

CLASS OF '75

This flowery crop of knowledge and new light

John Milton, *Areopagitica* (1644)

At the time of the 1975 election for the Council, J.W.E. Raine, the president, was completing his 12 years and due to retire (though a president was, under the constitution at that time, in office and hence eligible for re-election until replaced, a provision which had allowed his predecessor John Loewenthal to remain for a thirteenth year and achieve three years as president). The junior vice-president, C.A.C. (later Sir Clarence) Leggett, chose to resign at the nine-year stage; the treasurer, F.D. Stephens, resigned after having served ten years, to take up a chair in paediatric urology in the University of Chicago; and H.H. Eddey decided not to seek a third four-year term. N.C. Newton had died in the latter part of 1974.

Suddenly there were five places vacant on the Council, an unprecedented situation. Only in 1955, when four new councillors were elected, had anything approached this level of turnover. From 17 candidates, N.C. Davis of Queensland, D.G. Macleish of Melbourne, J.H. Heslop and A.W. Beasley from New Zealand and a second Melburnian, R.C. Bennett, were elected. The five of us who joined that year were all of about the same age, and we rapidly formed strong friendships round the council table.

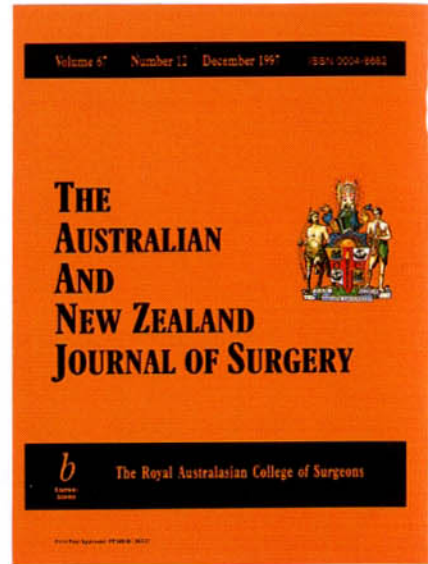
Neville Davis was prevented by illness from serving beyond his first four-year term. He was already a significant figure in Australian surgery because of his work on melanoma when he joined the Council, and in those four years he contributed much, not least in reminding his fellow-councillors (and when necessary, his president) that the borders of the College extended to the north of Tweed Heads and to the west of Coonawarra. Scotty Macleish would go on to the presidency in 1985-87 and would later assume the mantle of Weary Dunlop as the College's principal link with Thailand. John Heslop, already renowned as a basic science teacher in Dunedin, would later be chairman of the Part 1 Board. I suppose I fit best into that part of Dr Johnson's definition of a lexicographer which refers to 'a harmless drudge, that busies himself in tracing the original'.

Dick Bennett might fairly be regarded as the 'ideas man' of the group. His first 'portfolio' on the Council was as editor of the journal.



Dick Bennett has served his College with loyalty and flair. His portrait, a good likeness, provides some recognition of his contribution.

The journal has evolved through several cover designs since the self-effacing format that we inherited in 1975.

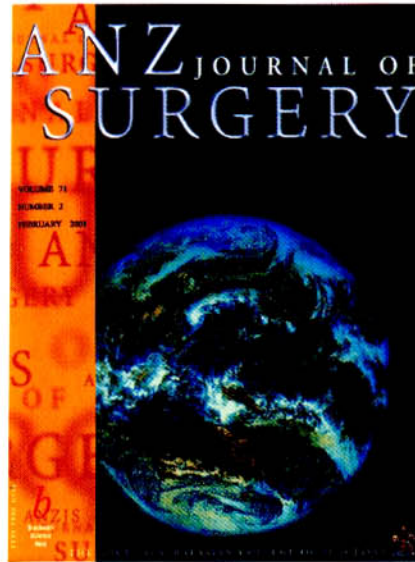
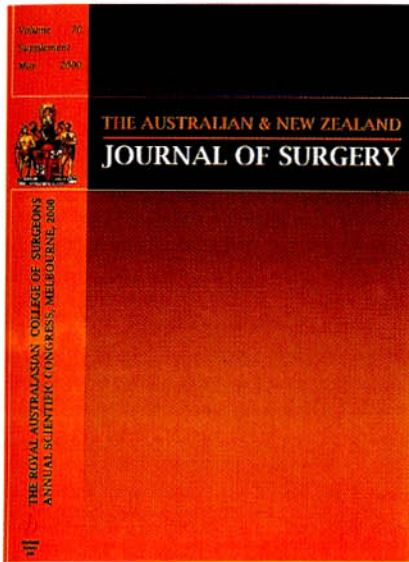


