



**ANZSOM**

The Australian and New Zealand Society  
of Occupational Medicine Inc

# CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

## 1968 - 2018

*A collection of mementos, reflections and  
submissions from members past and present*



# FOREWORD

## Happy 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ANZSOM!

How very exciting for our members, friends, families and colleagues. The year has been a time of reflection for past and present members, an opportunity to celebrate and reminisce our honoured history. Whether you are a nurse or doctor or fellow or have an interest in occupational health and medicine more broadly, we all share a purpose and vision of ensuring work does not have a deleterious effect on workers.

I personally have spent time reflecting on how much work has changed over my own career. How the nature of the work has evolved, the seemingly endless scientific and technology advances, the changing workforce demographics, how language and terminology have influenced change, helping to break down barriers and encourage open conversations in particular around mental health. Diversity and inclusion, the design of work and of organisations, a global economy - so much has changed in the past 50 years.

But what has not changed is that work is a detriment of health, good work, safe workplaces and healthy workers as is our vision. An organisation's greatest asset continues to be its people – workers, just like you and me.

ANZSOM's purpose has not faulted in our 50 years. Our mission to engage and collaborate with our members and other professionals, governments and relevant organisations to facilitate workplaces that are safe, healthy and committed to worker wellbeing remains the core of our existence.

We are proud of our history our contributions and of our members, congratulations to you all.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melinda Miller".

**Melinda Miller**

Federal President (2014-current)

This collection is by no means a complete history of ANZSOM, but is a compilation of reflections, images and documents supplied by past and present ANZSOM members.

# EARLY HISTORY OF ANZSOM

The formation of ANZSOM reflects the burgeoning interest in occupational health that developed in Australia in the 50's and 60's. Early histories of the Society have been documented by Mannie Rathus, focusing on the Queensland Branch, and by William (Bill) Glass, describing the establishment of the organisation in New Zealand. These two documents are accessible on the ANZSOM website.

A further document by Hugh Denehy was recently discovered among ANZSOM archives held in trust by Kevin Sleigh. This describes the early history of the Victorian Section of Industrial Medicine of the AMA and the subsequent formation of the Australian Society of Occupational Medicine.

## **A brief history of the formation of ANZSOM**

**By Dr W. Hugh Denehy, April 1986**

In the early 1950's, the Section of Industrial Medicine, Victorian Branch, AMA, was formed and it is suggested that information on the early activities of the Section be obtained from Dr AJ Christophers, as he would have this knowledge. Certainly, one of the members in the 1950's would be Dr WF Cooper, who was then Medical Director, GMH.

In the early 1960's, the Section became very active with the following participating, RD Wilson, the late Ferguson Laidlaw (Ford, Geelong), AJ Christophers, KE Brown, WF Cooper, the late Dr Clive Mendelsohn and WH Denehy. From memory, F Laidlaw was President 1960, with AJ Christophers active on the Committee, and C. Mendelsohn Treasurer.

In approximately March 1960, a visit was arranged to Ford Motor Company at Campbellfield, there being about 20 members and visitors attending, and all were taken on a tour of the manufacturing facility by small train. While various aspects of the manufacturing were seen, detail was omitted, as the first Falcon was being produced for the Australian market. Following this, there were several factory visits, and clinical meetings held in different areas, several at GMH Fisherman's Bend, several at Ford, and certainly one at Mobil at South Melbourne.

Somewhere in 1960-62, F Laidlaw died of an infarct, and he was sadly missed by other members of the Section for his friendship and his enthusiasm for 'Industrial Medicine'. In approximately August 1962, Clive Mendelsohn died suddenly, and the position of Treasurer became vacant, this being filled by WH Denehy.

From 1962 onwards, factory visits and clinical meetings continued with the addition of several being held at Olympic Tyre & Rubber Company at West Footscray through KE Brown. Also, during this period, weekend clinical meetings were held at the Emerald Country Club and these were highly successful with outside speakers, two of whom were NP Jackson, Deputy General Manager, Joseph Lucas Australia Ltd, and Sir Charles McGrath, Managing Director Repco Limited. One disastrous after dinner speech was on the Pensioner Medical Service which bore no relationship to those attending.

In approximately 1965-66, a weekend meeting was held at 'The Cumberland', at Marysville, with the National Heart Foundation, VIC Branch. The theme of this meeting was 'Heart Disease and Work'. The meeting was highly successful from the viewpoint of papers, discussion, and contact with cardiologists. One incident of this particular meeting was the late Douglas Donald being locked out of his Rolls Royce by his wife leaving the keys in the vehicle.

In 1967, WH Denehy became Chairman of the Section for a period of two years with Committee Members being: WF Cooper, KE Brown, JE Milne, and BR Grove. Any other members' names could be obtained from the Minutes of the Meeting of that time.

In Sydney, DA Ferguson had been giving consideration for some time to the formation of an Australian Society of Occupational Medicine and arrangements were made early in 1968, after discussion between the Victorian Section of Industrial Medicine and the NSW Section of Occupational Medicine to have a joint meeting in Canberra to discuss the formation of an Australian Society.

A social meeting took place on Friday 25th October at the Australian Institute of Anatomy, followed by an all-day meeting on Saturday 26th and a meeting on the morning of Sunday 27th. Arrangements were made by DA Ferguson, and the meetings were chaired jointly by WH Denehy and H McCulloch, from the NSW Railways. Approximately 32 members attended the meeting, a number accompanied by wives. Victorians attending were: (and this list is probably incomplete) WH Denehy, KE Brown, RD Wilson, BR Grove, the late R Curry, J Gowland, DR O'Donnell. NSW delegates included: H McCulloch, DA Ferguson, WP Nelson.

It was resolved to form the Australian Society of Occupational Medicine (ASOM), and all those attending became Foundation Members. Foundation membership remained open for a period of approximately 12-18 months after the meeting.

On the evening of Saturday 26 October, a dinner was held at the Hotel Canberra for delegates and wives, as well as representatives of the ACT Medical Association, Commonwealth Department of Health and others. Following the dinner, all assembled in the lounge for an address by Dr R Greville on ergonomics. The final decision of that meeting was to appoint a Steering Committee to report to a meeting 12 months hence with the Memorandum and Articles for approval. The Chairman of the Steering Committee was WP Nelson, and the Secretary DA Ferguson.

In Canberra at the end of September 1969, at a meeting convened by the Steering Committee, the Australian Society of Occupational Medicine became official, with the first President being WP Nelson, and the Secretary DA Ferguson. Other Office Bearers would have to be obtained from the Minutes.

Early in 1970, the New South Wales and Victorian Branches of the Society were formed, taking over the role of the previous Sections, and conducting plant visits and clinical meetings.

Late in 1971 a meeting was held at the Sebel Town House in Sydney, with WP Nelson presiding, the organisation having been once again undertaken by DA Ferguson. A number of Victorians attended including RD Wilson, WF Cooper, KE Brown, BR Grove, and WH Denehy. At this meeting a new Federal Executive was elected, this time from Victoria with DR O'Donnell as President, KE Brown as Secretariat and R Doig Treasurer. Possibly RE Davies was Treasurer at this time. WH Denehy was co-opted as Assistant Secretariat- Assistant Treasurer, and Executive Meetings were held mainly at the home of DR O'Donnell.

