From Your President

Changes
The first half of 2012 has seen some significant changes in the Society’s management and governance.

As incoming president, on behalf of the Society, I express our sincere thanks to Dr Michael Jay for his tremendous contribution during his recent term as President. I look forward to continuing to work with Michael in his role as Immediate Past President and benefiting from his experience and wise counsel.

My thanks also go to Dr Michael Dobson who has served as Federal Secretary for the past seven years and is now retiring from that role. Apart from all the other duties he undertook during that time, Michael supervised the upgrade of ASOHNS website from its original presentation, significantly improving the site and laying the underpinnings of a website which can be regularly updated.

We have also greatly appreciated the valued contribution to the Society made by other retiring Council members – Drs Robert Black (RACS Council Representative), Stuart Miller (Immediate Past President) and Brian Williams (Chair, Policy and Procedures Sub-Committee).

Welcome
I’m sure all members will join me in welcoming our newly-elected Vice-President, Dr Neil Vallance, and Federal Secretary, Dr Chris Que Hee. I look forward to working with them as fellow members on the Federal Executive and Council and benefiting from their support and advice in the next couple of years.

Other changes have occurred in some of the State Executive roles and you will find a list on page 2.

CEO and Staff Changes
Another significant change this year was Mark Carmichael’s resignation as Chief Executive Officer. Mark was appointed to the inaugural CEO role in early 2008 and was a personable and extremely competent overseer of the Society’s secretariat. He has left to take up a similar position with the Australian Society of Anaesthetists and we wish him well.

Mark was farewelled during the Gala Dinner at the recent ASM in Adelaide with a choral tribute admirably performed by Michael Jay, Simon Carney, Darcy Economos, David Close and Tricia MacFarlane.

We took the opportunity to review the future role and responsibilities of our CEO and other secretariat staff roles before appointing a successor to Mark. More information on management and staff changes is outlined on page 3.

Successful 2012 ASOHNS ASM
The 2012 ASOHNS ASM in Adelaide in April this year was a highly successful meeting and, again on behalf of all members, I extend our gratitude and congratulations to the Convenor, Darcy Economos, Scientific Convenor, Simon Carney and those on the convening and scientific convening committees: Kym Diamantis, Stephen Floreani, Michael Jay, Suren Krishnan, Anthony Morley, Eng Ooi, John Tomich and Ian Wong.

This team produced a scientific program of the highest quality, combined with relevant satellite meetings and a very enjoyable social program. We have received very positive feedback about the meeting.

Awards and Member Recognition
We were pleased to present the Society Medal for Distinguished Contribution to the Art and Science of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery to Professor Ron Gristwood of South Australia and to honour Mr Hugh Millar with Life Membership in recognition for their respective outstanding services to the OHNS specialty and Society. You can read more about their contributions on page 9.

Our congratulations go to Paul Fagan AM and Robert Black OAM, who were honoured in this year’s Australia Day Awards. ASOHNS is proud that their contributions over many years have been nationally recognised as helping the whole community.

We also congratulate our Honorary Member, Prof. Michael Halmagyi who received an Order of Australia in the recent Queen’s Birthday Honours. Our profession owes much to his achievements in the vestibular system. I’m sure many members and trainees appreciate Michael’s generosity in sharing these with us in many forums over the years.

ASOHNS Member Logo
An “ASOHNS Member” logo design has been developed in both colour and monochrome artwork for members to use on both printed material and online. The logo artwork can be downloaded from the Members section of the ASOHNS website. There are guidelines for the logo’s use to which members must comply. More information has been emailed to members.

Surgical Trainees
In acquiring assets an audit trail of income and investment is essential. Our greatest ENT asset is our workforce. However, tracking the development of our Trainees has not always been robust. It has been agreed that Supervisors of Training will record their mid-term and end of term assessment meetings with the Trainee and submit the recording to the Surgical Education and Training Manager at ASOHNS HQ for filing.

Continued page 2
Council Meeting Update

The ASOHNS Council met in late March just before the 2012 ASM in Adelaide. Among the issues discussed were:

- **Chair Aboriginal Health Subcommittee**: Clinical A/Prof. Kelvin Kong has accepted the invitation to take on this Chairmanship.
- **RACS Council Representative**: Dr Rob Black's time expired in May. Subsequently Mr Neil Vallance has been elected.
- **Discussion on the use of Co-Phenylcaine**: Consequent to an adverse result from the use of Co-phenylcaine, not by an ENT surgeon, Council noted that the Coroner in Victoria has made a recommendation that the use and the dose of all medications (including topical medications) for an operation be written in the medical record.
- **Treasurer's Report**: Honorary Treasurer, Dr David Veivers, reported that the annual financial audit was unqualified and positive. The Society’s finances are strong.
- **CPD Sub-Committee Report**: Chair, Mr Malcolm Baxter, reported that 92% ASOHNS members were compliant for 2010.
- **ASM 2013**: 16 – 20 March, Perth. Convenor, Mr Philip Grey, reported that planning is well advanced. Accommodation can be very hard to get in Perth and early booking would be recommended.
- **ASM 2014**: 30 March - 1 April Brisbane: Dr Roger Grigg will be Convenor.