His next was when he became treasurer in 1979, an office he would hold for eight years. The final two years of that term he was also junior vice-president, a combination of offices that was possible in those times. After his retirement from his chair at St Vincent's he became Executive Director for Surgical Affairs, for a distinguished seven-year term. He and Neville Davis are the two members of our group to have been honoured with the Devine Medal, which is the highest tribute the College can offer to a Fellow in his lifetime.

Much of this chapter, therefore, will be a survey of the innovations Dick Bennett sponsored for the betterment of the College. First, then, the *Journal*.

After Devine had sponsored the inauguration of the then *Journal of the College of Surgeons of Australasia* (which went on to become the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Surgery* when the name of the College itself was changed to incorporate the status 'Royal') the journal settled into a routine of four issues per year. As we saw earlier, Searby added the chairmanship to his multiple College appointments in the 1950s, before he abandoned the College on being defeated for the presidency by Miller. E.S.J. King then became chairman for a time, before handing over to Miller himself. Loewenthal served as chairman for a time, before Bennett assumed the role in 1976.

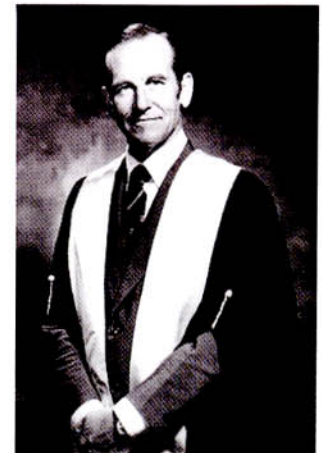
But Bennett was also appointed editor at that time, only the fourth to have held that appointment. His predecessors were Mervyn Archdall, the founding editor, K.F. Russell, the anatomist-bibliophile who had done so much to secure the Cowlshaw collection for the College, and Malcolm Earlam. He moved rapidly to expand the scope of the publication, first by arranging for the production of six issues a year. In one of our chats as our friendship developed, we looked at the matter of presentation and in particular at what had been a rather



unpretentious cover, with restrained print on a quiet yellowish paper. We agreed that it would be worth our while to have a cover that could not escape notice on a magazine rack. With a sheet of x-ray backing paper – the gaudiest yellow paper I had available – and a couple of lettraset sheets I constructed a mock-up with the name of the College and the date on broad black bands across the sheet. We agreed that, whatever its faults, reticence was not one. The ‘yellow comic’ was born; it might go unread, but could hardly go unnoticed.

The next consideration was the content. At a time when it was particularly important to make the specialties feel part of College and journal alike, the idea of devoting particular issues to papers of interest to particular specialties was attractive, for no surgical reader wishes to be confronted, issue after issue, by papers that are of no particular relevance. The down-side of such a policy is that holding papers until there is a ‘critical mass’ dealing with one specialty may involve undue delay in publication, but the themes were notified about four issues ahead and in its time it was a useful initiative. The inclusion of defined sections on surgical anatomy, surgical techniques, surgical training, surgical research, surgical history and so on helped to broaden the interest of the journal, as did the inclusion of editorial comment, often from guest writers who were able to write with authority on a particular theme.

By such measures the journal was enabled, during the Bennett period, to become well known, generally well respected and quite widely distributed overseas. Until 1978 it had been published either in Sydney or in Melbourne; but at that stage – no doubt because the New Zealand dollar lost value – publication in New Zealand was contemplated. K.M. Ewen, recently chairman of the New Zealand committee, was able to effect the necessary introductions so that Messrs Wilson & Horton (publishers of the Auckland morning paper,



Keith Ewen had recently completed a term as chairman of the New Zealand committee when he negotiated the publication of the journal in Auckland.



