From your President

Thanks to our ASM Convenor

Many of us had the opportunity to enjoy the recent 59th ASM in Queensland. It was an excellent meeting and David Cronin and his committee must be congratulated on a particularly well-crafted academic program. The invited guests, Professors Thomas Linder and Jesus Medina and Mr David Roberts, made a great contribution responding strongly to the topics requested by the committee.

Proposed national registration and accreditation

The dialogue between the medical profession, led by the AMA, and government regarding proposed national registration and accreditation legislation is ongoing. ASOHNS has cosigned numerous government submissions made by the AMA as well as submitted its own paper to a senate select committee on the matter. Government is beginning to see merit in professional autonomy regarding training and accreditation and understand that this position is based on a concern regarding maintenance of our professional standards. Our position is strongly reinforced by similar stance held by most allied health organizations.

Clinical Pathways - update

Closer to home ASOHNS, in conjunction with the AMA, continues discussions with the Office of Hearing Services regarding clinical pathways for patients eligible for free or subsidized hearing aids. We are resisting strongly the proposed pathway that bypassed medical clearance for hearing aid fitting.

RACS Council Election

Our colleague Vince Cousins is to be congratulated on his recent successful election to the Council of the RACS.

Stuart Miller
President

ASOHNS Members honoured

Chris Perry has been awarded an OAM (Medal of the Order of Australia) “for service to medicine as an ear, nose and throat specialist and to indigenous health”.

Chris has contributed significantly to the Society and the specialty of OHNS – both within Australia and overseas.

He was Chair of the Foreign Aid Program from 2003-2007, during which time he focused on providing training and educational opportunities for trainee Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) surgeons in PNG. This included arranging for them to travel to Australia to attend conference/hospital placements.

Chris also visited PNG to run educational sessions and supply ENT services to a population needing such assistance.

Within Australia, Chris has contributed substantially to OHNS training and development, particularly as an OHNS examiner for the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons. He also served on the Queensland Regional Training Committee for several years, including two years as Chair.

Chris O’Brien (who was an Honorary Member of ASOHNS) was awarded a posthumous AO (Officer of the Order of Australia) “for continued service to medicine and to the community through advocacy and fundraising roles for the development of integrated care and clinical research facilities for people with cancer, particularly the establishment of the Lifehouse Centre at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital”. (See page 10 for obituary)
Recognition is Important

One of the critical elements for Societies such as ASOHNS is that in order to operate successfully there needs to be a strong and generous involvement by the membership. That involvement can and is exhibited in a variety of ways. The highly successful, if a little damp 2009 Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) on the Gold Coast run under the direction of David Cronin and his conference committee is a recent example of what I refer to.

The commitment required to stage and deliver a meeting such as that just finished reflects a very deep level of respect for the profession and the membership.

Importantly all organisations, be they large businesses, sporting groups or Societies of specialised professionals, need to recognise the contribution of those who give of their time and talents to make the organisation better. This recognition was suitably on display at the 2009 ASM where one of the highlights was the awarding of the ASOHNS Society Medal to three long serving members who have contributed greatly to ASOHNS and the art and science of otolaryngology head and neck surgery. While a separate article on these awards appears elsewhere in this newsletter, I refer of course to Jack Kennedy, Kevin Holwell and Malcolm Baxter, each of whom was humbled to be presented with this most prestigious of awards, one determined by their peers.

At the same time the work of well known Society members Patrick Bridger, Bill Coman and Stephen O’Leary, along with Prof Michael Gleeson, was acknowledged with awards at the Convocation of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons held in Brisbane early in May.

While no one sets out to collect awards the recognition and respect that they convey to the recipients says a great deal about how the body that they have contributed to regards them. ASOHNS has done well in creating not only the Society Medal, but also the George Halliday Medal linked to the Journal and the Jean Littlejohn Prize for trainees, thereby creating opportunities across the spectrum for works of high merit to be acknowledged. Importantly these awards recognise two previous presidents of OSLA (the forerunner of ASOHNS) both of whom were leaders in the profession, being Sir George Halliday, the first otolaryngologist to be awarded a knighthood in Australia and Jean Littlejohn the only female president.

