

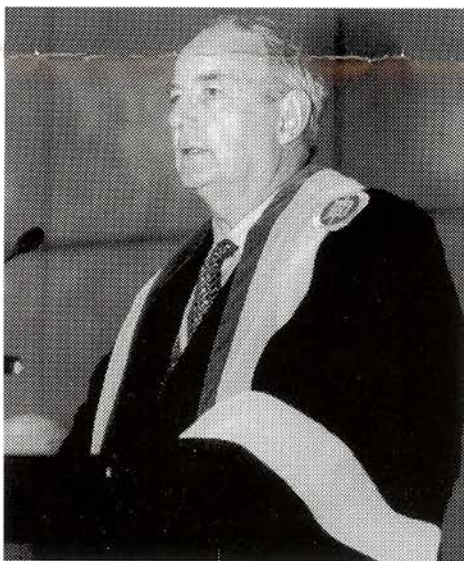


International College of Dentists Australasian Section

Newsletter

Issue Number 22, July 2004

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Australia and New Zealand both have a strong private practice base, supplemented by Government services, in the provision of dental services to the community. We are indeed fortunate that we haven't had to face the challenges of National Health systems, such as that in the United Kingdom, which impinge on the provision of quality care. In Australia, general medical practice has been dominated by its reliance on Government funding and the accompanying strictures on fee levels and work practices.

Whilst dentistry in this part of the world does not have these particular problems, we must remain vigilant in assessing the impact of government funding on the provision of dental services. The forthcoming Australian Federal election sees the major parties outlining their dental health policies, outlined elsewhere in this Newsletter. Neither policy is destined to have a significant impact on private practice but each requires analysis in terms of its impact on the provision of dental services to the disadvantaged. It is a good thing that oral health is seen to be important by both of the major parties and that each of them has outlined its approach in this area.

Robert J F Butler

Registrar's Report

Membership

At the most recent Convocation of the Australasian Section in Sydney in association with the FDI Conference in September 2004, forty New Fellows were inducted. These included Mr Peter Lazar as an Honorary Fellow, for services to the Dental Profession via the Dental Health Foundation of the University of Sydney. Active membership is at total of 334 Fellows, including 292 Australian Fellows and 36 from New Zealand. We have Fellows resident in France, Fiji and Malaysia. Life membership numbers a total of 145 Fellows of whom 120 are resident in Australia, 24 in New Zealand and one in London (UK).

Change of Address

We depend on Fellows to notify us of any changes of address or other details as they occur. If any Fellows have information as to the present address or other contact details of the following, we would be most grateful to receive any information: Dr Romuald Denham (Qld, ? now UK), Dr Peter Foreman (NZ) Dr Phillip Gray (NSW), Dr Manilal Jogia (NZ), Dr John Sinclair (NZ).

Queen's Birthday Honours

Several Fellows received Australian awards, announced on the recent Queen's Birthday.

These include:

Professor Mark Bartold (SA) AM
Dr Patrick Dalton (NSW) AM
Dr John McIntyre (SA) AM
Dr John Myhill (SA) OAM
Professor Greg Seymour (Qld) AM

Vale

The International College notes with much regret the recent passing of Dr Ian Noble of Ballina (NSW), 1922 – 2004, and Dr James Rattray of Balwyn North (Vic) 1912 – 2004.

Braham Pearlman - Registrar

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

Fellows Honoured in Queen's Birthday Awards

Five Fellows of the College featured in the recent Queen's Birthday honours list. They were:

Member in the General Division (AM)

Professor Peter Mark Bartold.

- For service to the dental profession, particularly through periodontic education and research and the establishment of the Australian Periodontal Research Foundation.

Dr Patrick Joseph Dalton.

- For service to the dental profession, particularly through the Australian Dental Association, and to the community of Griffith.

Dr John Malcolm McIntyre.

- For service to dentistry, particularly in the areas of education and research and by developing dental health programs in the Asia-Pacific region, and to the community.

Professor Gregory John Seymour.

- For service to dentistry, particularly through periodontology and immunology research, and to dental and oral health education and administration.

Medal in the General Division (OAM)

Professor Robin Hawthorn.