Under our Memorandum of Understanding with RACS, ASOHNS plays a large role in delivering services to Trainees. This is a living document and our role continues to evolve. This also is requiring more administrative input from ASOHNS HQ.

The Federal and State governments are re-negotiating health care delivery. I am within a further, more local, change being on staff at one of the two children's hospitals in Sydney which are being amalgamated: two hospitals, two locations but one Board and the Executives splitting themselves between two sides of Sydney.

Whatever our particular super specialised interests, ASOHNS must remain the umbrella organisation for ENT surgeons. It is essential that ASOHNS is publically recognised for this and is able to work with other organisations from a united position on behalf of all ENT Surgeons.

I look forward to promoting this during my term as President of ASOHNS.

**John Curotta**
President

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**Council Members**

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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
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<td>President</td>
<td>Dr John Curotta</td>
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<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Mr Neil Vallance</td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Dr David Veivers</td>
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<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Dr Christopher Que Hee</td>
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<td>Advisor to the Executive Committee</td>
<td>Mr Cameron Bracks</td>
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<td>Immediate Past President</td>
<td>Dr Michael Jay</td>
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<td>Chair, Board OHNS, RACS</td>
<td>Dr Francis Lannigan</td>
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<td>RACS Council Representative</td>
<td>Mr Neil Vallance</td>
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<td>QLD State Representative</td>
<td>Dr Larry Kalish</td>
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<td>SA State Representative</td>
<td>Dr Andrew Lomas</td>
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<td>Tasmania State Representative</td>
<td>Dr Kym Diamantis</td>
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<td>Vic State Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>WA State Representative</td>
<td>Mr Michael Wilson</td>
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<td>Mr Philip Grey</td>
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**State Executives**

- **NSW & ACT**
  - Chair: Dr Larry Kalish
  - Vice-Chair: Dr Phillip Chang
  - Secretary and Treasurer: Dr Yuresh Naidoo

- **Queensland**
  - Chair: Dr Andrew Lomas
  - Vice-Chair: Dr Roger Grigg
  - Secretary: Dr Tony Parker

- **South Australia**
  - Chair: Dr Kym Diamantis
  - Vice-Chair: Dr Suren Krishnan
  - Secretary: Dr David Wabnitz
  - Treasurer: Dr Ian Wong

- **Tasmania**
  - Chair: currently vacant
  - Secretary and Treasurer: Mr David Merry

- **Victoria**
  - Chair: Mr Michael Wilson
  - Secretary: Mr Perry Burstin
  - Treasurer: Mr Avdo Zahirovic

- **Western Australia**
  - Chair: Mr Philip Grey
  - Secretary: Mr Paul Yuen
  - Treasurer: Dr Richard Lewis
Staff Changes at ASOHNS

Following the resignation of inaugural Chief Executive Officer, Mark Carmichael, we have reviewed the management and staff positions of the ASOHNS secretariat.

We have now appointed Mrs Lorna Watson to the position of Executive & Finance Officer.

Lorna has been working as the Society’s contract accountant for the past four years and has a good understanding of the Society’s operations and her experience and wise counsel was noted.

She was educated and qualified as a chartered accountant in Scotland and worked both in Scotland and Australia for one of the “big 4” accounting firms.

Subsequently, her roles included finance manager for a software development company and then, with her husband, created a very successful print management business, ultimately with some 90 employees.

Lorna will work three to four days per week, with responsibility for the Society’s financial aspects and will work under my direction regarding ASOHNS Federal Executive and Federal Council, Governance, statutory reporting and policy and business matters.

We will review this position after a six-month period.

Carole Gridley, who has been the Society’s Membership Officer in a part time capacity for several years, has a deep understanding of the Society; the benefits of Carole’s expertise will be optimised in her enhanced role as full time Membership Manager responsible for all membership operational matters.

Surgical Education and Training Officer, Mary-Jean Newton, will be leaving ASOHNS and moving to Perth with her husband who has been transferred.

Mary-Jean has been administering the Trainee program, liaising closely with the OHNS Board, RACS and the trainees. She has been a highly efficient and very personable employee and we are sorry to lose her.

However, we are pleased to welcome Mary-Jean’s replacement, Ian Denney, who has recently joined ASOHNS. Ian’s background includes managing education programs for medical societies.

John Curotta
President

Journal Update

ASOHNS and JLO

You will remember the short engagement ASOHNS’ journal had with the ‘white’ journal a couple of years ago. The efforts expended by many of our most experienced and academically recognised Members were enormous.

Now ASOHNS’ journal is engaged to the blue JLO. Like all good partnerships, success will happen not just with constant expressions of commitment but with actions.

The ASOHNS-JLO relationship is quite fragile. ASOHNS members so far have not been delivering sufficient suitable content on a sufficiently regular basis to reassure JLO Editors of the Aussie commitment. This means that ASOHNS Journal Supplement has but another year or so to prove itself or this engagement similarly will fail.

While print journals seem to be in their twilight, developing a sustainable business model while maintaining a robust peer review system is turning out to be difficult.

Our Journal has a long history but has always been bedevilled by the Catch-22 of our most robust research seeking out journals with a ‘high impact factor’ and our Journal not being able to attain a high impact factor without those articles. The links with these substantial journals were designed to overcome this.