One memorable meeting commenced very late due to there having been a flash flood with water one metre high in Elizabeth Street, Melbourne. Digressing, it was probably the 1970 meeting in Canberra that brought the first visit of CD Hall from New Zealand, showing the interest of New Zealand physicians in joining the Australian Society of Occupational Medicine. As a result of the interest shown, at the Scientific Meeting held at the Park Royal Motor Inn in Melbourne in later 1972, the name of the Society was changed and became The Australian and New Zealand Society of Occupational Medicine (ANZSOM). There were two New Zealand members present at that particular meeting, to hear the name change, these being CD Hall and WI Glass.



With tremendous interest in the Society emanating from New Zealand, the decision was made to hold the 1973 Scientific Meeting in New Zealand and Rotorua was selected as the venue. This meeting was most successful, with a number of Australians travelling to Rotorua, and a large attendance from physicians in New Zealand interested in occupational medicine. At this meeting the executive returned to New South Wales and Professor Ferguson became Federal President.

1974 saw the Adelaide meeting on October 17th and 18th, with a large interstate contingent, and a memorable visit by a number to Alice Springs and Ayres Rock following that meeting. In 1975 the Annual Scientific Meeting was held in Hobart, with the Federal Council Meeting on Tuesday, 11th November, the day that Sir John Kerr sacked Mr Whitlam.

During 1975, there had been some discussions between Professor Ferguson and Professor Yamaguchi on the possible entry of ANZSOM to the Asian Association of Occupational Health. Conditions were favourable, and the current Federal President, WH Denehy, travelled to Tokyo for the Asian Association of Occupational Health Conference. At a meeting on Sunday, September 26th 1976, a submission was made to the General Committee of the Asian Association for admission of ANZSOM. This being unanimously agreed. Furthermore, at this same meeting the venue for the 1979 meeting was decided. ANZSOM made a bid for this meeting to be held in Sydney, but both Australia and Singapore were beaten by South Korea. The sessions of the Conference were well attended by quite a large Australian contingent, approximately 14, with sessions being chaired by DA Ferguson and WH Denehy. At the final social function, the retiring President, Professor Kubota, announced the Member Countries to supply the Vice Presidents for the ensuing three years, and stated that Australia would provide a Vice President, this falling to WH Denehy. Continuity was established by this being maintained for two three-year periods, whereupon Dr J Stoke from New Zealand became Vice President.

1979 saw the Asian Association Conference in Seoul, with quite a reasonable contingent of Australians, approximately ten. The meeting was quite well organised at the Hotel Shilla, and the Conference ended on the evening of Friday October 26. It was ascertained the following day that President Pak of South Korea had been assassinated, and this resulted in the proclamation of Military Law with extension of the curfew.

## **Dr W. Hugh Denehy, 1986**

### **Hugh Denehy Oration**

Each year a member of ANZSOM is invited to present an oration at the Annual Scientific Meeting in honour one of ANZSOM's founding fathers, Dr Hugh Denehy (1925-1996).

Dr Denehy was a great contributor to the profession of occupational medicine and held the position of Chairman of the Victorian / Tasmanian Branch before becoming Federal President. He then became a Foundation Fellow of the Australian College of Occupational Medicine in 1982. His contributions are highly valued by the Society and are reflected in our selection for the annual Hugh Denehy Oration.

Recent presenters of the oration are included on the ANZSOM website.

# PRESIDENTIAL REFLECTIONS

This section is a compilation of reflections submitted by past Presidents as a way of recording some of the key milestones of the last 50 years.

We asked past Presidents to submit their reflections guided by the following questions:

- 1. When did you first join ANZSOM?
- 2. What do you recall were the main issues in workplace health around the time of your Presidency?
- 3. What were the main challenges and opportunities for occupational medicine professionals around that time?
- 4. What are your recollections of the role of ANZSOM at that time and any significant changes or challenges for the organisation?
- 5. Do you have memories of other prominent ANZSOM members from your time as President?
- 6. Who were the key people supporting the work of ANZSOM at that time?
- 7. Do you have any personal reflections/anecdotes of your experience within the organisation and more broadly at that time?

## Past Presidents of ANZSOM

<b>1968</b>	Dr W P Nelson (NSW)	<b>1992-94</b>	Dr K S Sleigh (VIC)
<b>1969-71</b>	Dr W P Nelson (NSW)	<b>1994-96</b>	Dr R J Scott (ACT)
<b>1971-73</b>	Dr D R O'Donnell (VIC)	<b>1996-98</b>	Dr J Cross (SA)
<b>1973-75</b>	Prof D A Ferguson (NSW)	<b>1998-2000</b>	Dr Helen Jagger (NSW)
<b>1975-77</b>	Dr W H Denehy (VIC)	<b>2000-02</b>	Dr Tony Barr (WA)
<b>1977-79</b>	Dr K J Wilson (SA)	<b>2002-04</b>	Dr Barry Gilbert (VIC)
<b>1979-81</b>	Dr S F McCullagh (NSW)	<b>2004-06</b>	Dr Chris Walls (NZ)
<b>1981-83</b>	Dr J Stoke (NZ)	<b>2006-08</b>	Dr A Newman-Morris (VIC)
<b>1983-85</b>	Dr K E Brown (VIC)	<b>2008-10</b>	Dr Virginia Pascall (NSW)
<b>1985-87</b>	Dr N W H Ormonde (WA)	<b>2010-12</b>	Dr Robert McCartney (QLD)
<b>1987-89</b>	Prof. C A Mitchell (QLD)	<b>2012-14</b>	Dr Amanda Sillcock (VIC)
<b>1989-92</b>	Dr G B Hanna (NSW)	<b>2014-current</b>	Ms Melinda Miller (QLD)

## Dr DR O'Donnell (VIC)

### President, 1971-1973

Dr O'Donnell reflects on his time as president in a letter to Bob (Scott). Letter discovered in ANZSOM archives held in trust by Dr Kevin Sleigh.

15th December, 1980

Dear Bob,

I suppose it is really up to others to judge the success of our term of office. On reflection I believe I had in yourself, Keith, Hugh Denehy and Ron Doig a really first class team of cooperative and willing helpers. This permitted me to concentrate on what I felt was very important namely selling the young society to private enterprise. If my arteriosclerotic memory serves me correctly I addressed as guest speaker some thirty seven luncheons, dinners and various societies in the two years.

Perhaps the overwhelming success of our requests for donations to our Melbourne Conference on Rehabilitation was a measure of some success in that field. It certainly turned an inherited deficit in the Society's Funds to a very healthy surplus which put the Society on a sound financial basis. Likewise the 100% acceptance by the twenty leaders of industry invited to the Saturday night dinner was an additional indication of their interest in the Society.