- For service to dentistry, particularly in the field of prosthodontics as a practitioner and an academic.

Dr Reuben John Myhill.

- For service to dentistry through contributions to professional associations and the community.

NOTE:

In the previous Newsletter, the listing of Fellows who had received Australia Day Honours for services to dentistry omitted to mention that Fellow, Dr David Neesham, received a Medal in the Order of Australia (OAM) List for services to water polo as a player, coach and administrator.

My apologies to David who has also contributed significantly to the profession in WA as Director of Dental Health Services and as a long term member of the Dental Board of WA.

Congratulations to all.

Aid to Cambodia

The College is always interested in providing assistance to developing countries, particularly where this assistance leads to the establishment and maintenance of professional skill levels.

One of our New Zealand Fellows, Callum Durward, has been visiting Cambodia on a regular basis for the past 14 years to assist in developing oral health training and services. As a result of a request received through him, the Board of Regents of the College has recently approved a significant grant-in-aid to assist a Cambodian dentist to undergo forensic training in Australia.

The recipient, Dr Someth Hong is the Head of the Department of Oral Surgery at the Faculty of Dentistry in Phnom Penh. He has a Post-Graduate Diploma in Oral Surgery from Otago University and is the past-President of the Cambodian Dental Association. He has a specific interest in the area of forensic dentistry but there is no such expertise in his country, despite its need in the case of disasters and subsequent victim identification.

ICD Dinner, Melbourne

The College will be holding a Dinner at the Athenaeum Club, 87 Collins Street, Melbourne, on the evening of Thursday 5th August 2004. The dress will be lounge suit and the cost of the evening will be \$90 per head. There will be an expert guest speaker to address us on the topical subject of stem cell research.

The date has been chosen to suit those Fellows from other States attending the Australian Dental Association (Victorian Branch) Convention and Industry Exhibition in Melbourne during the following weekend. It is hoped that as many Melbourne and visiting Fellows, and their partners, as possible, will take this opportunity to enjoy a fine dinner, an interesting guest speaker and the fellowship of their colleagues, on this occasion. Of course, New Zealand colleagues in Melbourne at that time will be most welcome.

Although there is a separate mail out seeking notice of attendance of Australian Fellows, those wishing to attend may contact the Section Treasurer, Dr Gerry Dickinson, 2 Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000, who will be happy to receive your attendance advice and cheques made out to the International College of Dentists, for those attending.

Will We Be Short of Dentists?

Crises in higher education funding and criticism of Government policies have been reported recently in the United Kingdom. For a number of years, problems have been reported in New Zealand, with respect to the requirements for student fees and the effects of these on future workforce.

For a long time, in Australia, the profession had held the view that our dentist numbers were adequate, albeit suffering from some maldistribution. Recent studies have shown that this is not the case, with projected shortages of dentist workforce being projected over the next ten years. The effect of change in Federal Government funding policy, added to these projections and the existing maldistribution and shortages in the public sectors amount to a crisis in dental education.

In August last year, the Australian Dental Association made a comprehensive submission to the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education References Committee on this subject. This submission reflects some of the data arising from the University of Adelaide's Dental Statistics and Research Unit. The following points are made in the submission:

- There are approximately 9,000 dentists practising in Australia, for a population of around 20 million.
- 85% of these dentists are in general practice and, of these, 83% are in the private sector
- Approximately one third of currently registered dental practitioners are aged 50 and over
- Studies suggest that the number of dental visits made will increase by 15% by the year 2010

- These studies show that, to cater for the changing oral health of the nation, population increase and the expected decrease in the number of practitioners due to retirement and other factors, there is a need to train an additional 120 dentists per year over and above the 220 per year produced by the established five dental schools
- Whilst Australia rates very highly in its overall picture of child dental health, a recent OECD study showed Australia as second last in the quality of its adult oral health

Federal Government funding levels are insufficient even to maintain current dentist numbers and the emphasis on private fee-paying students does little to address these workforce issues, tending to encourage universities to accept overseas students who return home on completion of their studies.

