

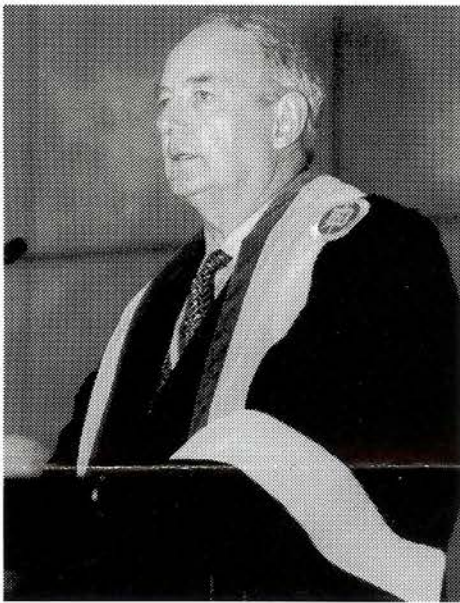


# International College of Dentists Australasian Section

## Newsletter

Issue Number 21, April 2004

### President's message



The current term of the Board of Regents of the Australasian Section of the College commenced immediately following the last Convocation in September 2003 and continues until March 2005. Drs Jackie Robinson (NSW) and David Thomson (Qld) are new faces on the Board and Dr Neil Henry is now the immediate Past President and remains as a Board member. It is particularly pleasing to see that he has made a full recovery from a very serious illness which prevented him presiding at the last Convocation and we look forward to his continuing guidance in the management of the College. I would like to express my gratitude for the opportunity of serving the College as Australasian President for the next two years and pledge to do my best to ensure that the College continues to thrive and exercise its influence.

It goes without saying that the award of Fellowship in the International College of Dentists represents recognition of worth by one's peers. This alone is cause for existence of the College, and perusal of the reports of the various Sections of the College around the world would seem to indicate that, in many cases, other activities are limited, being largely confined to Convocations and the presentation of College pins and certificates.

I am pleased that the Australasian Section of the College sees Fellowship as something more than this. Recognition of dentists for past achievements and future potential is but part of our scenario. This Section also sees the opportunity for the College to exercise leadership in educational and philanthropic ventures in the field of oral health. Indeed, many of our Fellows are active in an individual capacity and past Newsletters have outlined College-sponsored activities, predominantly in the Pacific area with occasional assistance to South East Asian countries. Despite there being College Sections in parts of Asia, it appears that the assistance of our Section is still somewhat needed in this part of the world, apart from our responsibilities in the Pacific area.

Your Board of Regents decided at their meeting immediately prior to the last Convocation to focus efforts to assistance in East Timor and, at home, in the provision of aid to indigenous communities in Australia and New Zealand. The agenda for the Board meeting this March included consideration of a number of such proposals. Furthermore, we would appreciate further input from individual Fellows, active in these areas, in order to assist us in formulating additional proposals for such aid.

In parallel with this important work of the College, we intend to continue the practice of occasional dinners or luncheons, associated with the induction of new Fellows in the periods between our Convocations. Very successful functions of this type have been held in Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane and Melbourne, in the past, and Fellows have indicated their appreciation of such events. In August this year, it is intended to hold a dinner and induction in Melbourne, in conjunction with the ADA Victorian Branch Conference and Exhibition. Details of this function will be promulgated in due course and it is to be hoped that as many Fellows as possible, particularly those resident in Victoria or attending the ADAVB Convention, will be able to participate. This will be held on Thursday 5th August 2004 in Melbourne.

The College will also be holding a function in Christchurch later in August during the NZDA Meeting, at which it is hoped to induct a number of New Zealand Fellows. These social activities provide a pleasant opportunity for Fellows to congregate and enjoy the pleasure of the company of colleagues.

Robert J F Butler

**President:** Rob Butler  
**Treasurer:** Gerald R Dickinson  
**Regents:** Peter Noblet, Jackie Robinson, David Thomson

**Past President:** Neil Henry AM  
**International Councillor:** Geoffrey C. Hall AM

**Vice President:** Clive B. Ross CNZM  
**Editor:** Dick Cook AM RFD  
**Registrar:** Braham Pearlman

## Registrar's Report

### Membership

The number of Fellows in the Australasian Section increased disproportionately in the last twelve months because of the high number of inductees (40) who received Fellowship at the recent International Convocation in Sydney in September 2003. Active memberships have risen to 341, and Life memberships to 140.

