

## THE HISTORY OF THE COLLEGE JOURNAL

### Preamble

The Journal has evolved and flourished over the life span of nearly eighty years of the Ophthalmological Society of Australia (OSA) and the College.

With the founding of the OSA in 1938 Sir James Barrett was the first President and Dr Darcy Williams was the first Honorary Secretary (1). Annual meetings of the OSA were disrupted by World War II but were resumed in 1944. One of the stated objectives of the OSA was to publish a journal (2) and several committees were appointed with considerable terms of reference for editorial amongst other important matters. Dr Darcy Williams, who was an enterprising individual, commenced the publication of "*The Transactions of the Ophthalmological Society of Australia*" after the first meeting of the OSA. He funded the early editions, published on an annual basis, until they became self-supporting (3). The first Editorial Committee comprised Drs J Ringland Anderson (Chair), A James Flynn and J Bruce Hamilton with Dr Mervyn Archdall as Editor and the first Volume was published in Sydney by the Australasian Medical Publishing Company in 1939 (4). Dr J Ringland Anderson remained Chair of the *Transactions* until 1953 when J Antill Pockley took over with a completely new Editorial Committee, and Dr Mervyn Archdall remained as Editor until 1956 (5).

### Early Beginnings

Dr Reuben Hertzberg was demobilised from the Army in 1946, and after the publication of a paper by him in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, he was invited to write ophthalmological abstracts and review books for the *Medical Journal of Australia* and subsequently, for *Excerpta Medica* (6). From 1953 to 1967 he was on the Editorial Committee of *Transcripts of the Ophthalmological Society of Australia*, being appointed as Chair of the Editorial Committee in 1958. With the formation of the College, publication of "*The Transactions of the Ophthalmological Society of Australia*" became an inappropriate title and the last volume was published in 1970 as "*Transactions of the Australian College of Ophthalmologists*" Volumes 1-3, when RF Taylor and D Shortridge were the Editors. During his Presidency in 1971 Reuben Hertzberg took an active role in setting up a more frequent publication and resigned from his term as President to become the new Journal's first Editor (7). A team of Assistant Editors joined him and the initial editorial committee consisted of R Hertzberg (Chairman and Editor) RF Lowe, PA Rogers, DRL Hart and D Shortbridge and Volume I, No1 of "*The Australian Journal of Ophthalmology*" was published in February 1973. Its aim was stated simply as "It is hoped that this journal will serve as a means of communication and education not only among ophthalmologists in Australia, but that its value and acceptance will be world-wide" (8).

The Journals were published by the College itself with Reuben as the Editor: they were distributed to College members and to individuals and institutions throughout the world (9). Frank Martin became Editor in 1976 when Reuben retired as Editor: together with RF Lowe, MR Harrison, GGB Thomson, and Reuben Hertzberg, they published Volume 5, but papers submitted for publication were sparse and Frank called for more support from the members, especially the University Departments, so that the standard could be raised. A section on Continuing Education was commenced which was received favourably (10). Efforts to obtain listing in "*Current Contents*" were continued while hopes were continued that as the standard of the Journal improved it would be attained (11).

By 1980 the Journal had increased to four issues per year with the Annual Scientific Meetings providing sufficient scientific material for the Journal. Efforts to obtain listing in "*Current Contents*" were successful by that time and the Journal was also listed in "*Index Medicus*". It was hoped that this would result in Fellows who had hitherto published work in overseas journals, offering them to the Australian publication instead (12). The editorial committee was expanded because ophthalmology had become more specialized and expertise in the many facets of the specialty was required. At that time Drs RL Cooper, GRT Serpell, RD Williams, I Goldberg, J O'Day, while Professors Frank Billson and Doug Coster were included, adding their expertise to the

task of refereeing and editing papers, while Dr Jill Forrest was commissioned as the sub-editor to vet all papers before publication to ensure uniformity regarding style of manuscripts, giving the Journal a much more professional finish (13). Dr Justin O'Day served on the College Journal Editorial Board for 25 years (14).

The amalgamation of the *Australian Journal of Ophthalmology* and the *Transactions of the New Zealand Ophthalmic Society* took place in 1984-1985 and Dr Ken Tarr from NZ joined the Committee followed by JDC McDiarmid and PC Wellings the following year. The new journal, "*The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Ophthalmology*" (ANZJO) set a new standard in ophthalmic publishing in Australia and a series entitled "From the Therapeutics Committee" was prepared for inclusion as a regular feature in the journal (15).