Please remember to seriously consider the ASOHNS Supplement to JLO for your next research article.

John Curotta
President
I’m a third generation Sydney-sider, born in Sydney and brought up in Bondi Junction then Strathfield. My father was a pharmacist but I don’t recall having any particular interest in medicine at an early age – although I do remember going under ether to have my tonsils out at age four.

Watching the creams and ointments being made up with the mortar and pestle and the giving of advice before the days of Medibank and Medicare probably guided me toward medicine. I can still see and smell the square bottles of chemicals in the dispensary.

As a student attending ENT Clinics at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital I was so impressed by the engagement, skill and civility of that superb otologist Barrie Scrivener that ENT came on my radar as a goal to pursue.

However, the road to surgery was interrupted by a BSc Med year in immunology and an elective at MD Anderson Institute in Houston. The major outcome of this was the realisation that research is not my long suit.

When I encountered microsurgery of the ear I knew I had found it.

I undertook my ENT training at St Vincent’s Hospital in Sydney under the supervision of John Tonkin, Ray Carroll and Paul Fagan. I then spent a year in the UK completing an ENT Fellowship at the Royal Ear Hospital, London.

I had to return to Sydney, as my father suffered a stroke at age 53, which left him hemiplegic. As the oldest of four siblings, I was keen to get back to my parents and family. Another reason, perhaps, was that I missed the sunshine!

Paediatrics is a strong area of interest as I like working with children. I have always believed that the more you treat children like adults the less adults will act like children.

I commenced practice at Westmead Hospital in 1981. In 1995 the Children’s Hospital moved from Camperdown to Westmead and I joined the staff there. In 2008 I closed my private practice of 28 years and I am now full time Staff Specialist at The Children’s Hospital at Westmead.

In the meantime, I met my wife, Trish, on the tennis court. While my tennis-playing prowess has advanced no further over the years, the marriage has flourished. We have a daughter and son, both aged in their twenties. Our daughter is a musician, currently studying in Germany, and our son works in the IT industry.

About four years ago we moved from our large home and garden in Castle Hill – a wonderful place to bring up children – to an apartment in Pyrmont. We are thoroughly enjoying the proximity to the city for its musical concerts and theatre and for me, public transport accessibility to the hospital and now also the ASOHNS office.

Career highlights mostly encompass my work in office bearer roles for ASOHNS. I have held several roles in both the Federal Executive and NSW Section Executive during the past 10 years, including that of Federal Secretary in the years 2000-2005. Key tasks during that time included developing the ASOHNS Constitution with Bob Payten in 2003 and instigating the ASOHNS website in 2002.

I am looking forward to my term as Federal President. I know that I’m following in the footsteps of so many highly competent and hardworking predecessors. All previous presidents have contributed considerable time and effort to the Society’s governance and to representing the OHN specialty. Some Past Presidents’ contributions were especially significant, including that of Cam Bracks, who was instrumental in giving ASOHNS’ small secretariat a status and structure that was built upon further by subsequent office bearers.
I have seen so much generosity of time and spirit provided by so many of my colleagues, yet so few know about it. One of my aims is to raise the profile of our specialty generally. Indeed this was the primary purpose of the original website. We are planning a further upgrade, to be supervised by our current Federal Secretary, Christopher Que Hee, with assistance and input from ASOHNS staff and members.

Having reviewed and revised the roles of CEO and administrative staff for the Society (details are outlined elsewhere in this newsletter), I am enthusiastic about working with my fellow Federal Council members, state executives, OHNS Board members and ASOHNS staff during the next two years. We intend to provide better services and support to members, more information about CPD compliance, more publicity about member activities (such as members’ Outreach activities) and aspire to improve cohesion within the specialty.

John Curotta
President

New ASOHNS Member Logo Design Available

Late last year the Council approved a new design for an ASOHNS Member logo for both print and online purposes. Artwork has been prepared in both black and white and colour and with versions specific to business card, letterhead, email and website.

Members who are financial and eligible (that is, Life Members, Ordinary Members and Associate Members) are welcome to download and use the logo artwork from the Members section of the website.

There are Guidelines for use, which must be read and adhered to, and these are located in the relevant folder in the Members section also.

Call For Nominations For 2013 Society Awards

ASOHNS is now calling for nominations for 2013 Society 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 Executive & Finance Officer by post, email or fax by Friday September 21, 2012.

Nominations will be considered by the Awards Sub-Committee who will submit recommendations to the Council at their November meeting.

Those selected will be awarded their medallions at next year’s ASM to be held in Perth.

For more information on the Awards and previous Award winners, click on the link to the Members section of the ASOHNS website


(Note: you will need your login details to access this item)
The 62nd Annual Scientific meeting of ASOHNS was held in Adelaide from March 31, in brilliant autumn weather at the Adelaide Convention Centre. More than 470 delegates from Australia and overseas attended the meeting, which proved to be an exciting and truly international conference, fulfilling the “Global Perspectives” theme of the meeting.

Scientific program and satellite workshops

The invited keynote speakers lived up to all of our expectations and, in addition to a large contingent of overseas speakers and Australian faculty, presented perspectives in a really diverse scientific program. The invited keynote speakers were Eric Genden from New York, Tony Narula from London, Rodney Schlosser from South Carolina, Edward Weaver from Seattle, and Gerard O’Donoghue from Nottingham.