Bruce Gray was an early Crouch Fellow, but had already shown skills as a recruiter of sponsorship for the journal.

The New Zealand Herald) took over, and from 1978 the process of publication (including sub-editing, carried out by a retired Auckland urologist, L.I. Parton)¹ went 'offshore'. The finances of the journal were helped by the move but also by the skill of B.N. Gray (then of Melbourne, later Perth) in recruiting advertising revenue.

In 1983 publication passed to Blackwells in Melbourne, and their involvement with the journal has been a successful one. Monthly issues began in 1986, allowing prompt publication of important papers; the page size was later increased to one that was more economical of paper; and the advent of electronic sharing of data has produced a situation in which papers are normally submitted on disk or by e-mail.

Although Dick Bennett retained the chairmanship of the editorial board for over a decade, the role of editor passed to J.P. Richardson for the period 1981-84. Then for some years there was an editorial soviet in which the names of Bennett, Clunie and John Ludbrook the polymath are relatively constant. From this bunch emerged Gordon Clunie, first as editor and then editor-in-chief, ultimately to be succeeded by Irwin Faris of Geelong.² The present editor is R.J.S. Thomas, and the turn of the millennium was marked, first by the introduction in 2000 of a new cover in the gold and grey-green of the Australian rugby strip (given the result of the last World Cup, this was forgivable) and then, one year later, by abbreviation of the name to '*ANZ Journal of Surgery*' and yet another cover design, this one preserving its Australian rugby colours while placing a view of the western Pacific from space against a black background that should mollify the most bigoted All Black supporter.

The jubilee of the College was celebrated in 1977; indeed the celebrations were prolonged through the year. But one outcome was



John Ludbrook combines a sophisticated understanding of medical statistics with a degree of competence as a writer of Italian verse. Here Mervyn Smith, as president, welcomes him to the Court of Honour in 1983.



Irwin Faris, seen here with his wife Rosemary, moved from a chair in surgery (and the task of editing the journal) to a second career as a clergyman.

the recognition that, if the College were to be an institution whose activities went beyond training, examining and celebrating, it should do something to support education and research in the broadest sense of the terms. In a period when foundations were springing up throughout the educational community, an RACS Foundation appeared the logical vehicle for such an initiative. You might say it appeared essential to Dick Bennett and appropriate to his Council colleagues. He became treasurer in time to drive it from its inception in mid-1979.

The Foundation was set up by a grant from reserve funds (including accumulated profits from past GSMs) made by the Council with support from the Board of the Faculty of Anaesthetists and maintained by voluntary contributions from Fellows. Rather than being established as a separate charitable trust, it functioned as an identifiable account within the College finances since, thanks to R.G. Menzies, the College enjoyed the tax privileges of a scientific and educational body.

From the beginning it was a useful addition to the College's repertoire of useful activities, but the goodwill of a section of the fellowship was – as soon became apparent to Bennett – not going to bring in funds sufficient to make the College a force in research or the Foundation a credible sponsor of educational activity. His solution was the 'subscriptions-in-advance' scheme.

He argued that fellows in active surgical practice would not miss next year's subscription if they paid it now. (They already paid at the beginning of the year, of course.) They would, indeed, be protected against inflation-based subscription rises, since the amount of next year's subscription would be determined now. The College would, however, gain possession of a capital sum amounting to a full year's worth of subscription payments, which it could invest so as to generate interest sufficient to run a worthy programme of research



Members of the "Class of '75" (from left: Bennett, Beasley, Macleish) provide a close escort for the president of the English College. Sir Geoffrey Slaney was a member of the line of presidents of the older Colleges who have immersed themselves in the life of the Australasian College. One of them, Sir Reginald Murley (below), so valued his association that he wore his RACS tie for his presidential portrait at Lincoln's Inn Fields.



and educational activities. It would also be able to point to the fact that every Fellow was supporting this cause (involuntarily and to the extent of a quasi-loan year by year, perhaps, but certainly to the extent of the interest on a year's subscription) whenever it went out into the community seeking support. For the first thing a potential donor will ask is: what are the Fellows themselves doing?