Honorary Fellow: one of the notable new Fellows at that meeting was Mr Peter Lazar (NSW) who was the recipient of an Honorary Fellowship. Peter is well known to most dentists in New South Wales and to many in the profession from other States because of his long association with and service to dentistry.

Peter was one of the central figures in the establishment and impact of the Dental Health Foundation of New South Wales during the 1970's, and he has continued to contribute in a consultative capacity to the present day. Peter's expertise in Public Relations was one of the major forces in changing the focus of Dentistry and it's stagnant public image into a modern preventative, caring and significant health profession.

Honorary Fellowships in the International College are seldom awarded and only for the most exceptional contribution. Peter Lazar is a most deserving recipient of this honour.

### Convocations

Two Convocations of the Australasian Section will be held during 2004. Early in August, a Convocation will be held in Melbourne (Vic), and later that month in Christchurch (NZ). The latter is organised in conjunction with the Biennial Conference of the NZ Dental Association.

The International Meeting of the ICD for 2004 will be held in Orlando, Florida (USA) during September.

In association with the Australian Dental Association Conference in 2005, an Australasian Section Convocation will be held in Adelaide (SA) in March 2005.

### Vale

The Australasian Section notes the passing of Dr James Neil Rattray of Victoria, 1912 – 2003, and extends sympathy to his family.

### Honours

#### Australia Day Honours List:

Award of OAM to Dr Effie (Ernst) Ehrmann MBE (Vic) for service to Dentistry and to the Jewish Community of Melbourne

### Australian Government Centenary Medal

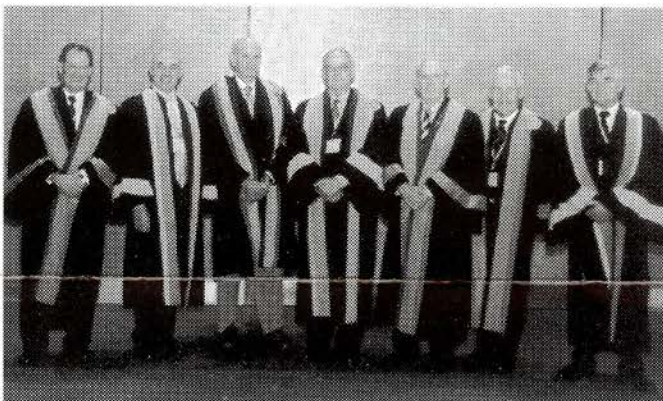
Dr Ross Bastiaan OAM RFD (Vic) – President of the RACDS

Dr Gavan Oakley AM (Vic)  
Australian Dental Association (Vic Branch) – Dentistry  
**Achievement Award**

Dr Sydney Warneke AM  
New Fellows

Fellows are reminded that it is their prerogative to nominate for Fellowship any member of the profession they feel has contributed outstanding service to the dental or wider community. Nomination forms can be obtained from the Registrar at brahamp@bigpond.com, or 10 Michael Crescent, Valentine NSW 2280.

Braham Pearlman  
Registrar – Australasian Section



Australian Regents at the Sydney Convocation. September 2003  
L to R: Drs. Peter Noblet, Braham Pearlman, Clive Ross, Rob Butler,  
Geoffrey Hall, Dick Cook and Gerald Dickinson

## Board of Regents Meeting 26 March 2004

The Board of Regents of the Australasian Section of the College met in Melbourne on 26 March 2004. Items covered included:

- Consideration of candidates proposed for Fellowship in the College
- Review of financial reports. No increase in subscription rates was proposed
- Decision to hold a dinner in Melbourne on Thursday 6th August at the time of the ADA Victorian Branch Convention
- Discussion of future guidelines for approval of grants-in-aid. Proposals for individual projects will be considered later this year, following refinement of these guidelines
- The establishment of a process to revise College By-Laws to ensure clarity in a number of areas

## Action Against Anti-Amalgam Lawyer

In an interesting twist to the long-standing legal battles over allegations of toxicity from mercury in dental amalgam, the American Dental Association is proceeding with defamation action against the lawyer associated with a number of anti-amalgam suits, Shawn Khorrami.

