

John Wallis (Jack) Hornbrook, President of the Royal Australian College of Ophthalmologists, 1983 - 1984

Jack Hornbrook was born on 14 April 1921 in Sydney and died on 15 October 2007 aged 86. He married his first wife in 1953 and was father of three daughters. His father was a medical practitioner in the Western suburbs of Sydney and Jack was educated at Kings School. Jack Hornbrook gained his MB BS (Syd) in 1944 and joined the Royal Australian Navy Reserve from 1945 to 1949. He gained a Diploma in Ophthalmology from Sydney University in 1951 and from London in 1952. He also gained FRACO and FRACS and was an Honorary Medical Officer at Sydney Hospital and Royal Alexandra Hospital from 1953 to 1986.

After his time in the Australian Navy he served on numerous committees during the development of ophthalmology as a public utility in New South Wales and Australia and was one of the principal founders of the Australian College of Ophthalmologists, serving on the Finance Committee from 1982 to 1998. When tutors were needed to teach in less popular areas he volunteered to accept the tasks and gave time and effort to developing these areas.

His considerable achievements were in the field of contact lens management and he was internationally renowned in all aspects of the fitting of soft contact lenses for aphakic babies and in the management of keratoconus with rigid lenses.

During his term as President, formal submissions were made to two Federal Government inquiries, one of which was Medifraud and the other was the Review of the Schedule of Medicare Benefits. The State Branches were able to assist with many of the inquiries and requests for specialised advice which were increasing in number each year. Accreditation of Training Posts continued under the auspices of the Inspector of Training Posts and a numbered register of accredited Training Posts was established. The RACO booklet on General Information and Regulations on Training Requirements and Examinations was published and distributed to all institutions involved in Training and was made freely available to all intending trainees. Progress towards restructuring the relationships between the RACS and RACO were made, with a view to the Conjoint Surgical Board in Ophthalmology being replaced by a Committee of Liaison between the RACO, OSNZ and the RACS, while changes were made to the method of appointment of examiners to the combined FRACO-FRACS examination. Continuing Education followed on the same as previously with the Co-ordinator of Workshops and the Convenor of Self-Assessment Programs, and a section of the journal was devoted to Continuing Education.

In his Presidential Address he discussed the importance of research and the ORIA, and addressed the role of education in relation to the establishment of the College. He acknowledged the inspirational efforts of the Censors-in-Chief of the College since its beginning, viz. Ken Howsam, Peter Rogers, Frank Billson and Des Coote. He also spoke about the acceptance of the invitation by New Zealand ophthalmologists to become New Zealand Fellows of the College, but because of differences in modes of practice and in medical politics, full union in an Australian and New Zealand College was not possible at that time. He advised that the main fields of joint endeavour would be determination of standards of training, the education of trainees, examinations, continuing education of ophthalmologists, and that the publication of the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Ophthalmology* would result in the merging of the *Australian Journal of Ophthalmology* and the *New Zealand Transactions*.

Jack's recreational interests were horticulture, golf, food and drink and he was a member of the Australian Club and the Royal Sydney Golf Club.