It was a scheme of elegant simplicity and seemed worthy of a Sicilian financier; but arguably Bennett's greatest achievement was not the devising so much as the 'selling' to a fellowship which tended to say: all very well for the College, but what is the College doing for me, and what is in this scheme for me? Or is it just another grab? But it was adopted, and without major acrimony. It would be fair to say that the outcome has made many Fellows pleased that they concurred in its introduction. When they retire, moreover, they get back the windfall of a year's subscription!

Because of the resources it can now call on, the Foundation funds visitors to the GSM/ASC each year, to every programme section as well as to specialist society meetings; it supports CME activities within the College; it makes travel grants, in south-east Asia as well as for its Fellows and trainees in Australasia; it awards a wide range of research scholarships and makes various project grants. It also funds the Younger Fellows' course - and that too, is the outcome of a Dick Bennett inspiration.

As the class of '75 became firm friends, round the table and off duty alike, we came to reflect on the fact that our friendship had to wait, by and large, until our election to the Council. Dick Bennett's thoughts went one stage further: how much better if we had been



In 1982 the College moved into a suite on the top floor of a block in Wellington Hospital.

given an opportunity to become friends earlier in our surgical careers – well then, let the College give such an opportunity to the next generation of surgeons.

I think the word 'camp' came into the dialogue when it was first discussed, with jokes about wet tents and the like, but the 1982 GSM in Christchurch gave the idea the scope it needed. At that stage the College in New Zealand had just achieved a suite on the top floor of a new block at Wellington Hospital,³ and the regular Council meeting was to be held there after the scientific meeting. Why not, we decided, mount an inaugural Younger Fellows' course immediately after that?

At the time I was in a position to book space in one of the university halls of residence. The state and New Zealand committees were invited to submit the names of suitable (and willing) candidates, and a couple of dozen Fellows (including three councillors: Bennett, Mellick and Beasley) spent an agreeable week chewing several rags, appropriately washed down. We even had a picnic one day, at the Riddiford property round the coast,⁴ with the president, J.K. Clarebrough, and senior vice-president, M.K. Smith, present and able to enjoy themselves before they left Wellington.

The course has become an annual event (I think recent parties take it more seriously than our group did, and I am not sure if this is progress), and its alumni have assumed positions of responsibility in College affairs, with, I trust, the benefit of friendships made a few years before. From the first course, Tony Green has been an elected member of the Council, Peter Burke (from whose anecdote the group took the name of 'The Liontamers', with tie to match) was honorary principal curator of College treasures a few years ago, and James Church came back as a Foundation Visitor in 2000. A substantial number of Liontamers and wives held a 15-year reunion dinner in Brisbane in 1997. From subsequent groups Jim Toouli was the Crouch Fellow in 1994 and is now the College's professor of surgical sciences,



The potential of J.K. Clarebrough (president 1981-83) had been recognised, early in his Council term, by Bill Hughes.



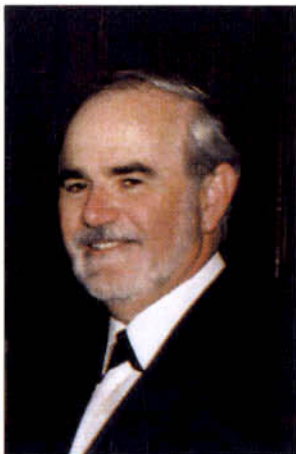
From left: Tony Green, Peter Burke and James Church were members of the original Younger Fellows' Course, which took the name 'Liontamers' because of a Burke anecdote.

and three alumni (Donald Murphy, Alan Thurston, and Spencer Beasley, now the Crouch Fellow for 2002) spoke at the Cowlshaw symposium in 2000. And the most notable achiever of all has been Kingsley Faulkner, who assumed the presidency in May 2001.

Even the Crouch Fellowship itself owes something to Dick Bennett. John Mitchell Crouch, English-born, was a Melbourne graduate in 1966 who trained in neurosurgery in Canada and was a research fellow at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto before electing to return to Australia. He became medical director of the Frankston Community Hospital in Victoria, added an Australasian Fellowship to his Canadian one and then developed the brain tumour which, in 1977, cut short a career of great distinction and greater promise.