Awareness and recognition of the contribution made by members, play a vital role in helping those who are to follow understand how the Society and the profession has evolved. Next year 2010 sees ASOHNS celebrate its Diamond Jubilee and it is hoped that when nominations for Society Medals are called for in June this year the great work and contribution of members will again be recognised.

Mark Carmichael
Chief Executive Officer

Call for Nominations for 2010 Awards

ASOHNS is now calling for nominations for 2010 awards.

The category Distinguished Services for ASOHNS is intended to recognise members who have made outstanding contributions to the Society. The category Distinguished Contribution to the Art and Science of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery is intended to recognise members who are providing outstanding OHNS services outside their normal practice activities.

Nominations for either of the categories can be made by financial members of ASOHNS only. A name and a one-page letter supporting the nominee’s eligibility should be sent to the Chief Executive Officer by post, email or fax by mid-August 2009. Nominations will be considered by the Awards Sub-Committee who will submit recommendations to the Council at their next meeting later this year. Those selected will be awarded their medallions at next year’s ASM to be held in Sydney.

Send to:
Chief Executive Officer
ASOHNS Limited
Suite 403, Level 4, 68 Alfred Street
MILSONS POINT NSW 2061
Email: ceo@asohns.org.au
Fax: +61 2 9957 6863
ESR Hughes Medal awarded to ASOHNS Members

ASOHNS members Professors Patrick Bridger and William (Bill) Coman AM were awarded the prestigious E S R Hughes Award at the Convocation of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons held in May this year. The Award is designed to recognise distinguished contributions to surgery by Fellows of the College and others. It was created in 1998 in recognition of the outstanding contributions to surgery by Professor Sir Edward Hughes. The following are citations for Professors Bridger and Coman.

Prof Bill Coman AM FRACS

Professor William Coman is the inaugural Garnett Passe & Rodney Williams Memorial Foundation Professor of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery at the University of Queensland, a fellow truly deserving of the award of the ESR Hughes Medal.

Professor Coman has been the outstanding Otolaryngologist, Head and Neck Surgeon of his time and his contribution to the specialty of Head and Neck Surgery, to our College, to his state of Queensland and to the people of Australia is not easy to quantify. Perhaps the best testimony to this great Australian surgeon’s impact on practice, teaching and research is the legion of surgeons who have had the privilege of training with him and who have been inspired by his teaching.

He has served this College as a Councillor, an examiner and chief examiner. Professor Coman was Chairman, Board in Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery for six years, President of the Australian Society of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery (1995-1997) and hosted the first International Federation of Otorhinolaryngological Societies meeting held in Australia.

He has an international presence, altogether enjoying membership or fellowship of 11 other Associations and Societies, including the Cartesian Society of which he was sometime President.

He is one of only 13 surgeons to receive Honorary Fellowship of the Section of Otolaryngology, Royal Society of Medicine.

Professor Coman’s career has spanned some 45 years, beginning with contributions to ear surgery, working in the prestigious centres of Europe including the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, Saint Bartholomew’s Hospital, London and in Cologne and Tubingen.

He has an impressive experience in rhinology and was highly regarded as a surgeon and teacher in the art of rhinoplasty surgery.

His most significant contributions have been in Head and Neck oncology. In 1978, with senior colleague Dr Gerry McCafferty, he established and now chairs a multi-disciplinary Head and Neck Cancer Clinic at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, one of the first multi-disciplinary clinics in Australia. This approach ensured excellent and comprehensive care for patients with head and neck cancer.

Professor Coman has been an enthusiastic teacher and research worker. He has been Lecturer or Clinical Lecturer in Otolaryngology for medical students, clinicians and nurses since 1974 and has held the position of Professor of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery, within the Department of Surgery at the University of Queensland since 1990.

Since 1983 he has been invited as a guest lecturer at 73 national and international meetings, conferences or courses, including being the invited Guest of the Royal Society of Medicine, London in 2006; in 2003 he was the First International Guest Professor for the Society of University Otolaryngologists – Head and Neck Surgeons in Washington DC and he has delivered the prestigious Sir William Wilde lecture for the Irish Otolaryngology Society in 2002.