The incorporation of N.Z. members and the change to A.N.Z.S.O.M. during our term of office was I believe a very important step forward. We also instituted a number of firsts:

1. First conference outside Australia. (ROTORUA)
2. First conference to which members of the nursing and allied professions were invited.
3. First conference and dinner to which leaders of industry were invited. I think it a great pity that this idea was not pursued with more enthusiasm by subsequent committees.

Looking back over the years I think we can claim a fair measure of achievement. This was due to the fact that not only did we as a committee, but our two interstate delegates at that time Cooper Guthrie and David Ferguson, had as our prime objective the advancement and interests of the Society.

If any recognition is to be made in the future I would consider it not as a personal honour but as one to a team of which I had the pleasure to be the "TITULAR HEAD".

With best wishes for the festive season.



## Dr Helen Jagger (NSW)

### President, 1998-2000

#### Issues impacting on Occupational Health practitioners at that time that stand out to me included

- Sleep apnoea amongst commercial drivers in particular was being recognised as a significant health issue but treatment options were still controversial. CPAP machines concentrators were emerging as a “useful” treatment but were cumbersome and poorly tolerated. There was some resistance amongst the general medical workforce to acceptance of both the condition and the treatment with fairly brutal surgery still being common in severe cases rather than CPAP.
- Job demands specific to each separate job were beginning to be used as the screening and decision-making reference point for fitness for work medical examinations rather than blanket medical or wide-ranging health questionnaires as had been the common practice. Cases of discrimination were starting to appear in the courts as a result of adverse outcomes for employees or applicants for work who had been subjected to a generalist approach.

#### Issues for ANZSOM as an organisation that I recall included:

- Relationships and shared education opportunities between ANZSOM and AFOM (later to become the AFOEM) varied widely from state to state and depended on the history and the significant members in each state. When he was President, Dr Bob Scott had achieved a MOU between the two organisations at Federal level but the impact did not flow through effectively to all branches, NSW /ACT in particular. Efforts of Dr Mark Burns and Dr Wing Chan helped to later really get a practical working alliance in NSW.
- There was emerging need for a national website as a database and for information sharing. Dr Ralph Meyer hosted a webpage that the NSW/ACT branch used and initially this prompted work on a more general and robust web presence that has continued to serve us well since.
- With input initially from Dr John Cross in his presidential year, we were able to secure formal relationship with the NSW Dust Diseases Board that reached across all branches. Working with CEO Geoff Lansley and grants committee chair Sylvia Kidziak (now an Honorary Fellow of ANZSOM) there was agreement to fund speakers of interest and a financial sponsorship for the Annual Scientific Meetings in exchange for distribution of relevant information and ongoing education of ANZSOM members
- Categories of membership of ANZSOM were extended to include “Affiliate membership” though there were only a very few of these taken up.

In conclusion I am immensely proud of my association with ANZSOM as its first female president. The Annual Scientific Meetings became my annual family holidays from the beginning of my membership and friendships and professional contacts made then have been enduring. The content of these meetings has always been practical and enjoyable and is now enhanced with inclusion of the nurses as equals. Congratulations to all ANZSOM members and colleagues who have helped to build and maintain this great organisation over the past 50 years!

#### Dr Helen Jagger



Dr Helen Jagger was Federal President from 1998-2000 and is a long-standing member of ANZSOM and a great contributor to the New South Wales Branch. Helen has had a diverse career, spanning roles in health service delivery and senior management in the New South Wales health system. She also has over 20 years' experience as a surveyor and administrator for the Australian Council on Health Care Standards (ACHS). Helen is currently enjoying retirement and voluntary service for the Rotary Club of Campsie and as a consumer advocate on the Clinical Governance Committee for Tresillian Family Care Centres.



## **Dr Barry Gilbert (VIC)**

### **President, 2002-2004**

#### **When did you first join ANZSOM?**

I joined ANZSOM in 1985. At that time we, 'younger' Members, were welcomed with open arms by the original founders of ANZSOM, including Hugh Denehy, Jim Milne, Darrel O'Donnell (who were ANZSOM Fellows), and Keith Brown and Bob Scott. All were passionate about clinical occupational medicine. The VIC/TAS Branch met regularly in Parkville and relationships grew.

Bruce Hocking at that time had commenced an excellent course in occupational medicine at Trawalla, the home of the RACGP. The course changed the vocation of almost all who went through it, and most went on to specialise in the field. The new generation had begun. I recall the wonderful international event, ICOH 1987 in Sydney, which reaffirmed my decision to do the required study and become a practising specialist.

In May 1987, David Ferguson was a powerful figure but during the presidencies of Nick Ormonde (WA) and Charles Mitchell (QLD) storm clouds appeared over the relationship between ANZSOM and the emerging College (ACOM). Federal Council actually recommended dissolution of ANZSOM. I recall my utter disbelief that the Society, which had been around since 1967, was about to disappear, and that all the GP's who worked in the field were about to lose their representative body. Hugh Denehy, I recall, was a determined advocate resisting such change and Hugh and I became very close, even living in the same street in Camberwell for a time. I completed my MPH (occupational health stream) at Monash in 1989, and then had to decide whether to join ACOM, or go with the Faculty of Public Health Medicine, which is what I eventually did. My rationale at the time was my personal view that in many respects modern occupational medicine was public health within captive (workplace) populations, and that public health was a broader field with international connections. I have never regretted that decision. It was a matter of some reflection that the keynote speakers at ICOH2018 were in fact eminent public health physicians. That ANZSOM not only survived but prospered was due to strong advocates in each Branch, but Hugh Denehy remained the person I credited with saving ANZSOM. Of course, there were others, Charles Mitchell and Pat Doughty come to mind, and Trevor Smith, but few members were more passionate than Hugh. When he died suddenly in 1996 it was a very sad time. Attending Branch meetings and taking on General Council positions of Secretary and Treasurer seemed only natural to me, and attending the ASM was my highlight of each professional year. The ASM's became family affairs. They were fun. They were also highly informative and practical.

#### **What do you recall were the main issues in workplace health around the time of your Presidency?**

I was President in 2002-2004. I was preceded by Tony Barr from WA and succeeded by Chris Walls from NZ. In 2001 the John Stokes Medal was first awarded in New Zealand to Chris Walls. John was Director of Public Health in New Zealand and a tireless worker with the WHO until his unexpected death in July 2000. The ASMs in the years of my Presidency were Adelaide, Fraser Island and Norfolk Island. Nothing gave me grater pleasure than to present Richie Gun with Fellowship of ANZSOM at Norfolk Island in 2004. The main organisational issues for ANZSOM were the perennial tasks of building membership and improving communications and finances. We established the Flywheel magazine in late 2000 which then ran until the website was developed.

#### **What were the main challenges and opportunities for occupational medicine professionals around that time?**

The main challenges were falling employment for occupational physicians, lack of a clinical focus in training and of course diminishing training opportunities. These remain challenges today, but training under the RACP for FAFOEM, and the associated tertiary courses now available are great improvements.

At the same time, it was obvious that ANZSOM needed to expand its own horizons and the merging with the Occupational Nurses, and ANZSOM's role as a foundation member of the Health & Safety Professionals Alliance are truly great outcomes. It took many years to accomplish these goals and moves to achieve such goals started in the early 2000's.