His father had been killed when he was a teenager; his mother, now Mrs Elizabeth Unsworth, proposed to endow a memorial fellowship which would both reward and encourage careers in the pattern he had established. Dick Bennett was much involved in the discussions with Mrs Unsworth which established the form of what has been designed as the College's premier research award. It was

Three of the speakers at the 2000 Cowlshaw symposium were alumni of the Younger Fellows' courses: From left: Donald Murphy, Alan Thurston and Spencer Beasley.





John Mitchell Crouch (far left), is commemorated in the Fellowship endowed by his mother, Mrs Elizabeth Unsworth (right), who is seen here with Peter Carter.

intended to recognise young surgeons and, after the award to the late Bernard O'Brien, the regulations were amended to clarify this.

The John Mitchell Crouch award stands at the head of a line of research fellowships and grants that have been endowed over the two decades since the universal nature of Fellows' contributions to the Foundation gave it the standing to attract support from outside. But one of the most imaginative awards of all came not from outside the fellowship but from a very senior and distinguished Fellow.

We met Rowan Nicks as a naval surgeon in the Adriatic; after the war he trained in cardiothoracic surgery, practised in Auckland until 1956, then moved to Sydney to set up a unit at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. After the death of his beloved wife Mary in 1969, he took the young people of the third world as the family that the two of them had been denied. Visiting professorships took him to India, Malaysia, Tanzania and Iran; his energy in his retirement took him even further afield. Already a generous supporter of the College, in 1987 he endowed the Rowan Nicks scholarship which brings a young surgeon from a country on the rim of the Indian Ocean or from the Pacific, to be presented at an annual meeting and to spend a year (give or take) in an academic department in Australia or New Zealand.



Rowan Nicks is seen here with two old friends, Alice Beasley and Pat Mellick.

Bill Hughes with his censor-in-chief, John Goldie, and treasurer, Peter Braithwaite.



It had been hoped to have a joint Australia-New Zealand stamp issue to commemorate the 1977 jubilee. In the event only a New Zealand stamp was issued.

The celebration of the College's jubilee in 1977 spread, in one form or another, over most of the year. Bill Hughes as president (he was knighted that same year) described it in a report in the journal:

The first meeting of the year was held in January in Melbourne. The Sixth International conference of the International Association of Accident and Traffic Medicine was organised by the Road Trauma Committee. It was attended by over 200 delegates, and resolutions arising from the meeting are having an impact on road safety throughout the world. In March a seminar on rehabilitation was held in Perth and attracted a large number of Fellows from all States, indicating strong College interest in rehabilitation in its many forms.

In May the first microsurgical workshop was organised in Singapore by Arthur Lim on behalf of the College. Despite interference by an air-controllers' strike, the Workshop was an outstanding success.

The 50th General Scientific Meeting in Melbourne was the largest and the greatest meeting the College has ever organised. [False modesty was never one of Bill's failings.] Despite threats of disruption of air travel, nearly all registrants arrived – a fact about which the College is very proud.⁵ During this meeting the Joint Conference of Surgical Colleges held its meeting, attended by all eight Presidents of the English-Speaking Surgical Colleges.⁶

In July the College held its first-ever meeting in Darwin. Organised by an enthusiastic committee, it was attended by a large number of Fellows who agreed on some practical resolutions concerning surgery in remote areas.

The meeting also led to an ongoing concern with this subject, one which has resulted in the formation of the Divisional Group of Rural Surgery in today's College.

The South Australian Fellows met in early August... a meeting described by senior Fellows as the best held in the State.

The following week the New Zealand Fellows met in Rotorua. Again there was a very large registration... The President of the College

proceeded to tour all major surgical centres in New Zealand. [He travelled as the Senior Anzac Fellow for that year.] He unveiled special plaques in memory of Sir Louis Barnett and in recognition of the first Council meeting of the College in the Lindo Ferguson building in Dunedin.

The Tasmanian Fellows held a joint meeting with the Australian Orthopaedic Association in October – a highly successful conference.⁷ The Queensland State Committee organised an excellent meeting on malignant melanoma and on cancer in general. So large were the numbers attending that it became almost a mini-General Scientific Meeting of the College.