William Coman has published some 50 peer reviewed articles, contributed numerous book chapters and sits on five Editorial boards.

Professor Coman has been a prolific researcher in fields as diverse as quality of life outcomes and surgical technique to the challenges of molecular biology of head and neck cancer and the cellular response to viral diseases including the role of the Human Papilloma Virus.

He has also been involved in indigenous health projects, establishing a registrar training program in Papua New Guinea. In 2005, he was awarded membership to the Order of Australia for services to Medicine.

Professor William Coman has been an outstanding surgeon, teacher, researcher and mentor. He has been unstinting in his service to the College, a great ambassador for Australian Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery and a most worth recipient of the ESR Hughes Award.
Associate Professor Patrick Bridger FRACS

Patrick Bridger graduated with Honours from Sydney University in 1960. He gained the FRACS in 1965 and FRCS in 1966. His surgical training was at St Vincent’s Hospital, Sydney and his otolaryngological training was at Guy’s Hospital and at the Royal Free Hospital London, where he was a senior registrar. For 18 months he was a Fellow at Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore. His research on nasal airflow gained international recognition. In 1970, he received the Ben Shuster Award from the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery.

Patrick provided 36 years of service as visiting Otolaryngologist to Prince of Wales and Bankstown Hospitals. His main interest was the Head and Neck Oncology Unit where he worked with Drs Smee, Baldwin and Kwok.

In 1994 Dr Bridger and Dr Robert Smee organised the 2nd World Congress on Laryngeal Cancer in Sydney. Almost 900 delegates from 43 countries attended and the Proceedings were published in a book titled “Laryngeal Cancer”. The conference and book remain outstanding milestones in the progress of cancer treatment.

Patrick published extensively on laryngeal, ear and nasopharyngeal cancer and sinus melanoma. He was a pioneer in craniofacial resection for paranasal sinus cancer and his article in the US Journal “Head and Neck” showed unparalleled survival. He developed operations for septal perforations and hereditary nasal telangiectasia.

Professor Bridger has contributed to 54 Australian and 24 international publications and has been a keynote or invited speaker at dozens of international meetings. In 1992, he was RACS Visiting Professor at the Malaysian College of Surgeons meeting in Kuala Lumpur. In 1996, at the 4th International Head and Neck Conference in Toronto, Canada he was sponsored by the New York Head and Neck Society to give the keynote address on laryngeal cancer. In 1997, he was visiting Professor at the Memorial Hospital New York. At the 5th International Head and Neck Congress he hosted a “Lunch with the Professor” presentation on infratemporal fossa tumours; in 2001, he was examiner at the University of Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Patrick Bridger has been referee for professorial appointments to universities in Singapore, Toronto, Madrid, New York, Malaysia and New Zealand. He is on the editorial board of American Journal “Current Opinion in Otolaryngology and Head and Neck Surgery”. For 17 years he was a faculty member at the Vanderbilt University Head and Neck Meeting in Colorado.

Patrick has demonstrated commitment to postgraduate education, conducting many workshops. Three registrars won the Jean Littlejohn award for research under his stewardship and he trained fellows from Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Malaysia and the USA.

In 2002, Patrick was appointed Conjoint Associate Professor at Prince of Wales Hospital and University of NSW. He has been a senior examiner for the College, President of the Australian Society of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery and inaugural President of the A & NZ Head and Neck Society.

His dedication to the profession was recognised when, in 1995, the University of NSW awarded M.D.honoris causa.

Professor Bridger is now retired, however, his son Andrew, also an Otolaryngologist, keeps him informed.

Citation kindly provided by William Coman FRACS

ASOHNS Medal Winners 2009

Three members, Drs Malcolm Baxter, Kevin Holwell and Jack Kennedy, were awarded Society Medals for their outstanding services to ASOHNS and Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery.

The 2009 Society Medals were presented at the ASOHNS Annual General Meeting held on 26 May as part of the Annual Scientific Meeting in Queensland.