**Do you have memories of other prominent ANZSOM members from your time as President?**

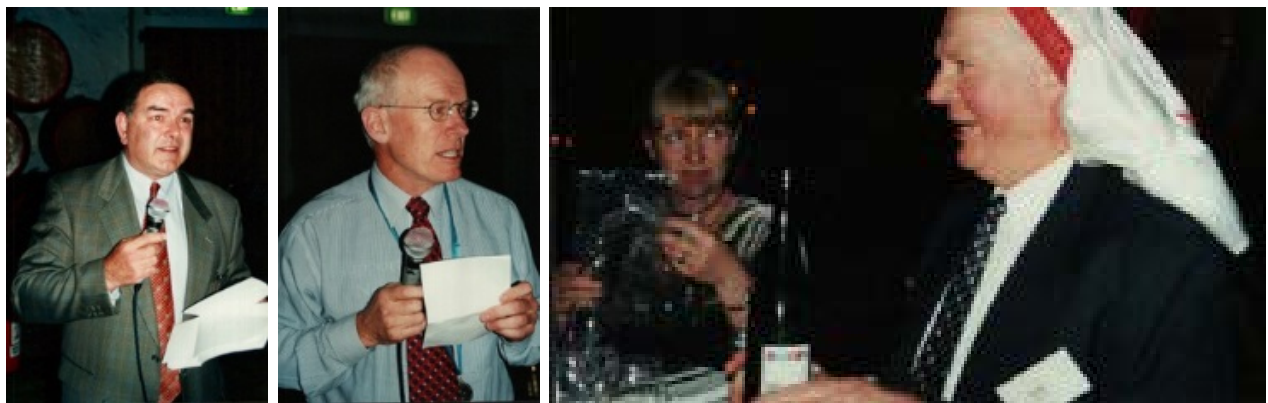
There were heaps, including Bill Hardy, Ross Andrews and Andrew Gibson, who are sadly no longer with us; Vicki Ashton, David Barton, Rhyl Black, Ian Bonwick, Anthony Brown, Mark Burns, Ian Goater, David Goddard, David Gras, Edwin Knight, Barrie Kenny, Ralph Meyer and on we go...

**Who were the key people supporting the work of ANZSOM at that time?**

My colleagues within ANZSOM have become my own personal history of the Society. Kevin Sleigh, Rudi Gasser, Andrew Newman-Morris, John Cross, Geoff Graham, Richie Gun, Helen Jagger, Andrew Van Ballegooyen, Chris Walls, Edwin Whiteside, Maggie Goldie, David Middleton, Chris Oates, Amanda Sillcock and Jane Wadsley, to name just a few. As a consequence of their dedication to ANZSOM, they have become truly wonderful and warm long-term friends. It has been a great journey because of them.

ANZSOM has been, and I hope always will be, about the people.

**Do you have any personal reflections/anecdotes of your experience within the organisation and more broadly at that time?**



*From left to right: Barry Gilbert, Chris Walls and Rudi Gasser at the Great Debate, Barossa Valley 2002*

There are many memorable moments, however none more so than the ASM's in Broome, Darwin & Kakadu, Fraser, Norfolk and Hamilton Islands, and Queenstown. Bass Strait, (twice on King Island – once by DC-3) not to mention countless other branch activities and weekends.

The 'Great Debate' held in the Barossa Valley in 2002 (pictured above) will always be remembered, when Australia beat New Zealand, by majority vote of those present. The result was also subject to debate, mainly by far easterners). In the end we all agreed that NZ was the 7th State of Australia.

**Dr Barry Gilbert**



Dr Barry Gilbert is a specialist public health physician, trained in epidemiology, biostatistics and occupational health at Monash University. He made the move to Launceston, Tasmania a few years ago and continues to consult in Victoria, Australian Capital Territory, Queensland and South Australia. A long-standing and enthusiastic contributor to ANZSOM, Barry was Federal President from 2002-2004. He is active in a number of other societies including the International Society for Infectious Diseases (ISID), the Australian Pain Society (APS) and the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH). He also sits on the Tasmania State Committee of the RACP.

## **Dr Chris Walls (NZ)**

### **President, 2004-2006**

#### **When did you first join ANZSOM?**

I first joined ANZSOM in 1986 after completing the Diploma of Industrial Health at Otago that year, my first Federal conference was at Queenstown in that year and that, for me, set the tone for all the great conferences that followed.

I recall Hugh Denehy, David Douglas, Nic Ormonde, Rob Scott, Richie Gunn and many other notable characters.

#### **What do you recall were the main issues in workplace health around the time of your Presidency?**

ANZSOM was faced with declining interest from employers and their organisations in preserving the health of those at work and scepticism (until sick) from employees.

The discipline laboured (and continues to do so) from indifference or a lack of understanding from our colleagues.

Marketing the advantages of ANZSOM to colleagues involved in occupational medicine but not engaged with professional organisations in that discipline

#### **What were the main challenges and opportunities for occupational medicine professionals around that time?**

Adapting to the changing industrial and Human Resource ethos of the day.

Ensuring access and quality advice to those Government and business organisations that did utilise occupational medicine services.

Encouraging positive relationships between our colleagues in Occupational Health Nursing and Hygiene and the Faculty of Occupational Medicine.

#### **What are your recollections of the role of ANZSOM at that time and any significant changes or challenges for the organisation?**

In my view ANZSOM has always been a co-operative organisation promoting Occupational Health and sharing Occupational Health resources and information amongst its members.

Its strength has been that relationship.

Its difficulties have been gathering and promoting resources from its members who are all busy engaged professionals, ANZSOM has to ask them to generate resources after work from their free time and it is a credit to the organisation and its members that it is able to do so.

I would also acknowledge the partnership with many (Australian) organisations such as the Dust Diseases Board and the Australian judiciary that allowed the exchange of information and expertise to members.

Do you have memories of other prominent ANZSOM members from your time as President?

ANZSOM is a collection of friendly characters too numerous to identify in full. I have fond memories of defeating Barry Gilbert in the Barossa Valley Debate (picture below) and great admiration for such characters as Bill Glass (NZ), John Ferguson, Richie Gun, Rob Scott (who superbly managed me to produce a good conference in Christchurch NZ) and Hugh Denehy.



*Chris Walls (left) and Barry Gilbert (right) at the Great Debate, Barossa Valley 2002*

Who were the key people supporting the work of ANZSOM at that time?

The key people supporting ANZSOM are its members and I welcome the inclusion of aligned disciplines.

Do you have any personal reflections/anecdotes of your experience within the organisation and more broadly at that time?

Well, when dealing with Australians speak loudly and carry a bigger stick.