Eric Genden’s presentations were of the highest quality. In the opening plenary session he discussed the human papilloma virus epidemic and associated oropharyngeal tumours, with a comprehensive overview of their management, including transoral robotic surgery.

Rodney Schlosser gave an exceptional presentation on the impact of technology in rhinological surgical decision making, as well as superb workshops in endoscopic sinus surgery.

Rodney Schlosser shared his enormous otological experience, which was particularly appreciated in his presentation of past, present, as well as future expectations in cochlear implantation surgery.

Tony Narula was always a thought provoking and highly entertaining speaker, particularly on his discussion, along with Adelaide Surgeon Robert Padbury, on ensuring quality in our surgical practice.

Edward Weaver, arguably one of the world’s foremost surgeons in the field of obstructed sleep apnoea, gave the Sam Robertson Memorial Lecture and an extremely erudite presentation on evidence-based sleep surgery.

Perhaps the highlight of the opening Plenary Session, however, was the inspirational lecture by Prof. Bill Coman on his career in head and neck surgery, which delighted all members of the audience.

The Scientific Meeting was preceded and followed by workshops, all of which were well attended and appeared to satisfy the requirements of the majority of attendees.

The meeting on Aboriginal Ear Disease was opened with a “welcome to the country” by Uncle Lewis O’Brien, elder of the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains, who also offered salient advice to the group in the management of chronic ear disease in indigenous communities.

The multi-disciplinary meeting was attended by State politicians, with a message from the Federal Minister of Indigenous Affairs.

All the talks were well received, particularly the state of the nation overview of current otitis media treatment services across the states and territories.

The meeting was also highlighted by an art exhibition of works of many prominent Aboriginal artists from the APY Lands who were delighted by encouraging sales of their work throughout the course of the conference.

The Advanced Temporal Bone Course (a two-day course on the Friday and Saturday) was also well attended, and involved dissection in the Temporal Bone Laboratory and superb audiovisual presentation of live cadaveric demonstration by an outstanding international faculty, including Gerard O’Donoghue, Shakeel Saeed, Chris Raine and Iqbal Khan from the United Kingdom, Barbara Wollenberg from Germany, and the expert Australian faculty. This satellite meeting concluded with a great dinner at the historic Ayres House Restaurant.

Suren Krishnan presented a Transoral Robotic Surgical Course, demonstrating live robotic surgery in the management of head and neck tumours, with the assistance of Eric Genden and the Australian Faculty.

Steve Floreani presented a Rhinoplasty and Facial Plastics Course in the exquisite setting inside the Art Gallery of South Australia, assisted by Jonathan Sykes from the United States, and an Australian and New Zealand faculty.

Simon Carney, the meeting’s Scientific Convener presented a post-meeting satellite on Balloon Dilatation Technology in ENT, with invited faculty Ray Weiss and David White from the United States, as well as New Zealand and Australian experts.

This meeting examined the role of balloons in sinus disease, as well as upper airway and oesophagus, with the assistance of cadaveric material, at the University of Adelaide Anatomy Laboratory.

The workshops in practice management and information technology in clinical practice were well received, particularly
by consultants and registrars, keen to make the most of software in clinical practice, as were the splendid instructional sessions on how to get a clinical paper published and impressive scientific presentations.

The concurrent instructional sessions format provided a smorgasbord of options which, along with more than 100 free papers and posters, more than adequately satisfied registrants’ requirements on early feedback of the scientific component of the meeting.

Six breakfast sessions were included on the program. The sessions were included in registration and were completely booked out. They included workshops on tonsillectomy, parotidectomy, immunotherapy, sleep surgery, paediatric otitis media, and topical treatment in chronic sinusitis.

Social Program

There were many high spots in the social program, including the welcoming cocktail party, held on the riverbank against the backdrop of the autumn Adelaide sunset, with gourmet South Australian food and wines, as well as wine tasting from regional centres, which set the tone for the usual conviviality of the group at the annual scientific meeting.

The Gala Dinner was the social highlight however, with a fine degustation menu and South Australian wines showcased by social convenor John Tomich. Delegates were also well entertained by world-renowned young violinist Annabelle Travers, master of ceremonies and media identity Mark Aiston, and music from E-Type Jazz, and culminating in the Adelaide Oto Choir, led by talented songwriter ASOHNS member, David Close.

The Gala Dinner also provided an opportunity to thank our outgoing President, Michael Jay, for his wonderful service to the Society, and welcome John Curotta to the helm. Significant service to the Society by Ronald Gristwood was also recognised, as well as Life Membership presented to Hugh Millar.

The ENT Nursing Meeting certainly appreciated the quality of Australian and overseas speakers who offered their expertise, and the nursing group enjoyed the opportunity to join us and also attend the cocktail reception and gala dinner events.

Trade Exhibition

The Trade Exhibition was extensive, comprehensively booking out all available space, and well attended, satisfying all the exhibitors involved.

Overall, the meeting proved an exciting and rewarding experience for all those who attended.