The ADA has recommended to Government that:

1. Funding be extended to cover the need for additional dental students.
2. Similar to the incentives being provided to universities to train additional nurses and teachers, there should be encouragement by the Federal Government for additional dental places.
3. The high HECS fees for dental students, estimated at around \$45,000 or \$130,000 to \$150,000 for full fee-paying students, be addressed.
4. There be a fee repayment and interest moratorium for dental graduates until a minimum income of \$75,000 is reached.

In its submission, the ADA has also addressed the problems of inequitable distribution of dentist workforce. It refers to studies which suggest that one of the best sources of obtaining dentists for remote and rural areas is to recruit dental students from these areas. It also points out that, faced with high levels of repayments under HECS, graduates are encouraged to seek employment in the more lucrative areas. Consequently, it has also recommended that:

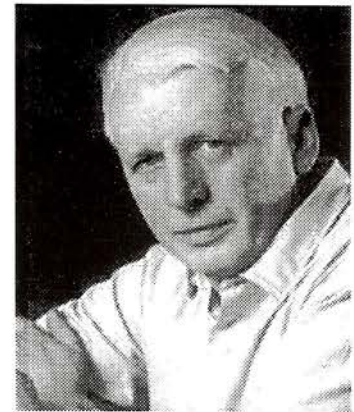
- Additional focus must be given to the creation of further scholarships to residents of country and remote areas, particularly recognising the high level of HECS repayments applicable to dental graduates.
- A moratorium or debt forgiveness for graduates who agree to serve in rural or remote areas
- Similar moratoria or debt forgiveness schemes to be applied to the public sector where shortages are already serious

The response from the Federal Government to this and previous submissions has been virtually non-existent, with the ADA still unable to obtain a meeting with the Federal Education Minister, Brendan Nelson, being fobbed off with unproductive meetings with Ministerial advisers.

However, there is an interesting development with the new dental school at Griffith University. Utilising a health facility to be built adjoining the Gold Coast Hospital, with 55 chairs and capability to expand by another 14, there will be an intake of some 50 or so dental students in 2004. Incidentally, Griffith will also be taking 21 therapist type auxiliaries and 20 dental technology students for Bachelor degree courses this year. Whilst there are still some issues to be clarified in the minds of the profession with respect to the Griffith course, such as the intention for a Master degree level for the basic dentist qualification, the extra numbers produced by this course will go some way to assisting future dentist shortages.

OBITUARY

Dr John McFarlane Wark CBE, DDSc, FRACDS, FACD, FICD



It is a name as well known and respected in Dentistry as the name of Sir Donald Bradman is in cricket. To achieve greatness one has to have outstanding qualities - natural ability and integrity, and a great will to serve. There is no question John Wark had these qualities.

His secondary education was at Scotch College and he entered the Dental Faculty at Melbourne University graduating B.D.Sc in 1932. In 1938 he completed his D.D.Sc, and since that time has received numerous Fellowships for his contributions and service to Dentistry

He believed that the community had the right to a good dental service, at affordable costs, from good practitioners, and that the best of these in the profession should spend time and act as mentors and role models to students and young graduates. And by "the best" he meant those who combine in their person the best skills with a high sense, of vocation and of fine responsibilities and privileges of a caring profession.

At the age of 25 years, only three years after graduation he was elected to the Council of the Victorian Branch of the Australian Dental Association, a position he held for 41 years. He was Secretary for seven years and President in 1946. In 1945 he was elected to the Federal Council of the Australian Dental Association, where he served for 20 years: Secretary for six years and President from 1962-1964.

He had great vision and it was this vision and his concern for the future of the profession and the lack of suitable legislation to control this future that led him to seek a change of direction for his endeavours, and in 1960 he sought a position on the Dental Board of Victoria. He was successful and remained a member for the next twenty years. He was President on two occasions totalling six years. During those 20 years there were far reaching recommendations regarding the education and functioning of the Dental profession, John found himself on committees (chairing most of them) regarding the career oaths for and conduct of dental technicians, auxiliary personnel, general dental practitioners, specialist dental practitioners and advising the Australian Dental Examining Council. Like all committee meetings held in changing times, many lengthy reports and recommendations were required. Most of these he wrote himself - the drafts in the main were written on the Mont Albert tram while travelling from his home to the surgery. Whether his reports or remarks were directed to a colleague or a politician, no punches were pulled and nobody was spared his piercing gaze -- if it was warranted - but it was always tempered by an engaging wit. His ability to recall matters and reports discussed and resolved years past, was nothing short of an amazing talent and intellect. He held the position of Chairman, Dental Health Committee for eight years on the National Health and Medical Research Council. In more recent years he was a Consultant to the Traffic Accident Commission.