Society Medal 2009 for Distinguished Service to ASOHNS

Jack Kennedy

Jack Kennedy has done a great deal to promote ORL in Victoria and Australia.

At a time in the 1970s and 1980s when there was a dearth of Australian papers at our ASMs Jack regularly presented good quality papers. He was also very active in teaching and his drive, enthusiasm and compassion for those less fortunate had a significant impact on trainees.

He was a leading figure in attracting people into the profession and was responsible for head and neck cancer treatment in Victoria being recognised as being within the delivery of our services.
For ASOHNS his work as Chairman of the Fees Subcommittee in ensuring the ongoing welfare of surgeons’ fees and the services for which could be rightfully and appropriately remunerated, has had a lasting impact on the Society and all of its members.

Jack has been very busy and effective defending the favourable fees structure negotiated previously by George Gray - in particular doing a lot of good work refuting the relative values study, which the government had established and which had a very unrealistic view of practice costs.

Jack’s contribution has had a significant and lasting impact on the Society and its members.

**Society Medal for Distinguished Contribution to the Art and Science of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery.**

**Malcolm Baxter**
Malcolm Baxter has unselfishly devoted his time to the Pacific Islands region, making numerous visits to the islands over 24 years. It is largely through his voluntary visits that the current RACS Pacific Island Project has expanded and been maintained.

Malcolm began his long association with the Pacific Islands in 1985 in response to an advertisement for medical help in the Solomon Islands.

Malcolm Baxter accepts his award from President Stuart Miller

Since then he developed a committed and long relationship with the Seventh Day Adventist Mission in the Solomon Islands.

Through his association with Rotary Clubs in the Latrobe Valley, he was able to sponsor a trainee Solomon surgeon, Carl Susunagara, to Victoria in 1996.

The College of Surgeons was lobbied to formalise ENT services in the Pacific Islands. Our New Zealand colleagues already had established visiting services to Polynesia.

After the intervention in East Timor the College sent him to Dili in 2001. ENT outreach expanded into East Timor guided by his experience.

Always supported by his wife Lorraine who used her considerable nursing experience helping him in both the ENT clinics and the operating theatres, Mal has been generous and committed to his mission.

He is a worthy recipient of this recognition.

**Kevin Holwell**
Kevin Holwell began doing outreach work in 1994 with a visit to Vietnam. Since then he has made at least one visit annually to Vietnam or Cambodia to continue this work – always self funded.

In Vietnam he set up a teaching facility in Danang and was instrumental in arranging finance for an ENT ward in Danang hospital.

Kevin Holwell accepts his award.

In Cambodia Kevin worked with Christian Mission International and Rotary to establish an excellent program of primary health care and has involved surgeons from Australia, Holland and France in this work. Again this work was undertaken at his own expense.

Kevin has encouraged others to do similar work and is an excellent example of selfless motivation.

He is a quiet achiever and a worthy recipient of the ASOHNS Society Medal.
The 59th Annual Scientific Meeting of our society was held at the Gold Coast from 23rd to 27th May, and was from all reports a resounding success.

The meeting was preceded by two pre-conference courses held at the Griffith Medical School, one on Temporal Bone Surgery and the other on Facial Plastics. Both were fully subscribed and were evaluated by participants as worthwhile and valuable.

The invited guests to the conference were Professor Thomas Linder from Lucerne, Professor Jesus Medina from Oklahoma, and Mr David Roberts from London, each representing one aspect of the speciality, and views from different parts of the world. Each speaker was outstanding in his presentation and in conviviality, which was a hallmark of the conference.

More than 300 ENT surgeons registered for the meeting, and there were more than 500 attendees overall. The theme of the conference was ‘ENT for the Next Generation’ and this was highlighted throughout with all speakers concentrating on future developments. All four breakfast sessions were fully attended and greatly appreciated by attendees.

The Trade Exhibition was extensive and comprehensive, particularly in these economic times, and earned the gratitude of the organising committee. The exhibit was well attended during the meal and tea breaks, and all exhibitors were satisfied with their involvement.