Thanks are due to the Organising Committee, Barry Neame and Kellie Singer of Consec, the professional conference organiser, ASOHNS secretariat staff, and particularly all the Australian and international presenters, delegates and their partners who attended.

The next ASOHNS ASM will be held from March 16 – 20, 2013 in Perth.

Darcy Economos
Conference Convenor
2012 Society Medal

for Distinguished Contribution to the Art and Science of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery

Professor Ronald Gristwood AM

Prof. Ron Gristwood’s distinguished career began in Scotland where both his Under Graduate and Post Graduate training were in Edinburgh before he immigrated to Australia in 1957.

He began publishing in 1958 with his article on “Nerve Deafness Associated with Sarcoidosis” and has continued publishing, with his latest article last year in the Annals on “The Effects of Fenestration Size and Piston Diameter on the Outcomes of Stapes Surgery for Clinical Otosclerosis”.

In between he has published another 48 articles, almost exclusively in otology, but also on statistics. In was in this area that he brought a scientific rigour to the results of surgery with his co-author Venables, which had not previously been seen.

He has received other honours, including the Sir George Halliday medal, Affiliate Professor of the University of Adelaide, a Master of Surgery and an AM (Member of the Order of Australia) for Services to Otolaryngology.

He instigated Post Graduate training programs in Adelaide and helped set up the national training program in our specialty. He was Chairman of the Surgical Board from 1980 to 1984 and was an examiner in the specialty for 10 years.

New Life Member

Mr Hugh Millar

Hugh Millar has been awarded Life Membership of ASOHNS and was presented with his certificate during the recent Annual Scientific Meeting in Adelaide.

The following is his citation prepared by Dr Michael Jay:

“Hugh has been an outstanding contributor to the Society and Specialty, which are the criteria for Life Membership. His was a commitment to the public hospital system, Armed Services, community activities, the College of Surgeons and Otolaryngology.

He returned from London where he gained an FRCS in Otolaryngology in 1961.

He worked variously at the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, the Alfred, the Peter MacCallum Clinic, the Royal Women’s Hospital and Royal Melbourne.

He was in the RAAF Reserve as a Group Captain and was the author of 25 publications, as well as regularly presenting at the ASOHNS Annual Scientific Meetings.

He was one of the first to embrace Head and Neck Oncology within our Specialty and even today continues in medico-legal practice being a Consultant that works in Victoria.

He was Chairman of the Board in Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery, Examiner in our Specialty with the College of Surgeons and Senior Examiner in the latter part of his tenure. He was President of the Society from 1993 to 1995.

Mr Hugh Millar accepting his Life Member Certificate from Dr Michael Jay during the ASOHNS 2012 ASM.

He is a most deserving recipient of Life Membership to the Society.”
Dear Colleagues

On behalf of the organising committee, it is my great pleasure to extend an invitation to you and your partner to attend the ASOHNS’ 63rd Annual Scientific Meeting to be held in Perth 16 – 20 March 2013.

We have an exciting programme planned – one that will have relevance to all of our current and future practices.

All our invited speakers will provide an exceptional learning opportunity for delegates and include international Keynote Speakers (see box) who are at the forefront of their disciplines and are great communicators.

A number of satellite instructional courses are planned and you have the opportunity to enrol in the Australasian Academy of Facial Plastics Surgery (AAFPS) course as well.

Our theme, Fundamentals driving ENT, was chosen as it represents our bustling city of Perth driving our growing state of Western Australia. Perth is home to some of the most innovative medical breakthroughs of the last 30 years. It is also a beautiful, dynamic and friendly city and capital of a state that is as large as France, Spain, Germany and Scandinavia combined.

March is a fantastic time to visit Perth, so expect sunny days and warm evenings. While here, we urge you to visit Fremantle, Cottesloe Beach and Kings Park. After the meeting, treat yourselves to a trip to the Margaret River Wine region or have a North-West Adventure.

I look forward to welcoming you in Perth next year.

Philip Grey
ASOHNS 2013 Convenor

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International Keynote Speakers

Professor Ricardo L Carrau
Department of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery, Director of the Comprehensive Skull Base Surgery Program, The Ohio State University Medical Center, USA

Dr John L Dornhoffer
Professor and Vice-Chairman in the Department of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), Little Rock, Arkansas. He is holder of the Samuel D McGill, Jr Endowed Chair in Otolaryngology Research and is Director of the Division of Otology and Neurotology at UAMS and Arkansas Children’s Hospital. He is currently the Executive Director of the Prosper Meniere Society.

Dr Stephen S Park
Stephen S Park, MD, FACS is board certified by the American Board of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery and is a diplomat of the American Board of Otolaryngology. Professor, Vice-Chairman and Chief, Division of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at University of Virginia, USA, since 1994

Dr Michael J Rutter
Pediatric Otolaryngologist and Director of Clinical Research at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, Associate Professor at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, USA

Professor John Yoo
Professor, Chairman and city-wide Chief of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery at Western University, Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry, Ontario, Canada

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Register your interest or intent to attend the ASOHNS 2013 Annual Scientific Meeting at www.asohns.consec.com.au
Set Update

Selection for 2013 intake is well underway. I would like to thank those members who contributed their time to the interview process.

From next year we will be utilising a web-based residency programme that will permit all Trainee records to be maintained online.

