanctis, our International President.

'I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a successful luncheon and induction in New Zealand and would ask that you convey my warmest greetings to all of our fine Fellows there, along with the hope that we will have occasion to indeed meet next year in Australia. I salute all of you for the remarkable endeavours undertaken in recent years by the Australasian section. You have been exemplary representatives of everything noble about this college and I encourage you to maintain that strong focus in accordance with our motto "Recognizing Service and the Opportunity to Serve". To the new inductees, I thus extend my sincere congratulations and enjoin them to fully adopt as their own the goals and objectives of the College. The worldwide reputation and stature of the ICD will very much depend on their willingness and enthusiasm to build on the past with a bold vision of the future. I have every confidence that the future is in good hands!'

In his remarks to the five Fellows being inducted into

the College, Dr Henry reminded them that their Fellowship in the College carries with it the following responsibilities:

- To maintain a high standard of ethical practice – every patient merits ones finest efforts – it is necessary to cultivate good human relations – not as a means of manipulating or controlling patients, but as a means of being of service to them.
- To exhibit professional competence through continuing professional education.
- To sharpen scientific curiosity and so contribute to the advancement of professional knowledge in dentistry.
- To contribute to and support your professional associations, which are working towards improved regulations in the administration of dental services to the community.

Now please enjoy yourselves. I'm so pleased to have your support to welcome our New Zealand inductees into the College."

## New Zealand news

The most significant news is that Robin Whyman will be leaving NZDA as Executive Director in January to become General Manager (Clinical Services) for Dental Health Services Victoria. This will be a major loss to NZ and a big gain for Victoria. We wish Robin and his wife Jennifer every success in his new position.

The long awaited Health Professional Competency Bill has had its first reading in the House and the profession. Specialist groups and the Dental Council will be making representation to the select committee. It will put much greater responsibility and accountability on professional development, peer review and identification of competency. The NZDA, led by Dr David Crum, had put together a very comprehensive strategy to develop and promote the principles embodied in the competency requirement. Concerns exist in regard to the anticipated costs associated with the disciplinary procedures expected with a 'one tribunal' for all the health professional groups. The existing Dental Council will cease to exist and a new Council will be formed including the wider dental professional groups –therapists, hygienists and dental technicians. The Council will cease to have elected members; members will be purely by appointment from the Minister. Naturally the select committee stages may see some change and we all await the outcome with some trepidation.

Congratulations to Jeff Annan, who conducted his first APDF meeting in Vienna as its new Secretary General and, by all accounts, did an outstanding job. Congratulations also to David Crum, who was elected by the Council of the FDI to the Congress and Education Committee. Well done!

**Clive Ross**  
Regent



## New Inducted Fellows - New Zealand, September 2002



**Dr Kerry Pegler**

Kerry is a member of NZDA, the Auckland Branch NZDA, NZ Prosthodontic Society, NZ Society Endodontics and the NZ Society Periodontology. He was a committee member and Secretary/Treasurer of the NZ Prosthodontic Society for many years. He has been on a number of Peer Review and Complaints Assessment Committee panels but, most importantly, he has for almost a decade, quietly and confidently worked as a DHAS (Dentist Health Advisory Service) representative and has helped many colleagues and continues to do so effectively. The role he has taken on is very demanding both personally and time-wise, it requires considerable sensitivity, understanding and compassion and Kerry has carried this out in an unassuming but very effective manner. He has actively participated in many CE programmes and is a dedicated private practitioner.



**Dr John Hale**

John served on the NZ Prosthodontic Society Committee, 1983–89, and then the Dental Advisory Committee of the Postgraduate Medical Committee in the University of Auckland. This is a continuing education committee which has and continues to lead professional development in Auckland. From 1992 to the present, being its Chair in 1997, he has been instrumental in organizing numerous lectures and courses. John sets very high personal and professional standards, is totally committed to clinical excellence and is a major contributor to the profession. He was on the Scientific Committee for the 1992 APDF and is Chairman of the Scientific Committee for the NZDA 2002 Auckland Biennial Conference. He is currently a director of New Zealand Dental Insurance Society and has an ongoing interest and influence on the way dentistry is practiced in New Zealand.



**Dr Erin Collins**

Erin has had significant involvement within the Auckland Branch of the NZDA as an Executive member and then President. He has also been an Auckland Branch Representative on the NZDA Executive. He has chaired the NZDA Practice Management Standing Committee. He is currently Director of the NZDIS and Chairman of the NZDA Auckland Biennial Conference. As Conference Chairman he brings extensive skills of management, understanding of the professions needs and leadership. Erin has an innate enthusiasm for his profession, is a clinician with high standards and is highly respected in the wider community. He is in a private group practice, has had extensive experience in CE programmes and lectures and continues to be an active participant in the development of the profession.