In conjunction with the ASM, a Practice Managers course and an ENT Nurses conference were held, and both were well attended, both parties being invited to attend our Plenary Sessions. The Practice Managers course was highlighted by a luncheon with our ‘Madame Butterfly’, Susie O’Neill.

Socially, it was, as always, a very successful meeting. The golf tournament was held at The Glades, sponsored by Doc’s Proplugs, and won by Ngalu Havea and Bill Hurst. Their names will be the first to go on the new trophy to replace the one lost; the new trophy will have enough space to last till 2033!!

The highlight of the social program was undoubtedly the Gala Dinner, which was a magnificent success, great meals, great music, and a great entertainment package with ‘The Doctor’ (comedian Scott Williams) predominating.

Thanks are due to the professional conference organisers, Barry Neame and Michelle Naylor of Consec, who were so professional, approachable, knowledgeable and helpful and to the committee who laboured so long and so hard to make the meeting such a success.

David Cronin
Conference Convener
ASOHNS 2010 Diamond Jubilee ASM

The ASOHNS 2010 Diamond Jubilee Annual Scientific Meeting to be held in Sydney in March will be a very special occasion. ASOHNS promotes excellence in Otorhinolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery (ORL-HNS) in Australia. The theme of next year’s meeting is The Cutting Edge in ORL-HNS with a focus on up-to-the-minute ideas and treatments.

An outstanding meeting program and satellite workshops will cover topics in otology, neurotology, rhinology and skull base, head and neck, paediatrics, facial plastics, ORL-allergy and medico-legal impairment.

Four international speakers have been invited, including: Professors Bruce J Gantz and Bradley F Marple from the USA; Associate Professor Dharmbir S Sethi from Singapore and Dr John Chaplin from New Zealand.

As we will be celebrating ASOHNS’ Diamond Jubilee, delegates and partners will have the chance to renew and make new friendships with colleagues while enjoying the vibrant harbour city of Sydney.

This meeting is a ‘must’. It will be the ENT meeting of the year so book the 27 – 31 March 2010 into your calendar now.

Brian Williams
Conference Convenor

ASOHNS Journal Update

Earlier this year members and trainees were advised that the Australian Journal of Otolaryngology had been re-launched and would be published as a six-monthly, 100-page supplement to the American journal Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery (OHNS).

ASOHNS President Stuart Miller announced that the Society’s publishing contract with OHNS had been re-negotiated and this would now allow ASOHNS to produce a supplement that would be more relevant and beneficial to its members.

Members and trainees have free online access to the American journal and the supplement.

All ASOHNS members and trainees who supplied their email addresses have been sent an email containing a message from the Australian Journal supplement Editor, A/Prof. Simon Carney and the journal staff of the AAO-HNS journal, Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, advising online access details

A stand-alone hard copy supplement will be produced also for posting to members and trainees.

Dr Miller emphasised the importance of having articles for publication for the Journal to be a success and encouraged members and trainees to support ASOHNS and the Journal by submitting articles.

Details on submission are outlined in the Journal section of the ASOHNS website and A/Prof Carney is happy for anyone to contact him directly via the detail below should they wish to discuss submitting an article.

Phone: +61 8 8277 0288
Email: australianjournal@ent-surgery.com
CPD Update

Professional Development and Standards Board

2007 CPD Program

Ninety-three per cent of RACS fellows with a continuing CPD program requirement for 2007 have made a return and of those participants, 99 per cent have complied with the annual requirements.

The overall compliance rate stands at 94 per cent, which is in keeping with the previous year’s 2006 CPD program.

Of those fellows with a 2008 CPD requirement, 16.5 per cent are using the CPD online diary for 2008.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program – discussion paper.

As always the CPD program continues to be a source of interest as to its relevance. As such, Dr Pam Montgomery, Director of Fellowship and Standards continues to take an active role in ensuring that the program continues to meet the needs of Fellows and the responsibilities of the College in ensuring a transparent and educationally sound program.

A review of the CPD program is currently underway to develop the policy for the 2010/2012 triennium.