Earlier this year, a Federal judge denied an appeal by Mr Khorrami and ruled that the Association's defamation action could continue. According to the legal council for the Association, Peter Sfikas, " This is a significant victory, reinforcing the Association's right to adopt a position with respect to amalgam restorations".

The American Dental Association filed this suit in May 2002, basing it on three statements that Mr Khorrami had made on his law firm's website. These statements accuse the Association of perpetrating a "con" upon the US population concerning amalgam, of "concealing the dangers" of amalgam fillings from the public and of putting its financial interests ahead of the health of dental patients. It also was accused of pressurising and intimidating dentists against "warning their patients" against the alleged hazards of amalgams.

The judge found that, for purposes of the motions to dismiss the Association's action, there was no basis for Mr Khorrami's accusations. A number of actions brought by Mr Khorrami in various courts have been unsuccessful in the recent past.

## Origins of the College and Its Australasian Section

with acknowledgment of the recollections by

A Gordon Rowell AO, CBE, ED (RL) and  
Emeritus Professor Kenneth JG Sutherland AM

In November 1920, an eminent dentist, Dr Louis Ottofy was the guest of honour at a dinner in Tokyo. Dr Ottofy was a past President of the Chicago Dental Society and a former Dean of the American College of Dental Surgeons which later became the Dental School of Northwestern University, Chicago. The presiding officer at the dinner, Dr Tsurukichi Okumura, the then President of the Japan Dental Association, made the point that, although the Federation Dentaire Internationale (FDI) provided opportunities for representatives of national dental associations to meet to discuss matters of mutual concern, very few individual dentists knew a great deal about dentistry as practised in countries other than their own. In his response, Dr Ottofy suggested that FDI form some kind of an organization with the aim of learning what progress our profession is making in all parts of the world. The discussion concluded with the promise that upon his return to the USA he would give serious consideration to the proposition.

Some of those who had met in Tokyo again assembled at a FDI Meeting held in Philadelphia in 1926 and this stimulated further action, culminating in the formation of the International College of Dentists and its incorporation under the laws of Washington D.C., in February 1928. According to Dr Ottofy, the issue was to make contact with the leading dentists everywhere, and to have an organization which would permanently cement them together, and which at the same time would secure some service for members. In the first place it was necessary to see who the leaders were and then to interest them in the organization. I devised a plan and set it in motion. The result was the International College of Dentists. Ottofy did not seek the position of President of the College, initially, and was happy to accept the position of Registrar, from which, with his international contacts, he was able to make recommendations for the candidature of overseas dentists.

Originally the College was established with the restriction that the total membership was to be no more than 300. However, every country in the world was to be represented by at least one dentist, with a maximum of 50 from the USA - one from each State. It soon became obvious that the foregoing restriction made the task of selection of suitable candidates impossible. So the original quota for the USA was amended to permit 200, with a total membership of 500.

The first Convocation of the College was held on 22nd July 1930 to coincide with an Annual Meeting of the American Dental Association in Denver, Colorado. Dr Weinberger was chosen to be President. At the meeting in 1930 it was approved that the number of Fellows in the USA be limited to 500.

Elmer S Best became Registrar of the USA Section in 1935 and, in that year, presented the view that Sections of the College should be organised in those countries where there were a significant number of dentists. The Sections were authorized to set fees, establish entrance requirements and set out rules and regulations on the understanding that they would be in harmony with those of the parent body. Approval was to be obtained from the College for the establishment of a new Section and, ultimately, its Constitution.

Following this decision, the American Fellows were banded together as the USA Section, thus becoming Section Number 1. Dr Best, now the Registrar of the USA Section, reported that membership of the College had grown to 266 representing 174 countries, States and provinces.