When Frank Martin retired as Editor in 1987 he wrote an Editorial in the Journal stating that during his eleven years as Editor the Journal had undergone a significant change, as had ophthalmology: cataract extraction with intraocular lens replacement had become the routine mode of cataract management while technology had advanced, especially in the field of lasers, so that ophthalmologists utilising the improved techniques were able to obtain better results with far fewer complications. He anticipated that there should be plenty of original research emanating from the academic positions in all mainland states and New Zealand to fill the pages of the ANZJO (16). Frank Martin was replaced by Dr Ian Francis as Australian Editor; Reuben Hertzberg and Mark Harrison resigned and were replaced by Lee Lenton and Tim Haymet, while Glen Gole and RS Clemett were added to the committee (17). The Australian and the New Zealand academic departments contributed to the ANZJO and their collective scientific input benefitted the Journal enormously. The increased enthusiasm of the Fellows to write for the Journal indicated a constructive future of the ANZJO as a disseminator of ophthalmic knowledge, ideas and opinions. When Professor Frank Billson retired LW Hirst, A Cuthbertson and ACB Molteno were added to the Editorial Committee. Jutta Sieverding replaced Jill Forrest as Copy Editor while RS Clemett became New Zealand Editor (18).

Themes for each issue of the journal were introduced and Drs Anne Brookes and Michael Giblin were welcomed to the committee while Fellows and other specialists were encouraged to submit original articles. After having been in the role for four years Ian Francis resigned as Australian Editor. He was replaced by Alan McNab, and Malcolm Capon joined the committee. Jutta Sieverding continued as Copy Editor (19).

Philip Polkinghorne replaced JDC McDiarmid and RD Williams joined the committee when Alan McNab took over as Australian Editor and RS Clemett remained as NZ Editor. A few changes were made including the addition of the OSNZ shield to the cover and inclusion of "Instructions for Authors" which were revised in line with the Vancouver agreement, a style adopted by the vast majority of biomedical journals. As in most areas there was an increase in costs associated with the Journal production: competitive quotes for typesetting and printing were obtained annually (20).

In 1993-1994 Timothy Sullivan and Deb Colville replaced Ronald Lowe and Andrew Cuthbertson on the committee while Alan McNab and RS Clemett remained the Australian and New Zealand Editors respectively. Fellows were urged to consider their journal when submitting manuscripts for publication lest the standard should fall which would reflect poorly on academic standards (21).

Ian McAllister joined the committee in 1994-1995 and after four years in the role Alan McNab retired as Australian Editor of the ANZJO during which time he had introduced structured abstracts and the establishment of new sections based on preferences from surveys of readers. He was replaced by Dr Mark Gillies who pursued the international standing of The Journal along with the scope of The Journal augmented with articles on all aspects of visual science, clinical practice judgements, ophthalmic hypotheses, developing world ophthalmology and medicolegal/ethical issues, including the publication of a Supplement from the Australian Ophthalmic Visual Sciences Meeting (AOVSM) organised annually by the Ophthalmic Research Institute of Australia (ORIA) (22).

In 1997 Blackwell Science was engaged as the publishers of The Journal in its 25<sup>th</sup> year and it was anticipated that the presentation and layout would be improved. It was also anticipated that Blackwell would introduce a faster and more reliable distribution process, increased international availability and the prospect of being one of the first ophthalmic journals to be available through the Internet. Specialist section editors were introduced to improve editorial review and to solicit reviews and other material to clarify controversial issues in their subspecialties (23).

Mark Elder replaced ACB Molteno on the committee in New Zealand while four new Section Editors were appointed with John Grigg for Paediatrics, Paul Rosser for Orbital Plastics, and Justin O'Day and Michael Paine for Neuro-ophthalmology. The new Journal was distributed to all members of the College and the only cost to the College was the maintenance of a small editorial office with a part-time assistant. During 1996-1997 when Frank Martin was President, changes were made to the editing of the ANZJO with ten section editors appointed to cover the different sub-specialties; the position of "New Zealand Editor" was abolished with the retirement of Professor Richard Clemett; and registrars were encouraged to submit case reports for publication (24).

The Journal became available on the internet in 1998 through 'Journals Online' by which anyone could access the abstracts free of charge then either buy the full text of individual articles, or subscribe to each volume through the World Wide Web. An active international campaign was conducted and with increasing pressure on space some sections were forced to be omitted but the possibility of moving to six issues per year were negotiated with Blackwell (25). When Bill Gillies was President in 1999 the Journal was upgraded by Mark Gillies (who was Editor at the time) and the editorial team and the name changed to *Clinical and Experimental Ophthalmology* (26). The Journal, *Clinical and Experimental Ophthalmology* continued to make significant progress and by 2002 the *Impact Factor* had almost doubled over five years having risen from 0.333 to 0.659 (27).

In December 2002, Professor Charles McGhee formally accepted the role of Chief Editor of the Journal from Mark Gillies after a transitional period of joint editorship. Important changes were implemented with the number of section editors increased from 13 to 19 including a number of international reviewers with the aim of speeding up the review process. Ms Vicky Cartwright based in Auckland became coordinator for Charles McGhee (28). By building on the excellent foundations instituted by Mark Gillies, with the refinements and modifications incorporated by 2004, the journal impact factor (jif) had jumped from 0.71 to 1.15 bringing it to 20<sup>th</sup> in the top 41 peer-reviewed ophthalmology journal world wide (29).