As RACS Fellows and, in particular, ASOHNS members are aware, the aim of the recertification program is to advance the individual surgeon’s surgical knowledge and skills for the benefit of the patient and to provide Fellows with tangible evidence of participation in, and compliance with, the CPD program by awarding a certificate of continuing professional development.

After consultation with specialty societies, the feedback by and large is positive for the current criteria for recertification of Fellows. As noted by Dr Montgomery, CPD is considered to be the best mechanism by which doctors keep their practice up-to-date and encompasses all the ways in which doctors learn after completion of their formal training.

She also reports that given the amount of biomedical knowledge is said to double every 20 years and that new surgical techniques are constantly being introduced, it is evident that a doctor’s practice could rapidly become outdated without involvement in CPD.

Practice visits and CPD

The New Zealand Medical Council proposed the use of practice visits as part of continuing professional development.

Dr Maxwell, the representative of the New Zealand Orthopaedic Association, reported in the February PDSB meeting of their use of practice visits.

He reported that the practice visits were costly both in dollar terms and in time, were generally unwieldy and that some issues could not be identified by those practice visits.

These included behavioural issues, competence, substance abuse and whether the surgeon had suitable insight.

Their experience was that if practice visits as part of CPD were to occur, then it should be done by a central body (in their case, the New Zealand Medical Council) and not by the individual subspecialties.

The Code on Interactions with the Medical Industry

As discussed in previous correspondence, the development of a code on interaction with the medical industry is strongly supported by the RACS council and is an important initiative that will receive considerable external scrutiny.

This code is separate to a review of the wider College code of conduct that will take place in mid-2009.

As noted previously, a surgeon’s interactions with the medical industry must be governed by three overriding principles:-

1. The best interest of the patient (s) is paramount.

2. Transparency.

3. Acknowledgement of perception as an issue.

The code on interactions with the medical industry has been discussed by ASOHNS and as noted by Dr Stuart Miller, President of ASOHNS, ASOHNS is comfortable with the direction of the code and its current wording.

Douglas S Buchanan
Chair, CPD Sub-Committee
IFOS Rep Handover

At the Brazilian AGM I will complete my term as the Oceania Representative on the IFOS Executive. The Federal Council has nominated Vince Cousins as my successor.

The Executive meet annually to conduct the affairs of IFOS between World Conferences. The venue varies. It is usually by invitation in conjunction with a National or Regional Conference. Despite the intention of IFOS to have a worldwide influence, it has neither the human nor financial resources to do so properly.

Finance is a continual problem being almost entirely derived from its share of the gross World Congress income plus annual national membership subscriptions, which are often in arrears. To assist, IFOS has co-opted as representatives ENT specialists already appointed to other committees, eg; Dr. G. Meyer (US) on WHO, Tobacco Control Committee (Oncology) and Dr. W. Fokkens (NETH) on GARD (Rhinology). It also has an association with Hearing International. It is promoting its own strategy for Hearing For All developed with the RAND Corporation, for which a nomination has been requested from each National Society to lobby local politicians.

The Executive discussed submitting a new resolution regarding hearing loss prevention to the WHO in 2013, the last being endorsed in 1995, but concluded that it was impractical to do so at this time.

However, despite its problems IFOS membership continues to grow in part due to the newly emergent European nations.

I have found my time on the Executive both enjoyable and instructive. I trust that my replacement will have at least an equally rewarding experience in these changing times.

Raymond L. Carroll

Website Use Rising

The level of ASOHNS website usage continues to rise.

Since the website re-design more than a year ago, data collected from Google Analytics has shown that the level of usage has increased substantially. Currently more than 120 visits are made per day compared with 90-plus at the end of 2008.

Using a one-month sample (6 March – 5 April, 2009) a massive 3,685 visits were recorded on the viewing 15,045 pages.

Most significant was the average time spent on the site 00.04.09, which is 70 per cent longer than would be expected for a website of this type, demonstrating that visitors are finding items of interest.

Another important finding is that 58 per cent were new visits, indicating that the site is appealing to a widening audience. The following aspects are proving among the most popular on the site:

• **Current news items for members** – keeping up-to-date with ASOHNS initiatives and activities.