There was no provision for conferring Fellowships in foreign countries but, in accordance with a motion passed at the 1937 meeting, the Foreign Relations Committee of the USA Section was to have charge of all matters relating to College activities in the countries outside the United States of America and Regents were to be appointed in countries other than the USA as occasion demanded. It was not until 1948 that the decision to divide the College-at-Large into 30 autonomous Sections could be put into effect. In our

part of the world, Section 29 was established, consisting initially of Australia, Borneo, Celebes, Fiji, Java, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Papua, Samoan Islands, Society Islands, Solomon Islands and Sumatra. Later, this was to be replaced by the Australasian Section. The Canadian Section was established as an autonomous Section in 1949 and the European Section was founded in 1956.

Documentation shows that the eminent Western Australian oral surgeon, Gilbert Dowling Henderson CBE, was elected to Fellowship in 1930 or, possibly 1928 (early records are unclear) and made a Regent in 1932. Several other prominent dentists from Australia and New Zealand had been admitted to Fellowship prior to the establishment of a local Section. In the early 1960's, it was considered that it would be advantageous to appoint another Regent from the eastern seaboard and Alan Grainger was chosen for this position.

It was foreshadowed in 1962 that there might be an application from Australia for the formation of an autonomous Section and, in 1963, the formal application came from the Regents for Section 29, Gilbert Henderson and Alan Grainger. This was approved and the new autonomous Section was established in 1964. The Inaugural Meeting of the Section was held in Perth WA, on 30th May 1964, in conjunction with the Australian Dental Congress. In his report to the Council, Master Fellow Gordon Agnew stated "approximately 30 persons, including wives, attended the very sumptuous and artistically planned dinner which, with its warmth and spontaneity of good fellowship, established an appropriate setting for the cordial dignity of the inaugural and dedication ceremonies to follow. Many wives expressed their appreciation of being included in the ceremonies and entering into the meaning of this new experience and honour with their husbands.

The meeting elected an Organizing Committee to attend to the affairs of the Section until an election could be held for a Board of Regents at the next Convocation in 1971, by which time an election for officers could have been held. The Organizing Committee was made up of Alan Grainger (Chairman), Gordon Rowell, Derek Freeman (to act as Secretary), George Christensen and John Lavis. A draft Constitution was developed for consideration at the next meeting. The 1966 College Roster listed, under Section 29, some 39 names including those of the two Regents.

At the Convocation in 1971, the draft Constitution was accepted, pending its final approval at the next Convocation. The following were elected to be officers until the next Convocation:

President - Alan Grainger

Vice-President - Gordon Rowell

Registrar - Richard Setright

Treasurer - John Lavis

Regents - Derek Freeman, Kenneth Sutherland

In 1971, Alan Grainger sadly died and Gordon Rowell automatically, as Vice-President, became President. Derek Freeman became the Vice-President, with the other officers remaining unchanged.

On the international scene, in 1972, Gordon Rowell became a Councillor of the Board of the College and was the first Australian to be elected as College President, 1977-78. Some twenty years later, Syd Dobbin became the second to achieve this honour.

Today, the Australasian Section is thriving with over 441 Fellows in Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Malaysia.

## Vic Lanctis Address September 2003

A number of Fellows have requested copies of the inspiring address given by International Past President, Vic Lanctis, at the Convocation in Sydney in September 2003.

Dr Lanctis has kindly made a copy available and it can be obtained by contacting Rob Butler at:

PO Box 348,  
Shoreham, Vic 3916  
or email [butlershore@aol.com](mailto:butlershore@aol.com).

## Editorial Notice

The Newsletter editor welcomes contributions from fellows which can be sent to:-

8th Floor  
68 St Georges Tce  
PERTH WA 6000 (Hard copy)

OR

[dick@orthodonticclinic.com.au](mailto:dick@orthodonticclinic.com.au) (emailed copy  
-photographs acceptable)

In common with many organisations, the Australasian Section of the ICD can foresee cost savings and increased convenience to fellows by electronic distribution of the Newsletter.

While this may not happen in the life of the current Board of Regents it is planned to add emails of fellows to the address database.

To this end fellows are asked to forward their email addresses to either of the above addresses to start this process.