Over the years he found time to be a Tutor Demonstrator with the Faculty of Dental Science. Honorary Dentist to the Royal Melbourne Hospital and he served on organizing committees of three Congresses of the ADA.

During World War II he enlisted in the Royal Australian Navy as a dentist. Rose to the rank of Commander, and saw active service on HMAS Shropshire. Despite all of these activities, for 60 years he ran a very caring private practice, firstly in Preston

then in Collins Street. He worked 9 hours a day, 5 days a week until his retirement.

In recognition of his contribution to the profession he was made an Honorary Life Member of both the Federal ADA and the Victorian Branch of the ADA. These are the highest honours the profession can bestow. He was also the Branch's last remaining Permanent Vice President.

In 1960 on the recommendation of the Government of the day, the Queen honoured Dr Wark with the Award of Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

As a friend we shall miss him dearly. Our profession will long remember his wise counsel, his vision and his great ability, for his achievements and total commitment during his professional career were astonishing- Never was the thought of personal gain a motivating factor In any of these commitments - John Wark never had a personal agenda. John believed that good practitioners are nurtured by using the best we have as role models to show us all, and the young graduates in particular. the true meaning of "Professionalism"

John McFarlane Wark - was a very special "Role Model"

There is a verse used by members of an International Dental Fraternity on occasions such as this when one of its brethren passes on. He was a member for 70 years

And so to you we raise Silent Glass'

Pledging ourselves to keep your memory bright

And pray we too. when comes our time to pass

May look with fearless eyes the night

He will be LONG remembered

This obituary prepared by Dr Stan Kings was reprinted with the kind permission of the ADAVB

“Pure Water” Legislation Threatens Fluoridation

Experience overseas provides a warning against complacency by health authorities in the matter of fluoridation of water supplies. Actions brought at a local government level, posing as “pure water” legislation, can be most damaging to the interests of public health.

In late January of this year, a bill which has the effect of banning fluoridation, was passed by the Honolulu City Council. Under the guise of a “pure water” bill, the legislation bans “any product, substance or chemicalfor the purpose of treating or affecting the physical or mental functions of the body or any person” from being added to the city's water supply. A similar bill has been passed in the State of New Hampshire but, at time of writing, neither of the two bills has been put into effect, pending considerable lobbying by health authorities.

In the case of the New Hampshire bill, it prohibits any substance from being added to a public water supply that “is intended to treat people and not water, or to fulfil a health claim” unless the said substance has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as being safe and effective for all ages, health conditions and levels of water consumption. The fact that the FDA has no jurisdiction over

chemicals added to water supplies means that the effect of this legislation is to put a ban of fluoridation. Other bodies have the role of imposing standards on water supplies and the addition of substances to them. A similar situation would occur, for example, in Australia, if a bill was to be passed, requiring approval by the TGA for fluoridation, when this body does not have the appropriate jurisdiction.

Since the year 2000, similar legislation has been introduced to five State legislatures in the USA, namely, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Utah and Washington but all have been unsuccessful. It is thought that targeting of individual cities by anti-fluoridationists is a response to these legislative failures.

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

(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.

International College of Dentists (FICD)

The NZDA Conference will be an opportunity to hold our convocation for new ICD members. The venue for Fellows, Partners and Guests on Friday 27 August is at the Canterbury Tales Restaurant, Crowne Plaza Hotel, 12.30pm – 2.00pm. The cost is \$NZ45 per person incl Gst.

The ICD convocation will be held immediately prior to the luncheon, Fellows will be contacted directly with further information about this..

The NZ members welcome all our Australian Fellows who are attending the NZDA conference to participate and should indicate on their registration form their intention to attend. If there are visitors who wish to attend the function and are not registered for the Conference please indicate their intention to attend to:

Clive Ross

clivross@ihug.co.nz

12th Floor Quay Tower

Downtown

Auckland