Dr Chris Walls



Dr Chris Walls is an occupational medicine specialist in Auckland, New Zealand and has practised extensively in both New Zealand and Australia. His experience includes senior management roles in the Department of Labour (OSH, now WorkSafe New Zealand) and as the occupational physician for Auckland and Counties Manukau District Health Boards. His expertise spans numerous industries from aluminium smelting and steel production to transport. He currently works in private practice, as Chief Medical Officer for KiwiRail and as an Occupational Physician at Counties Manukau District Health Board. He has published extensively on issues in clinical occupational medicine and is the co-author of Brooker’s Workplace Stress in New Zealand. Chris has been active within ANZSOM, both in Australia and New Zealand since 1986 and was Federal President between 2004-2006.



# NURSE INVOLVEMENT

The Australian College of Occupational Health Nurses (ACOHN) was formed in 1976 (then known as the Australian Occupational Health Nurses Association), to represent nurses working in industry, commerce and government. In 2008, ACOHN amalgamated with ANZSOM in response to the changing needs of nurses working in occupational health. ANZSOM has since benefited from its rich and diverse membership base, with 2018 marking the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of amalgamation with ACOHN. Following is a reflection by Sally Kane on ACOHN's journey from inception to 2007 - the year before amalgamation.

## *ACOHN'S journey From There to Here..... (A reflection by Sally Kane)*

"At the Symposium this year there were no new Fellows to induct and it prompted me to take stock and look back at the College and the journey it has taken over the years. I think we can learn a lot from history and by looking at where we have come from and the reason for our beginnings we can fast track that to present day and really make an honest appraisal of the present and of course our future.

If we look at our web site in 2006 we read that the college started its life in 1976, 30 years ago as the Australian Occupational Health Nurses Association to meet the needs of the increasing number of Nurses in industry, commerce and government. The Association came under the Australian Nursing Federation umbrella and as such was a special interest group. Over time members identified that there was a need to move away from the ANF and become an Association in our own right representing the many and varied roles that members were performing.

In 1986, a further 10 years on, the split was made after a great deal of agonizing and negotiating and AOHNA was on its way as the Professional Body representing Occupational Health Nurses in Australia.

Each state had their own Executive and there was a central Secretariat that managed the Association. For those of you who were members at that time Elaine Siggins, was approached to help us run the association as she had the job of providing secretarial support for the Occupational Health Physicians and as a Nurse herself in a previous life, she seemed a natural fit. Each year Branches would undertake the role of providing educational support for Members in the form of seminars and of course the Conference, which was a biannual event.

It was in the mid Eighties that I became involved with the Association and became aware of the unique role it played in providing the networking opportunities and life long friendships that I have personally experienced.

The organization is really a collection of people and as such needs to be constantly evolving to stay current and relevant to those it is representing. As such AOHNA went through another change when it became the Australian College of Occupational Health Nurses, ACOHN, in 1998. This was in response to the changing needs of the organization and those it was representing. At this time Associates were admitted to the College who had an interest in Occupational Health and did not necessarily need to be an Occupational Health Nurse. At this time many of us were moving into other allied areas of Occupational Health such as Rehabilitation, Safety and Environment and as such ACOHN needed to reflect the change to stay relevant and viable. And so we move into our current environment, 30 years on from inception and we are again faced with a need to look at the state of the College and how it can best represent its members.

An organization is only as good as the people it represents and as such we need to have members who are willing to have a say as to what type of College ACOHN will be in the future. Everyone working in this field has jobs that are pressured and overloaded but in order to balance that we all need to take time out to foster our professional lives and networking. As one famous President said many years ago slightly amended, Ask not what ACOHN can do for you, rather what you can do for ACOHN! Although there are a small band of people working feverishly in the background the College needs to evolve and take stock of its future. We have over 200 members and we need to be able to represent them all in their varied occupations and disciplines.

In the AGM later today the Executive will be addressing this very point and over the next few months they will be exploring options to take the College forward and make sure it is a viable entity representing the majority. As an inaugural Fellow of the College I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the current and past Executives and Members of the Board of Management who have given selflessly of their time and enthusiasm to our College. Without these very special people ACOHN would never have had the opportunity to represent Occupational Health Nurses over the last 30 years."

## **ACOHN SYMPOSIUM 2007**

*Mark your Diaries and  
WATCH THIS SPACE.....*

**Monday 1st & Tuesday 2nd October 2007  
Melbourne - the Brighton Savoy**



# ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS

The Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) has and continues to be the key educational and networking event for ANZSOM, attracting delegates from around Australia, New Zealand and overseas. The first national meeting of medical practitioners working in occupational medicine was held in Canberra in 1968 and involved over 30 individuals. It was during this meeting that the Australian Society of Occupational Medicine (ASOM) was formed. In 1972, ASOM welcomed colleagues from New Zealand forming the Australian and New Zealand Society of Occupational Medicine (ANZSOM), and in 1973, the first ANZSOM conference was held in Rotorua, New Zealand.

### GUEST SPEAKERS

In order of Programme appearance.

The Hon. R.J. Tizard,  
Professor Cecil Lewis,  
  
Fr. Felix Donnelly,  
  
Sister Anne Ewart,  
Dr. M. Glick,  
Dr. D.R. O'Donnell,  
Dr. D.A. Ferguson,  
  
Dr. K. Humphries,

Minister of Health,  
Dean, Auckland School  
of Medicine,  
  
Department Community Health,  
Auckland School of Medicine,  
  
Moxgel Woolens Ltd, Dunedin,  
Joint Civil Board, Sydney,  
T.A.A. Melbourne,  
School of Public Health &  
Tropical Medicine, University  
of Sydney,  
  
The Ford Company,  
New Zealand,  
  
Olympic Consolidated  
Industries Ltd, Melbourne,  
  
The Ford Motor Co,  
Melbourne,  
  
Rheumatologist, Auckland,  
Repco Limited, Melbourne,  
Department of Health,  
Wellington,  
  
Dust Diseases Board,  
Sydney,  
  
Manufacturers Mutual Insurance  
Co. Sydney,  
Monier, Monsanto & B.A.L.M.  
Occupational Health Specialist,  
Auckland,  
  
General Manager, Wormald  
International N.Z. Limited,

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### PROGRAMME AND REGISTRATION FORM

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY OF OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE

and

NEW ZEALAND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSES ASSOCIATION.

to be held at


## ROTORUA INTERNATIONAL HOTEL ROTORUA

THURS. 13 SEPT. to SUN. 16 SEPT. 1973

TRAVEL AGENT :  
NEW ZEALAND - L.D. NATHAN TRAVEL SERVICE,  
P.O. BOX 190, AUCK.  
Mr. Geoff Earl,  
AUSTRALIA - GUTHRIES TRAVEL

PROGRAMME PRINTED THROUGH THE COURTESY OF WORMALD INTERNATIONAL N.Z. LTD.