## Manuscript Central

The transition to an online submission and review system in June 2004 was smooth and figures showed that it was a great success by encouraging an increase in submission numbers. The Editorial Board was expanded and internationalised to help facilitate review of the increased number of manuscripts (30). Taking advantage of the growth in submissions enabled the Board to set increasingly high standards for authors. Innovations introduced included encouragement of Fellows' readership with a CPD page in each issue earning CPD points with five questions based around each of two specially selected interesting and educational articles and the answers published in the following issue. "Online Early" publication was introduced to prevent lengthy delays and allow topical articles to reach the readership quickly. An increase from six to nine issues per annum was complemented with a new CEO cover being launched to celebrate the fifth year of publication (31). By 2007 the journal impact factor had increased to 1.247 placing the Journal 25<sup>th</sup> of the 45 ranked ophthalmology journals. The publishers, John Wiley & Sons Inc. acquired Blackwell Publishing with the merged business publishing 1,250 scholarly peer-reviewed journals (32).

The *Clinical and Experimental Ophthalmology* had continued to rise up the rankings of the Institute for Scientific Information Journal Citation Report over the next five to six years. By the time Dr Iain Dunlop became President a new contract with increased royalties and improved editorial assistance was re-negotiated with

Wiley-Blackwell for the continued publishing of *Clinical & Experimental Ophthalmology*, which was by that time recognised as a major international publication (33).

In 2009 the world of publishing had embraced the digital revolution with academic preference leaning increasingly to online search and access while the CEO was delivered in both traditional and contemporary formats. A special issue in January 2009 devoted to reviewing various imaging techniques available in ophthalmology with review articles from world experts was well received (34). March 2010 saw the publication of the second “Special Issue” consisting of ten reviews of corneal surgical techniques which was hoped to generate high numbers of citations in coming years (35).

Dr Salmaan Qureshi and Professor Bob Casson assumed full responsibility for the Journal in 2010, taking over from Prof Charles McGhee, who had served as Editor-in-Chief for eight years with the CEO emerging as a world class international ophthalmic journal. He remained on the Board in an advisory capacity as Associate Editor. In March 2011, CEO became the first ophthalmic journal to offer its content to iPad users with the launch globally of the CEO iPad app. More than 2200 users had downloaded the app giving them free access to all recent CEO content including virtual and special issues. The journal editors and managers continued to work hard with editorial teams to ensure that what was published was not only of interest and of high quality but was cited often and regularly (36).

By the time Bill Glasson had become President in 2011, under the energetic leadership of Dr Salmaan Qureshi and Professor Bob Casson, the journal impact factor (which measures the average number of times articles in the journal are cited in other publications) had continued to grow, taking it into the top 20 ophthalmology journals in the world. Increasing numbers of manuscripts were received from a broad international author base and research papers from 21 different countries were published in that year Virtual issues bringing together previously published articles in an online-only issue allowed researchers to easily view and access recent CEO articles in their areas of interest. The fourth issue was launched in 2011 and focussed on uveitis with 18 articles offered as free content, thereby increasing the potential citations. Feedback proved the popularity with readers of special issues on both retina and glaucoma in 2012 (37).

The cover of the CEO was updated again and the new version was launched in July 2012. A revitalised styling, reflecting the change to blue of RANZCO’s colour branding, replaced the familiar green and gold cover. In that year the rotation of Board members was introduced for the purpose of attracting new ideas and fresh expertise to the journal (38).

In 2009 the CEO had commenced publishing Special Issues of free content to enable all readers to read up on review articles from the latest research of world experts based around a central theme. The Special Issue in 2014 focused on the field of genomics in ophthalmology and featured eight invited review articles discussing the impact of genomics on ophthalmic conditions such as corneal dystrophies, primary open-angle glaucoma, and retinoblastoma. A new Anywhere Article format was introduced in February 2014 through the Wiley Online Library in the format of advanced HTML for easier and more productive reading (39).

It was reported in the 2014-2015 Annual Report that the Journal Impact Factor had jumped to 18<sup>th</sup> place in the ophthalmology journal rankings with a new, record Impact Factor of 2.35. The excellent achievement could be attributed to the hard work of the Editorial team and the targeted policy of the editors to focus on the Impact Factor and to attract top quality research that had been reviewed and published in a timely fashion. The Special Issue focussed on the “mechanisms of disease and basic science in ophthalmology” with nine high-impact review and original articles from highly-cited author groups. In a new move, five articles were included in a cross-journal virtual issue focussing on indigenous health (40).

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