The final major meeting of the year was in Canberra – appropriate because it was the scene of the first Scientific Meeting of the College in 1928. The programme centered [sic] on the contribution to surgery and anaesthesia from New South Wales. During this meeting, the Fellowship of the College was conferred on Dr Grace Warren, famous for her work in leprosy.

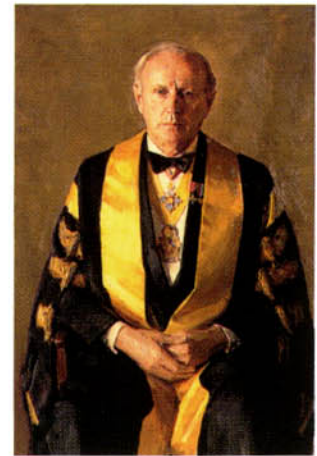
The College moves into its second 50 years strong and healthy, with a record of achievement in maintaining... standards... untainted by political affiliations. It will rely as it has done in the past on the voluntary work and inspiration and leadership of its Fellows.⁸

It was a comprehensive celebration. In the middle of the year, freshly knighted, Hughes was elected for a third year as president. One of his councillors, for reasons of his own, had urged him to stand aside from the presidency. He discussed his dilemma with me. If I do so, he said, there will be plenty of people who say: Well, he took his knighthood and discarded the College like a cast-off garment. He was persuaded to leave the matter in the hands of his Council.

When he did complete his term in mid-1978, he was awarded (the first so to be honoured) the Sir Hugh Devine Medal, an award which had been instituted in 1972 with the support of Sir Hugh's two daughters. It was a tragedy that he was soon overtaken by the Parkinsonism which wrecked his retirement, but in a strange way he preserved his planning skills even in the timing of his death – just before a Cowlshaw symposium and a Council meeting in 1998, so that a multitude of old friends and colleagues were able to be in Melbourne for the service of thanksgiving which followed a private funeral.

His successor in the presidency was H.D. Sutherland,⁹ who served for a year before handing over to G.D. Tracy. Like his Sydney predecessor Sir John Loewenthal, Tracy showed such ability in the office as to be re-elected into a thirteenth year. In my commentary on the College portraits, I wrote of him:

This was the period when the College's relations with the specialty associations in the several surgical disciplines were becoming an important (and potentially divisive) issue, and his standing as an 'honest broker' did much to hold the College together as an organisation capable of uniting the wide diversity of Australasian surgery.



D'Arcy Sutherland became president in 1978; he is now the senior member of the College's first father-and-son Council sequence.



Doug Tracy was able to foster improved relations between the College and the specialty associations during his presidency.



In 1983 the Council was quite modest in size. Back row: R.A. Chapman (secretary), B.McC. O'Brien, B.P. Morgan, D.R. Leslie, J.H.Heslop, L.W.Wing, D.E. Theile, T.S. Reeve, J.M. Ham, J.C. Hanrahan, B.J. Dooley, E.D. Smith. Front row: R.B. Holland (Vice-Dean), W.M. Crosby (Dean), D.G. Macleish, M.K. Smith (President), A.W. Beasley, S.A. Mellick, R.C. Bennett.

Tracy was in turn succeeded by J.K. Clarebrough, who had been 'talent-spotted' by Bill Hughes as a future president within a couple of years of his election to the Council, and it was John Clarebrough who led the touring party from this College on its British Isles tour in 1983. At the Hong Kong meeting which led on to Britain he had had the pleasure of handing the second-ever Devine Medal to Doug Tracy; on the tour itself he was showered with well-merited honorary Fellowships – in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dublin.

In Edinburgh, on that visit, Clarebrough's senior vice-president, Mervyn Smith, was awarded the John Bruce medal for his work in the field of examinations and in bringing the two colleges together in south-east Asia. The following month Smith succeeded to the presidency – for a difficult term, as the 'Doctors' Dispute' boiled over. I imagine there are few these days who could document the points at issue, principally between the state government and the surgeons of New South Wales, but that is commonly the way with disputes. In this case, the public was given, and left with, the impression that the surgeons had gone on strike. The two sides succeeded in painting themselves into their respective corners, managing to overlook the fact that today's adversary is, sooner or later, the person who has to be negotiated with.