Conference brochure: Rotorua 1973




AUSTRALIAN and NEW ZEALAND  
SOCIETY of OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE  
1975

HOBART  
NOVEMBER 1975


A.N.Z.S.O.M.  
Annual Scientific Meeting Sept. 23-26 1986  
"Towards 2000"



ABSTRACTS

MERLIN HOTEL  
PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

A.N.Z.S.O.M.88  
THE PRACTICE OF OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE

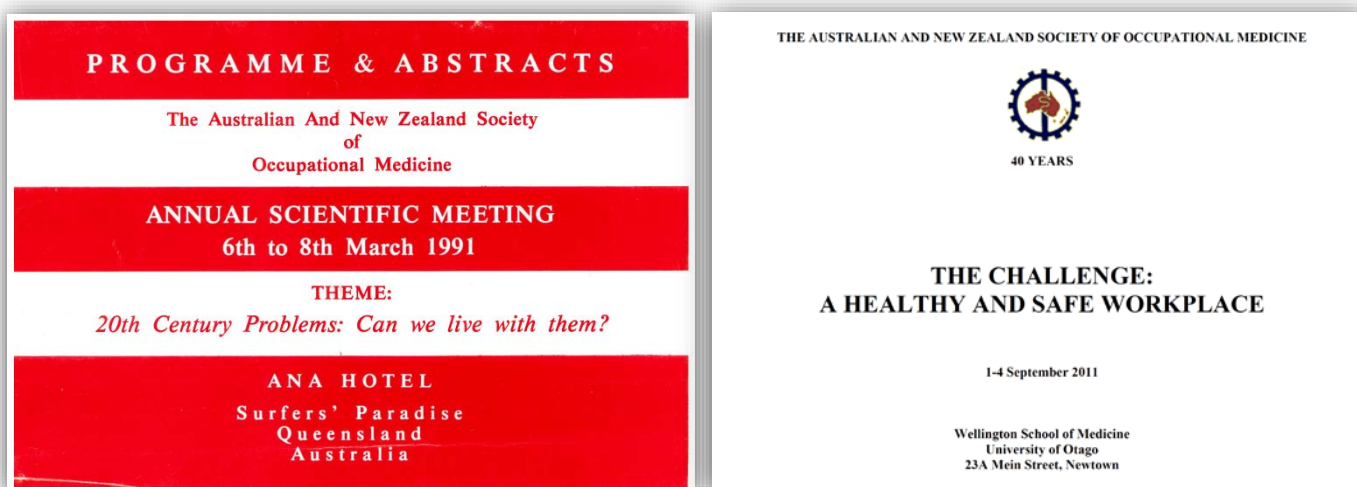


ABSTRACTS

HILTON INTERNATIONAL ADELAIDE  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA SEPTEMBER 14-16, 1988

Conference brochures: Hobart 1975, Perth 1986, Adelaide 1988 (left to right)

14



Brochure differences over two decades: Surfer's Paradise 1991, Wellington 2011 (left to right)

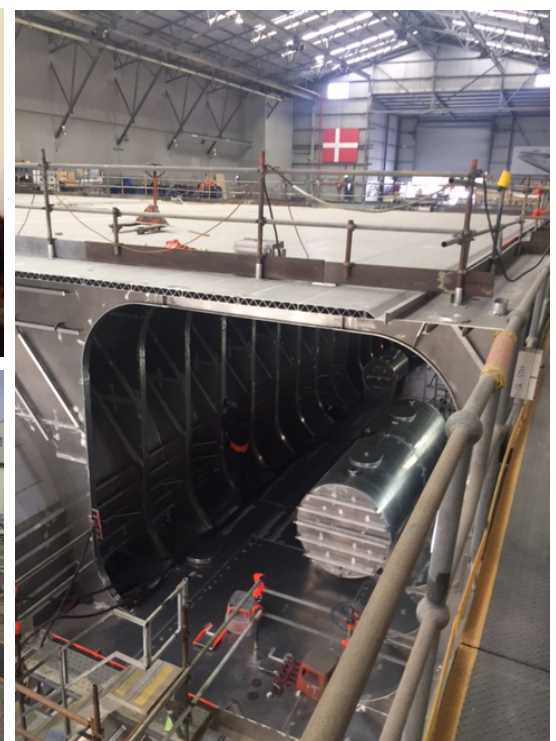
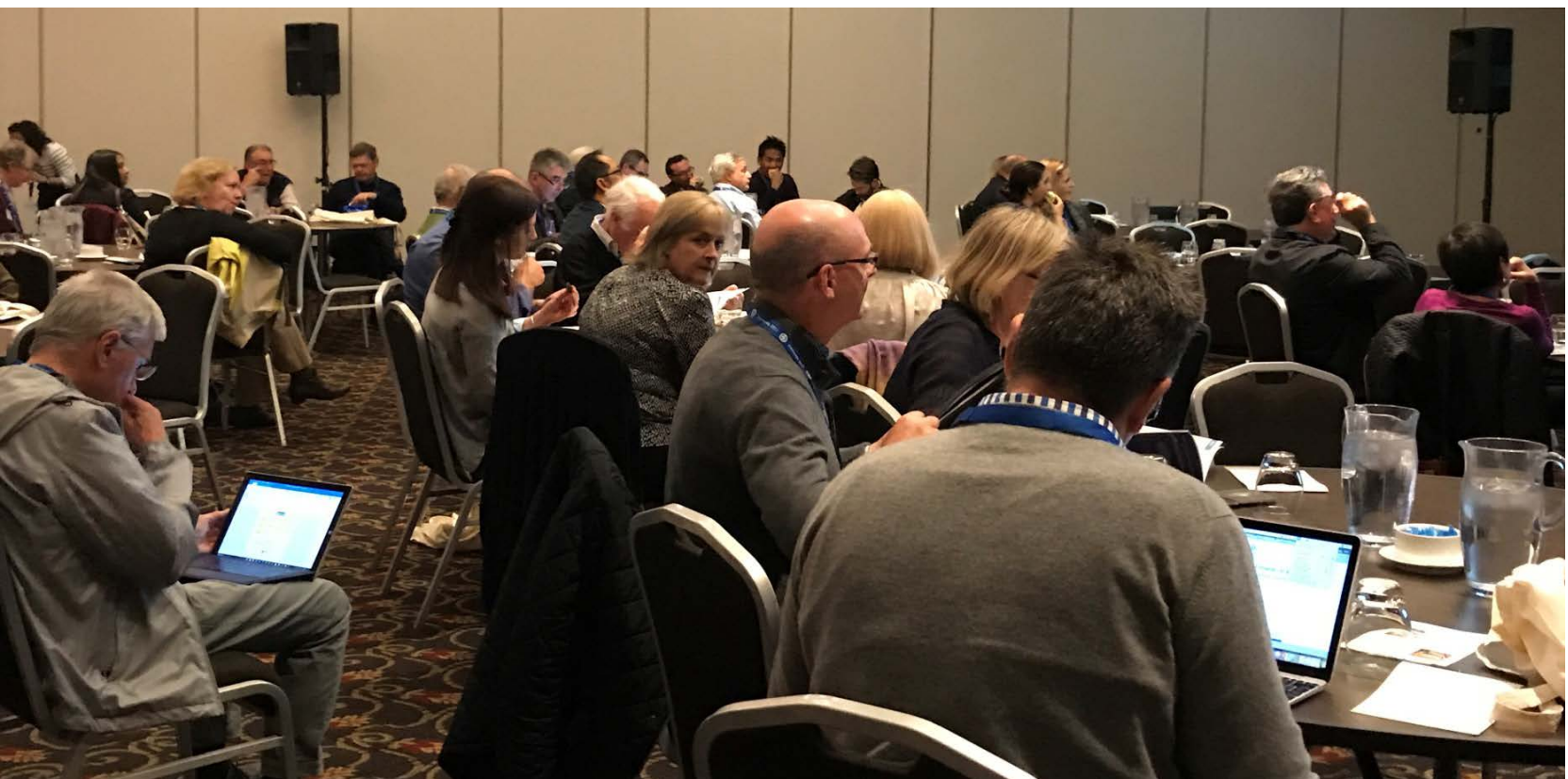