Trainees will be able to enter logbook data from their smartphones. Supervisors will be able to access a Trainee's portfolio online and the main office will also have access to Trainee data and will be able to communicate to Trainees through this portal.

The Society of Plastic Surgeons has utilised this programme successfully for a couple of years and I am sure that it will reduce unnecessary paperwork for all. Selection of this web-based tool was not made lightly.

The College has been developing its own E-Logbook, but this is still in its infancy, has been far more expensive and is less versatile than the option chosen by the Board.

The other change that was made at the last Board meeting was that it was decided that interviews with Trainees should be recorded. There were some initial concerns about the legality of this. It is not a problem as long as all parties are aware.

This will be my last contribution to the ASOHNS newsletter, as my tenure as the National Trainee Representative ends in July this year.

The next trainee representative will be elected by the trainees of Australia and New Zealand during the month of July via an online ballot. We have had many fine candidates put their names forward to take on this most important role and I wish them all the best of luck in the coming ballot.

This being the tail end of my training and now having passed my Fellowship Exam, I have been thinking about work/life balance and how important this was to my successful completion of the exam/training and my overall mental state.

Let's face it, as surgical trainees and surgeons alike, we are extremely motivated and driven, with a tendency towards singularity in the pursuit of goals. Having just completed the 18-month Exam study build-up period, it was not until after I got my results that I realised how much pressure I had put myself under to perform and pass. The palpable relief with the results was huge and now a month down the track I can, in hindsight, appreciate how that having had some balance during this period was even more important.

Trainees may request a copy of these digital files but otherwise they will be stored at ASOHNS.

This should be seen really as an extension of College policy. All meetings and interviews at the College are now recorded.

This should improve compliance with College processes, particularly when dealing with an underperforming Trainee.

It is expected that the College will appoint a Compliance Officer to ensure that correct processes are applied in a timely manner.

These recordings will eliminate some of the significant dispute that invariably arises at difficult times. Supervisors should be able to do this from their smartphones, but if there are any supervisors who are having problems then the Society will organise small digital recorders for their use.

Dr Richard Gallagher will be taking over as Board Chair from November. I wish him every success.

Francis Lannigan
Board Chair
Board OHNS, RACS

Trainee Rep Report

The Art Of Study

This will be my last contribution to the ASOHNS newsletter, as my tenure as the National Trainee Representative ends in July this year.

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During the last 18 months, after the completion of approximately 1400 hours of study, many things had to fall by the wayside to allow enough time to study (study, study).

For me, exercise was first to go (bad choice), then scheduled time with friends, then seeing extended family and then sending my wife and child away on three to four week holidays with the in-laws in New Zealand (mind, only after full consultation with my wife and with her agreement and understanding). As I only wanted to do this once, my wife and I were happy to make those sacrifices.

What was never compromised was spending what spare time I did have with my wife and child. Eighteen months is a long time to be a study widow so for me they always had first call on what time I did have available. This was highly scheduled but was never cancelled or compromised. Not only did this make the time spent studying very efficient, as I had a deadline, but it also meant that, within time constraints, life could happen outside of study time.

What was a great source of enjoyment for me and a great stress relief, allowing compartmentalisation of my life so as one would not impinge on the other; when my study time was up, that was it, and I could switch off and enjoy the time away from the books.

I cannot recommend more highly to those of you in the years below, the need for outlets during the build-up to the Exam and that keeping the study sphere separate from all other aspects of life is conducive to overall happiness.
Further, before the build-up, I urge you to enjoy life, have loads of fun and take the opportunity to build up “Brownie” points with loved ones and friends because the oft said “sorry can’t come…. I have to study” can wear thin as time rolls on.

From a personal perspective I would like to take the opportunity to thank my wife, son and daughter for their unwavering support, dedication and love during my entire training duration. We all got through it together and I look forward to having more time…. and no study…. period.

Again, good luck to all prospective candidates.

Luke Reid
Trainee Representative

Fellowship Exam Passes

The following trainees passed their Fellowship Exam held in May this year:

Nicholas AGAR (Vic)
Shane ANDERSON (Qld)
Angela BUTLER (NZ)
Andrew CHANG (Qld)
Siamak (Sim) CHOROOMI (NSW)
Zenia CHOW (WA)
Timothy CONNOLLY (Vic)
Julia CRAWFORD (NSW)
Matthew CRONIN (Qld)
Kristy FRASER-KIRK (MILLER) (Qld)
Tsu-Hui (Hubert) LOW (NSW)
Paul PADDLE (Vic)
Nicholas POTTER (Vic)
Luke REID (Vic)
Veronica VAN DIJCK (NZ)

Continuing Professional Development Update

In my recent report to the Society at the AGM in Adelaide, I mentioned that a number of members were still non-compliant for the RACS CPD requirements for 2010.

I understand that following contact from this office, many members have moved to rectify this situation, although I do not have final numbers at present.

The RACS notes that around eight per cent of all Fellows (across all specialties) are continually non-compliant in preparing their yearly CPD returns. This is a cause for considerable concern and they are considering taking continued failure to comply as a breach of standards, with attendant disciplinary implications. The Medical Board of Australia has also reminded us that yearly compliance of CPD, from the various professional bodies, is necessary for yearly registration renewal. I understand there is some suspicion at that level that some doctors across Australia may be stating that they have undertaken such a program without actually having done so. Obviously there are potentially serious implications for this, including loss of registration.