**Dr Geoff Lingard**

Geoff Lingard has played a significant role on the delivery of public health dentistry in New Zealand. He lives in Nelson and has been instrumental in developing the oral health public services in the region. As Principal Dental Officer, he has raised the profile of dentistry among the wider professional groups and has taken a particular concern nationally in the plight of disadvantaged children with high caries rate and the problems associated with accessing general anaesthesia for this needy group. He is currently President of the Hospital and Community Dentists Society. He belongs to that special group of dentists who work in the public sector, with limited funding available to address the significant problems associated with the sector, but has maintained enthusiasm and dedication making him a role model for all practitioners.



**Dr Robin A Whyman**

Robin achieved the Fellowship of the Royal Australian College of Dental Surgeons in 1991 and completed his MDS in community Dentistry with distinction in 1993. He is a registered specialist in Community Dentistry. His CV is extraordinarily long for a graduate of 1986. His work history has included a number of years at the Otago Faculty, some private practice, Regional Director Dental Services in Wellington-Capital Coast which has given him the background and experience to now take on the role of Executive Director of the New Zealand Dental Association. His unique background of academic, public health, research (a significant number of published papers) and a clear perception of the needs of the private sector has meant he brings an extensive skill mix to the position of Executive Director at a critical time for the profession. Robin has clear directed intellect which enables to stand astride the full breadth of the professions needs and already has earned him the highest regard and respect of the profession and the wider decision makers in health. He has a great future ahead of him.



## International Council Meeting

The International Council Meeting was held in New Orleans in October under the chairmanship of President Victor Lancitis from Ottawa, Canada.

The focus was on two main issues this year, the setting up of an ICD website, which in turn will assist the second issue of communications. A gradual transition is taking place with the expansion of the College website and the use of the internet as a standard means of communication. It is hoped that a roster of all members' postal addresses, fax numbers and email addresses will become available on the website together with up to date information on Section meeting dates, Section projects being undertaken and future ICD events around the world. A sharing of continuing education programmes between Sections is also envisaged.

An ad hoc Communications Committee has been set up to act as a focal point for all matters associated with the College communications, both internal and external. Terms of reference have been approved and the Committee has the responsibility of exploring, developing and promulgating new communication initiatives as appropriate with the approval of the Council. The Globe will still be an integral part of the College's communication with Fellows, and now has a new editor in Dr. Richard Smith, replacing retiring and long serving editor, Dr. William Hawkins, who held the position for 26 years.

The Council also held a Strategic Planning Session to further consider the future development of the College, to ensure its continued growth, the future status of the College and strategies to cope with any challenges and circumstances that the College may face in the years ahead.

Council is eagerly looking forward to its next meeting in Sydney in September 2003, which will be held in conjunction with the Australasian Section Meeting at the time of the FDI World Congress.

**Geoffrey Hall AM**  
**International Councilman**

## US class action over Artglass

Dentists in the USA are involved in a class action against Heraeus Kulzer, alleging deficiencies in the restorative material, Artglass.

According to a news report, at least one class-action lawsuit and numerous individual civil suits have been filed against dental manufacturer Heraeus Kulzer Inc. and a subsidiary concerning Artglass resin materials.

The class-action suit contends that Artglass dental products have 'an unreasonably high premature failure rate;' have 'fractured, cracked, "popped-off" and chipped ... in the past or are likely to do so in the near future;' and are 'defective and unreasonably dangerous.'

The suit also charges Kulzer with marketing Artglass 'without sufficient testing and development;' with failure to disclose various complaints by clinicians and dental laboratories while continuing to market the products; and 'negligent, intentional, fraudulent and otherwise illegal conduct.'

In relying on Kulzer's reputation, the suit contends, dentists who installed Artglass restorations have suffered substantial loss of income, professional chair time, existing and future patients, and business reputation.

'Heraeus Kulzer's pre-market testing of Artglass was not adequate and their representations to dentists of its efficacy have proven to be false and inadequate,' said New York general dentist Dr. Catalano's lead counsel, who also represents dentists in several individual suits. 'Data reveal that failures of the Artglass products have occurred, no matter which laboratory was involved in the process,' he continued. 'Many dentists have been financially damaged by having to repair faulty and inadequate restorations through no fault of their own.' 'The Catalano class-action suit was dismissed by the court [on] April 18, 2002,' said an attorney (who asked not to be identified) representing Heraeus Kulzer. 'The plaintiffs have filed a notice of appeal. I'm not certain it would be appropriate to comment on pending litigation.'

In Cherry Hill, N.J., Dr. John DiPonziano has launched an individual lawsuit, charging Kulzer with manufacturing Artglass 'in a defective manner, . . . negligently . . . selling the defective product' and breaching its express and implied product warranties. He has also charged the company of making 'false and misleading' representations and 'intentionally conceal[ing]' Artglass failure rates.

The suit also complains that Kulzer 'prepared a report that blamed the plaintiff for the cause of the failures of the Artglass-to-metal crowns and bridges.'