A more colourful era: Busselton 2012, Geelong 2013, Adelaide 2014 (top left to right)  
Brisbane 2015, Newcastle 2016, Fremantle 2017 (bottom left to right)



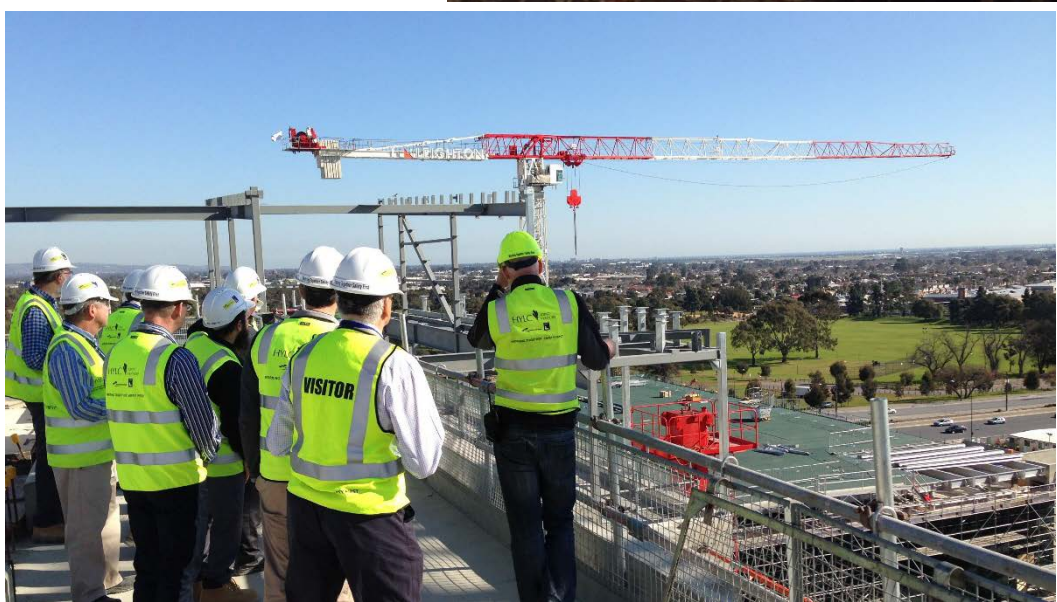






*The scientific programs are packed with practical and educational content.  
Photos from ASM 2013 to 2017*





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Photos from ASM 2013 to 2017*





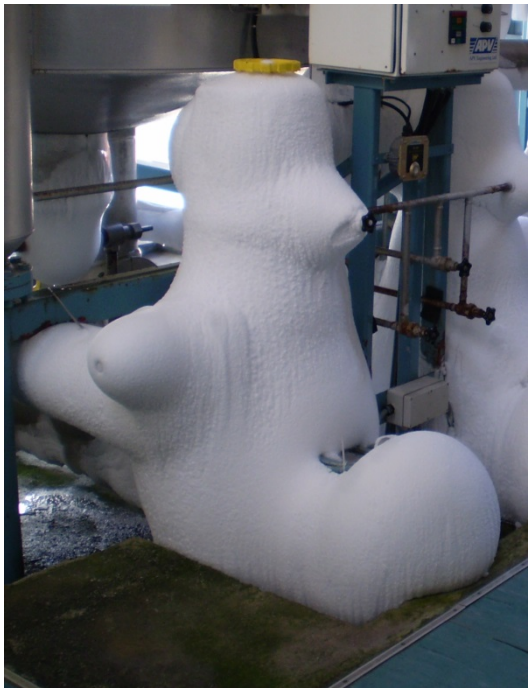
Delegates and guests like to have fun too. Photos from ASM 2013 to 2017



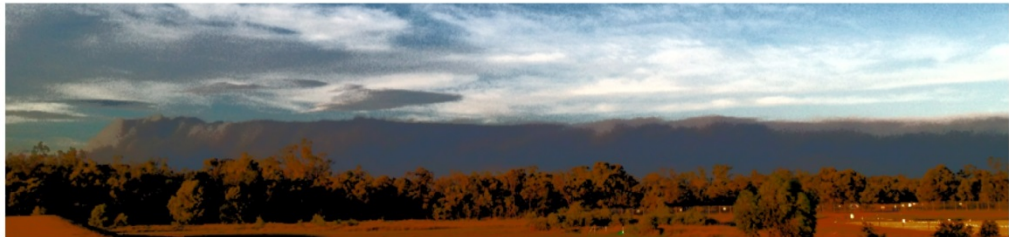
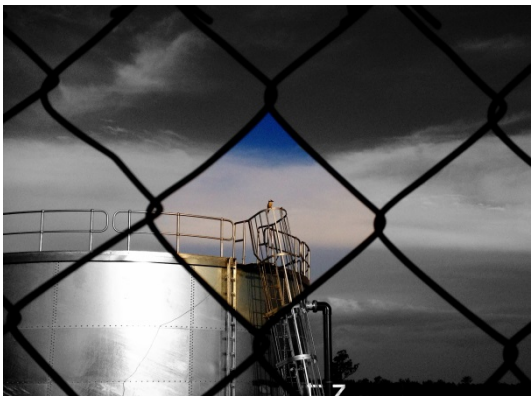


Delegates and guests like to have fun too. Photos from ASM 2013 to 2017



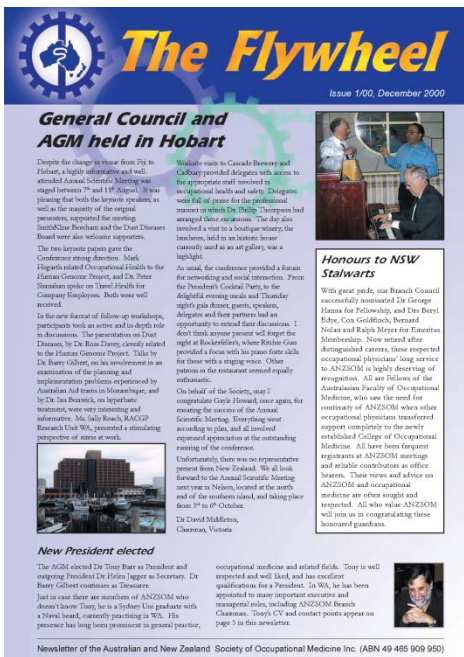


ASM2014 Photo competition - Delegates show off their photography skills highlighting occupational health hazards. **Left:** “Hey there, you guys – haven’t you heard about hard hats and ‘high-vis’ vests?” B&W taken about 1965 (when I was a medical student), Leigh Creek coal train derailment at Stirling North (near Port Augusta). Photo submitted by John Wilson. **Right:** Solid Worker: 1/4/2008. While looking at the compressor room for the freezer in a meat works I found this large accumulation of ice on exposed pipe-work which looks like a frozen Teddy Bear or Buddha. Photo submitted by John Guthrie