Members are again urged to submit yearly returns and to submit them early and preferably online. The online method is very easy, although take note that submissions for the particular year must be completed by March 31. I myself was caught this year in being a couple of days late submitting a few events which I had forgotten to post previously and found that I was locked out of being able to submit 2011 as it was past the March 31 deadline. However, this is not a big problem as members can then submit these omitted items by email to the CPD staff at the College and they will include them for you.

This year, 2012, is the final year of the current triennium and successful CPD completion will result in the three-yearly certificate being granted.

The College is currently revising its CPD program and the requirements for it, hopefully making things a little simpler for some doctors. One particular group, which has had problems in this way are some semi-retired doctors who no longer hold a hospital appointment. Doctors in this position should contact the CPD Department early to work out a suitable program, which will be acceptable.

Sub Specialities

In recent years there has been an increasing trend towards sub specialisation, as is the pattern overseas. This has led to a number of societies being formed from our membership, often in association with our New Zealand colleagues. The Rhinology Society and the Paediatric ENT Society are very active, as is the recently formed Australian College of ENT Physicians. We are currently forming a Laryngological Society and this will be formalised at the Australian and Asia Pacific Laryngology meeting, to be held at the Hilton, in Melbourne in October.

Of course attendance at all these meetings do carry a points benefit for CPD returns and should be included in your CPD returns.

If anybody has any queries about CPD, please do not hesitate to contact me on mbaxter@unite.com.au

Malcolm Baxter, CPD Chair
RACS Professional Development and Standards Board Representative
Outreach Update

Ent Outreach into Pacific and East Timor

There is an impression that the Pacific Island Project (PIP) has been rather in the doldrums this year as there has been no obvious activity and no contact from the College about it.

Last year, at the annual international planning meeting at the College, we were told that the management and actual running of the project would be undertaken by the Fiji School of Medicine under a new name.

The current PIP would persist in the sense that the RACS was still going to run the logistics of the program and would still supply the instruments and organise the staff and travel arrangements. The new Fiji School of Medicine Program would liaise with the various countries to find out what their needs were and let the College know what was required.

So far we have heard nothing from this new body, or at least I haven’t, although there presumably has been contact at College level. Several of my colleagues have asked me just what is happening with the program this year and I haven’t been able to answer clearly because I just don’t know. However, I have recently been speaking to the PIP Administration and have been told that there is one ENT trip going ahead shortly, which is still under the old funding, and that application has been made for extension funding for further programs to several Pacific Islands.

One problem is that when the College is organising people to go on the trips it is very much the “usual suspects” and when I look at the list of suggested personnel for the islands, which the College provides, I note that many of them have been going for several years and are around my vintage.

It is absolutely essential, I believe, that we attract new people, especially if the project is to continue once we older members have retired. I believe the College is largely to blame in failing to pursue younger members and with their policy of excluding Registrars from going on these trips. Again I would like to make a plea for younger members to consider giving one to two weeks a year to one of our overseas projects.

I know there is some competition for personnel. The Cambodian project run by Kevin Holwell has been very successful and I congratulate them for their efforts, which have not been funded by the College. I know that several of the younger members do go on these very worthwhile visits. I know that there are also problems with younger members who have just recently got their Fellowship, have family commitments, are going overseas, are setting up practice etc. Some new Fellows are worried about being thrown in the deep end in an unknown situation without the usual backup. However, it is often possible to arrange two surgeon trips where the new surgeon can go with a more experienced one who has done these trips before.

East Timor, in contrast, is becoming much more active. Four trips a year are now planned in ENT, each of one week’s duration, centred on Dili and Baucau. Two of these are funded by the College and also funded by Balwyn Rotary who have been very generous to us. ASOHNS also has made a generous donation towards equipment.

The trips are always very busy. The teams find themselves inundated with large patient numbers and, unfortunately, we have the problem that we used to find in the Pacific, the “Itchy Ear Syndrome” whereby large numbers of patients present with very trivial (or even no!) complaints which could be dealt with at a local level.

This has been very successfully dealt with in the Solomons and Vanuatu by creating teams of Nurse Practitioners who are very skilled in the day to day management of ENT conditions and in triaging for the incoming surgical teams. I have been trying to establish such training for Nurses in East Timor, but so far without success. I do not believe that our efforts can be ultimately of any use unless we establish this sort of back-up on the ground. As much as anything we need people who can look after our mastoids and similar cases when we have gone home and this is just not present to any degree there. Local doctors are in short supply, although there are many Cuban trained young doctors coming back to the country shortly. There is one young doctor being trained in ENT in Indonesia currently, but I suspect it will be quite a few years before he is effective.

Another problem in East Timor is that we also have the problem of the older Specialist mentioned above, except it is even worse there. It is not true that you have to be over 60 to do a trip to East Timor – it just appears that way! Fortunately we have just acquired new blood in the person of an enthusiastic New Zealand Fellow (Colin Brown) who will be a great future asset I am sure, however, again I would encourage younger doctors to think about volunteering on this program.