Nor did the efforts to calm the situation, made by Mervyn Smith and his fellow College presidents, appeal to those who were out for blood. The Australian Association of Surgeons (whose formation had been encouraged by the College some years earlier, to handle issues of pay and conditions that the College felt to be beyond its proper functions) became partisan enough to take offence at such placatory moves as the various presidents were making, and during a council meeting in 1984 a delegation from the Association arrived bearing a resolution of censure against Mervyn Smith.¹⁰

Paradoxically, the bearer of this resolution, Peter Jones, would become a councillor three years later, while one of the leaders of the New South Wales activists, B.D. Shepherd, was also elected to the Council, in 1985. Jones, an amateur of history, played an active part

in safeguarding the heritage of the College and became honorary principal curator until obliged by ill-health to retire in 1994. Shepherd, for his part, found some conflict between the demands of his causes and the time he could devote to Council matters, and he too left the Council in 1994.

At the annual business meeting of Fellows in Sydney in 1985 a resolution was passed, calling on the College to be more active in political affairs. After prolonged discussion and some soul-searching, the Council resolved to do so but confirmed its adherence to (and constraint by) two of the sections in its Memorandum of Association:

- 2 (b) To promote the practice of surgery under proper conditions by securing the improvement of hospitals and hospital methods;
- 2 (f) To consider all questions affecting the interests of the College and to initiate and watch over and, if necessary to petition Parliament or promote deputations in relation to measures affecting the College.

The dilemma is this: if the College does too little on the political scene, politicians may get away with running down the health system so that 'the practice of surgery under proper conditions' is compromised; but if it lets itself become too overtly political, it can be derided as 'just another trade union' and accused of self-interest, so that its effectiveness is once again compromised. It is a narrow line, and it becomes narrower as politicians become more intrusive in matters affecting surgical standards.

One who preserved his dignity during all this was Mervyn Smith,¹¹ at a time when many others were shedding theirs as if in a heat wave.



Scotty Macleish became president in 1985. Fifteen years later he remains active in College affairs. Here he is seen with Tess Cramond (née Brophy) when they were participants in a Cowlshaw symposium.

Scotty Macleish became president in 1985, and it became necessary that year for me to consider the problem of the New Zealand succession. Because John Heslop and I had come on together (and after Macky's retirement we had been the only two New Zealanders on the Council) it would have been unfortunate if we had departed together and two new councillors had been left to wave the four-star flag. John was now chairman of the Part 1 Board, to which he had contributed so much. I had had a good run already, so it was obvious that I should be the one to move out first. My successor, Colin McRae, was to be the fifth New Zealander as president.

NOTES

1. The interesting feature of this arrangement was that Parton was not an Australasian Fellow. It was reminiscent of K.F. Russell promoting the acquisition of the Cowlshaw collection by a college with which he did not yet have formal links.

2. Retiring from his chair and from the journal at the end of 1999, Faris began a second career as an Anglican clergyman. In this persona he preached at the ecumenical service in St Paul's cathedral in Melbourne, at the beginning of the College meeting in May 2000.

3. In readiness for the move into the new premises the New Zealand committee already had a committee table (commemorative of Sir Gordon Bell, who used while on the Council to chair the 'Dominion Committee' as well, and one of his successors as chairman, L.O. Bennett of Christchurch) as well as a set of chairs. This furniture was taken out of storage and set up in a vacant top floor area big enough to accommodate the full Council. It was then to be fitted into the new and somewhat smaller committee room of the College suite. The floor was locked up after the meeting, but several chairs were spirited away and had to be replaced.

4. Earle Riddiford, our host, was renowned as a Himalayan climber who, although in ill-health, was able to show us the art of climbing hills – and descending at a Sherpa trot.

5. I was almost disappointed when the airlines solved the problem at the eleventh hour, for I had looked forward to travelling in one of the fleet of corporate jets that Bill Hughes was busy recruiting from here and there. With him, the impossible took slightly longer.

6. They were all admitted to honorary Fellowship, too, along with the full bench of sectional Visitors to the scientific programme. It was a generous gesture, which had the advantage of being impartial, but it came close to debasing the currency of the honorary Fellowship.

7. This was one of the quinquennial combined meetings of the Australian and New Zealand Orthopaedic Associations, a series which began in 1962 in the week following the Wellington GSM.