• **Case Studies for the Trainees** – located in the Trainees section and also available to members who can access this section with their login – this will continue to be improved and regularly updated.

• **Find A Surgeon** – a valuable resource for the general public and therefore important that you update your member listing.

There are further ways members can use the website as an important resource (see article in box) and any suggestions for future improvements are welcome.

Mark Carmichael

‘Discussion Forum’ the sleeping giant

The ‘Discussion Forum’ section of the website is currently an untapped resource - but one with a great deal of potential benefit, particularly for those members living and practising in rural areas.

An online discussion forum provides opportunities for members to network with other members to exchange ideas and information.

Those members who are located in regional areas often have limited access to regular CPD events held in the city areas and can be professionally isolated.

We encourage members to visit this section and open up items of professional interest for discussion. You can view the section without logging in but need your login details to respond to, or introduce a topic.

Obituary - Dr Chris O’Brien AO

by William B Coman AM, MD

Chris O’Brien was educated at the Marist Brothers College in Parramatta and Sydney University and received surgical training in Australia, United Kingdom and the United States of America. His academic and surgical career has been marked with research, publications and teaching. He has lived the surgeon’s life and unfortunately his life has been claimed by the most relentlessly persistent of head and neck tumours.

Chris achieved celebrity status by virtue of his many appearances in the television reality show ‘RPA’. This show demonstrated the compassion, empathy and concern he felt for his fellow human beings, his patients afflicted with cancer.

These qualities endeared him to thousands of viewers who saw in Chris the committed and caring doctor they would like to have treat themselves when required.

He devoted his considerable talent and his energetic optimism to assist these patients through their ordeal with cancer.

With great vision and dogged determination he set about establishing a Sydney Cancer Centre, which would provide specialist care for patients with cancer.

Chris was all about helping his fellow human beings with care and foresight.

When confronted with his own predicament he unhesitatingly chose to deal with the matter head on.

With indomitable will he displayed fearlessness and resolution and did not take a backward step in his effort to overcome the disease.

The courage, caring attitude and devotion of Chris O’Brien has been matched by his wonderful wife Gail and his children Adam, Juliet and James who offered him total support during his life and his last illness.

His immediate family confronted his illness with great valour and support. Gail is a most caring and responsible mother who has been devoted to the care and upbringing of their children.

Chris has left a great legacy in his department at the RPA with eminent surgeons, Doctors Kerwin Shannon, Anthony Clifford and Jonathan Clark.

We, his colleagues and friends, are all the better for knowing Chris O’Brien.

Chris’ spirit is embodied in the words of Robert Louis Stevenson:

‘Every heart that has beat strongly and cheerfully has left a hopeful impulse behind it in the world, and bettered the tradition of mankind.’

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Vale

Jack Lancken
1925 – 2008

The Society extends condolences to the family of Jack Lancken, formerly of Bowral, NSW. Dr Lancken was a member since 1963.
New Members 2009

Dayan CHANDRASEKARA (Vic)
Paul GERARCHI (NSW)
Philip JUMEAU (Qld)
Jonathan KONG (NSW)
Yuresh NAIDOO (NSW)
Ana NAIMAN (Tas)
Tobias PINCOCK (NSW)
Caroline RYAN (Vic)
Craig SEMPLE (Vic)
Nicola SLEE (Qld)
Piera TAYLOR (NSW)
Neil THOMSON (NSW)
Andrew WILLS (NSW)

Fellowship Examination Passes

The following trainees have passed their Fellowship Examination:

Deborah AMOTT (Vic)
James BOWMAN (Qld)
Benjamin DIXON (Vic)
James EARNSHAW (Qld)
Alethea GROBLER (SA)
Raefe GUNDELACH (Qld)
Payal MUKHERJEE (NSW)
Leo PANG (NSW)
Damien PHILLIPS (Vic)
Jamie PRIESTLEY (Vic)
Catherine SINCLAIR (Vic)
Mark SMITH (NSW)
Joanna WALTON (NSW)