Reached for comment, Dr. DiPonziano's lead attorney Robert Sugarman added, 'The Heraeus companies have perpetrated a serious material misrepresentation which induced responsible professionals like Dr. DiPonziano to utilize a product which was inherently defective and known not to be what was represented to them.'

## Overseas aid

The College is involved in the provision of overseas aid to our dental colleagues in the Asia and Pacific regions, the latter in particular.

Fellows who might be aware of specific needs in these areas are invited to contact the President of the College, Dr Neil Henry, in order that the Board may consider these proposals. His contact details are: Tel: (617) 3396 1233 or Fax: (617) 3393 5480.



# Safety of dental amalgam

Dental amalgam fillings are safe and anti-amalgam activities endanger the public welfare, says the National Council Against Health Fraud in the 'Position Paper on Amalgam Fillings', released recently.

'No dentist is required to use amalgam,' observes the NCAHF in its four-page statement. 'However, dentists who make false claims about amalgam safety create unnecessary patient anxiety and undermine confidence in the [dental] profession. Such behaviour should be considered unprofessional conduct.'

The NCAHF is described on its Web site as a private, non-profit, voluntary health agency 'that focuses upon health misinformation, fraud and quackery as public health problems.' To read the full position paper on amalgam, go either to [www.ncahf.org](http://www.ncahf.org) or to a related Web site, [www.dentalwatch.org](http://www.dentalwatch.org).

The position paper acknowledges that some forms of mercury are hazardous, but the mercury in amalgam 'is chemically bound to the other metals to make it stable and therefore safe for use in dental applications.'

To illustrate the relationship between elemental mercury and other metals contained in amalgam, the paper notes that elemental hydrogen is an explosive, while elemental oxygen is combustible — in combination, however, they produce water. 'Saying that amalgam will poison you is like saying that drinking water will make you explode or burst into flames,' says the NCAHF. 'Amalgam is the most thoroughly studied and tested filling material now used. Compared to other restorative materials, it is durable, easy to use and inexpensive.'

Stephen Barrett, M.D., is NCAHF's vice president and director of Internet operations. He's also the editor of Consumer Health Digest, a weekly online newsletter accessible free of charge through either of the two Web sites listed above. Dr. Barrett described the NCAHF position paper on amalgam as 'the end product of something that's been evolving for a long time.' He said he hoped dentists would use the document in discussing the safety of dental materials with their patients — and that it would be useful in combating the 'fear campaign and frivolous lawsuits' of anti-amalgamists.

Other points made in the NCAHF position paper:

- Many prominent organizations' have concluded that dental amalgam is safe and effective for restoring teeth, including the American Dental Association, Consumer Union (publisher of Consumer Reports), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the U.S. Public Health Service and the World Health Organization.
- 'No illness has ever been associated with amalgam use in patients,' except for rare findings of allergy.
- 'Inappropriate removal of amalgam fillings is usually followed by replacement with a more costly material.

But removing good fillings is not merely a waste of money. In some cases, it results in significant damage or loss of the tooth.'

- Dentists attempting to 'diagnose' or 'treat' 'heavy metal toxicity' are not practicing dentistry; dentists who suspect a patient has a medical condition should refer the patient to a physician or other health professional as appropriate.
- Promoting a dental practice as 'mercury-free' is 'unethical because it falsely implies that amalgam fillings are dangerous and that "mercury-free" methods are superior.'

The position paper cites 27 references from a wide range of reports and publications. The paper concludes with a short list of targeted recommendations for patients, dental organizations, dental licensing boards and legislators. Legislators, for example, are urged not to be 'misled by false claims that amalgam is dangerous' and to oppose laws that would restrict or discourage its use. Patients are assured that 'there is no logical reason to worry about the safety of amalgam fillings.' What's more, patients should be suspicious of health professionals who say amalgam fillings cause disease or should be removed as a 'preventive measure,' the paper says.

## CDC fluoridation database

The American Dental Association carries a news report that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has launched a new Web site aimed at increasing public and professional access to information on the fluoride content and fluoridation status of local drinking water supplies.

The new site features include 'My Water's Fluoride' and 'Oral Health Maps' and it offers information on the population consuming fluoridated water, target fluoridation levels, water sources and whether specific systems supply fluoridated drinking water.

An initial 19 participating states offer basic water system information to the public at the new CDC site. One of the 2001 CDC Recommendations for Using Fluoride to Prevent and Control Dental Caries in the United States called for increased public information, said Dr. William R. Maas, director of CDC's oral health program. 'This new (Web) feature will make it easy for consumers to find this. It will aid both consumers and health professionals in determining the fluoride content of their drinking water so they can assess whether additional sources of fluoride should be used to help prevent decay.'

The new CDC Web site also offers 'Oral Health Maps,' a geographic information system application providing state or county profiles with selected demographic and water fluoridation information for participating states. These include Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Nevada, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.