8. Hughes, ESR (1977) *Aust. N.Z. J. Surg.* 47: 845.

9. With the election in 2000 of his son Andrew (an orthopaedic surgeon who had earlier been a co-opted member) D'Arcy Sutherland has become the senior member of the College's first father-and-son team of elected councillors of the College.

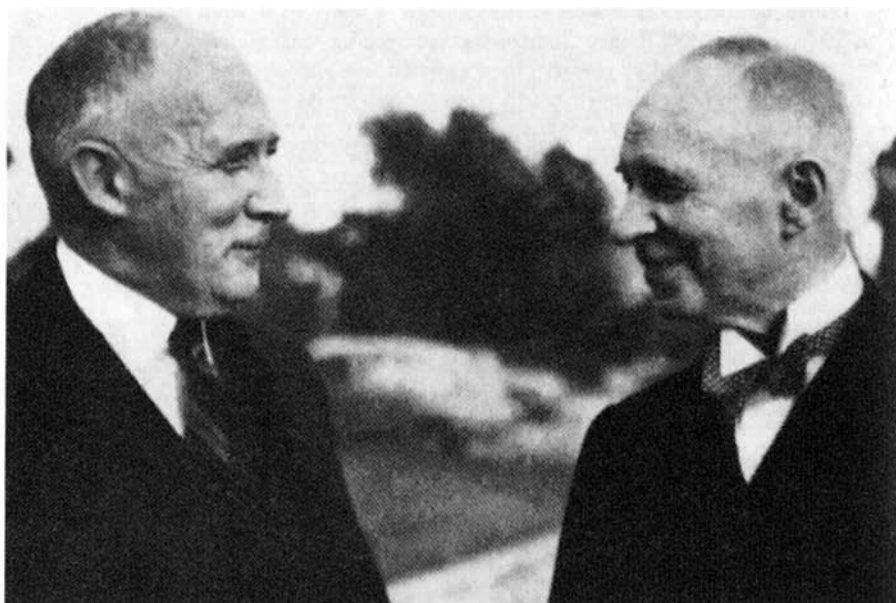
10. This move cut no ice with the Council; but the underlying choice for the College was a stark one: either to be more obtrusive in a peacemaking role, or to fail a large group of Fellows who, even if evidently misguided in their zeal, were voicing very real concerns. The difficulty was that both sides in the dispute were, by now, well into their corners – and painting vigorously. The dispute finally petered out with no gain to either side.

11. The occasion of the presentation of the resolution of censure had been one of the distressing events in my experience of the College – when two men of principle were placed in a position of confrontation. Mervyn Smith's composure was impressive.

A happier event during his presidency was the recruitment of HRH The Prince of Wales as Patron of the College. On a visit to Melbourne in November 1985 Prince Charles was received by such members of the Council as could be present, then gowned and photographed after a citation read by Mervyn Smith who, though by now succeeded in the presidency by Scotty Macleish, was recognised as the prime mover in the appointment. The design of the Patron's gown was derived from that of the lay members of the Court of Honour: a gold gown with black silk facings, his was distinguished by the addition of frogging – along the lines of the presidential gown, but in black – to the sleeves. Prince Charles identified the colour of his gown as 'Nullarbor gold'.



HRH The Prince of Wales was photographed with the group of available councillors and former presidents, when he was installed as Patron of the College in 1985. Back row: R.A. Chapman, J.K. Clarebrough, Sir Benjamin Rank, J.P. Royle, M.K. Smith, B.J. Dooley, B.McC. O'Brien, Sir Edward Hughes. Front row: R.B. Holland, D.G. Macleish, HRH The Prince of Wales, R.C. Bennett, S.A. Mellick.



In 1944 Sir Alan Newton was prepared to claim that 'all surgeons in Australia wish to belong' to the Australasian College. It was, at the very least, an overstatement at the time; but the foundations had been laid, and recognition of the 'surgical specialties' that year was a progressive move.

In this photograph, taken ten years earlier, Alan Newton welcomes Gordon Gordon-Taylor during the latter's first visit to Melbourne. Newton's knighthood came in 1936, Gordon-Taylor's a decade later.