Again if anyone would like to discuss this with me, please do not hesitate to give me a ring or email me on mbaxter@unite.com.au.

Malcolm Baxter
ENT Convenor Pacific and East Timor ENT Programs

ASOHNS Members Outreach Survey

So many members are quietly and modestly performing Outreach activities – almost invariably on a voluntary basis.

Therefore, for the purposes of ASOHNS promotion and public information of our members’ pro bono activities, ASOHNS HQ wishes to retain a register of members who are undertaking Outreach work.

Members will shortly receive a small table to be completed with any Outreach activities and returned to the Secretariat for recording.

John Curotta
President
VALE – Peter Packer OAM

1926 - 2012

Consultant Ear, Nose and Throat Surgeon
Universities of Cape Town and Western Australia
MB ChB (Cape Town) 1953
MB BS (Western Australia) 1961
M. Med Otol (Cape Town) 1959
FRACS 1964

Obituary

Peter Packer was born in Cape Town, South Africa, in 1926, the son of Admiral Sir Herbert Packer, Royal Navy, and Joy nee Petersen, a widely published author. He was brought up in South Africa, several Royal Navy Stations and the United Kingdom.

He trained in the Fleet Air Arm from 1944 to 1946. This took him to the UK and the USA.

Like many of his generation the war delayed his tertiary education. Initially considering engineering he decided on medicine as a career, subsequently specialising in Ear Nose and Throat Surgery. He trained in South Africa and the United Kingdom.

Peter married in 1949; he and his wife Glenda had four sons. He and his family decided to migrate to Western Australia in 1961, as he was unsympathetic with the apartheid regime and anticipated increasing unrest in South Africa. This was a difficult decision as he had already established a successful surgical practice in Cape Town.

Once settled in Perth he rapidly established his reputation as an excellent surgeon. One of his early surgical achievements was the first successful stapedectomy in Western Australia, having also done so in South Africa. While given a special license to practice as an ENT surgeon he was required to requalify with an Australian degree and ironically was attending ward rounds as a medical student whilst practising as an ENT surgeon at Royal Perth Hospital. The University of Western Australia awarded him his MBBS in 1961. Although not obliged to do so he also re-certified with Australian surgical qualifications as an ENT surgeon. This required sitting both primary and second part examinations. He was awarded his FRACS in 1964.

As well as a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, he was a member of the Australian Society of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery and its otologic sub-section, the Toynbee Society.

Although initially working as an ENT surgeon he sub-specialised as an otologist in the late 1960s. He was a Western Australian pioneer in all the major contemporary advances in otology during the course of his working life. He was a natural leader and collaborated with other ENT surgeons performing the first trans-labyrinthine removal of an acoustic neuroma as well as undertaking the first cochlear implant in Western Australia.

He worked as a consultant surgeon at Royal Perth Hospital for 32 years, much of the time as Head of the ENT Surgery Department. Upon his retirement in 1994 he was made an emeritus consultant at the hospital. In recognition for his work in medicine he was honoured with the Medal of the Order of Australia in 2003.

He was active in establishing the Ear Nose and Throat Foundation of Western Australia; funds from which continue to assist training ENT surgeons in ear surgery techniques.

Although not an academic he had an extremely enquiring and incisive mind. He collaborated with other surgeons and published as the senior author on the management of chronic suppurrative otitis media and otosclerosis.

In parallel with his public practice he conducted a highly successful private practice. By nature forward thinking he, again in collaboration with another ENT surgeon, established one of the first private day surgeries in Australia in 1987.

He was highly respected by his peers and juniors alike. He had many outstanding personal attributes that are perhaps best summed up in the ideal of ‘a gentleman’. He was generous with his time as a medical teacher and is responsible for training many ENT surgeons in otology in Western Australia.

Outside of medicine he was a highly competitive yachtsman, winning many of the major offshore yachtting races in WA. His highest and proudest achievement as a sailor was winning the Sydney to Hobart yacht race in 1975.

With his wife, Glenda, he was a dedicated family man. His four sons and many grandchildren survive him.

Stuart Miller MBBS, FRACS
May 2012
ASOHNS website review survey

Members and trainees have been emailed requesting feedback about the ASOHNS website in order to improve its function and accessibility.

Since the ASOHNS website was substantially upgraded more than four years ago in 2008, secretariat staff have received anecdotal feedback from members, trainees and the public on various aspects of the site’s content and navigation. They have also monitored and reviewed it themselves from their perspective as administrators.

The ASOHNS website is an important medium that provides information and services to our members and trainees. Your input is valuable in determining how we can improve the site’s re-design and upgrade for ease of navigation and better provision of information.

If you have not done so already, it would be very helpful if you can find a few minutes to complete a survey by clicking on the following link: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QKKZCN2

Many thanks for your assistance.

Christopher Que Hee
Federal Secretary

New Members
James BOWMAN (Qld)
Hannah BURNS (Qld)
Sharad CHAWLA (SA)
James EARNSHAW (Qld)
Alethea GROBLER (SA)
Indunil GUNAWARDENA (SA)
Wayne HON (Vic)
Smariti KAPILA (NSW)
Andrew LINDSAY (WA)
Harshita PANT (SA)
Eliza TWEDDLE (Vic)

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