Winning entries from Prasad Abeydeera. **Left:** Queensland bush fire, 2012. Photos were captured around 05/12/2012 from four coal seam gas mining camps in Surat Basin, QLD **Bottom right:** Taken on 07/12/2012 at "Ruby Jo" coal seam gas mining camp near Dalby, QLD. This photo highlights nature & construction. **Top right:** Taken on 03/12/2012 at Woleebee Creek coal seam gas mining fields in QLD. The Queensland Bottle Tree (*Brachychiton rupestris*) is a native of QLD

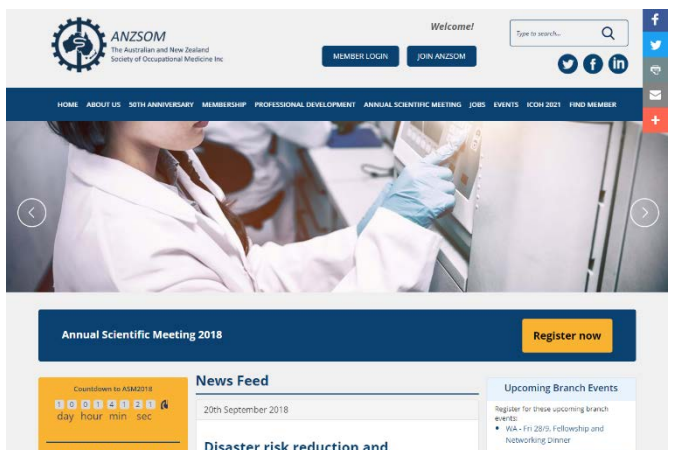
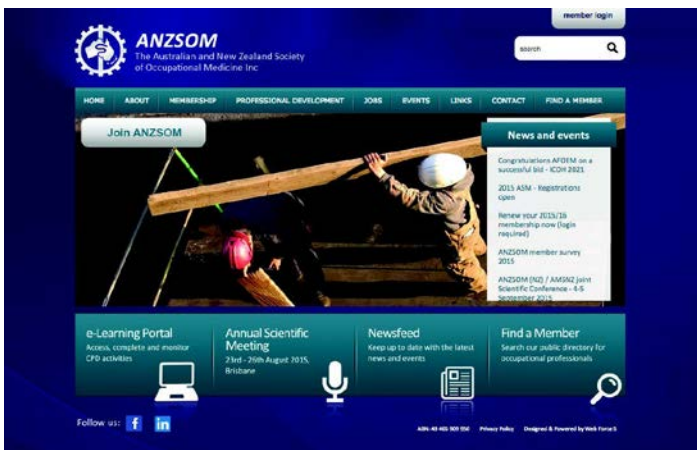




Pre-website days ANZSOM newsletter 'The Flywheel'. Supplied by Barry Gilbert



ACOHN newsletters pre-amalgamation. Supplied by Wendy Hayes



ANZSOM website 2012 and 2018 versions reflecting the advancing nature and changing needs of ANZSOM members



# OFFICE BEARERS & COMMITTEES

The activities of the Society are governed by General Council which includes the federal office bearers (Executive) plus a nominee from each Branch Council, usually the Branch Chairperson. In addition, Branch Councils in each state provide a point of local contact for members and manage local educational and networking events. Various Committees operate at a Federal and state/territory level to support the work of the organisation.

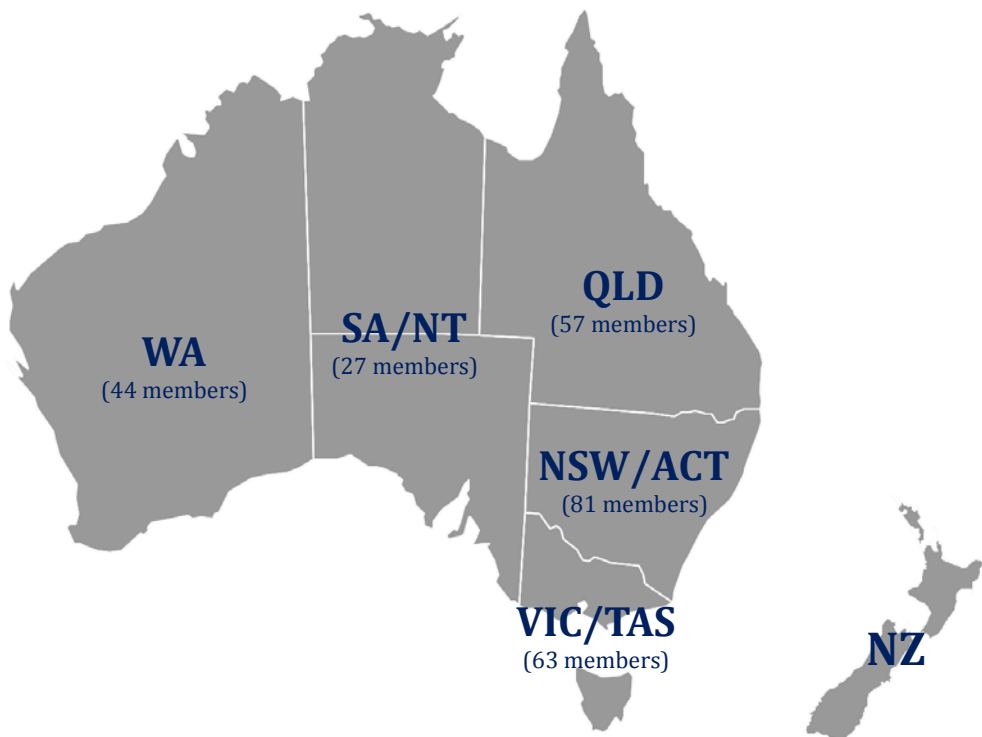


Current General Council members meet in Melbourne February 2018

From left to right: Sandra Code (Nurse Liaison Officer), Sarah Moss (NSW/ACT Branch Chair), Edward Foley (QLD Branch Chair), Melinda Miller (Federal President), Miguel Kabilio (WA Branch Chair), Sally Kane (VIC/TAS Branch Chair and ASM2018 Convenor), Roger Lai (Treasurer General), Fiona Landgren (Secretariat). Also present at the meeting but not shown: Virginia Li (Secretary General), Bill Panayiaris (SA/NT Branch Secretary)

## State Branches

The formation of the State Branches from the 1970s has helped advance ANZSOM’s vision and mission of engaging and collaborating with members and other professionals, governments and relevant organisations to facilitate workplaces that are safe, health and committed to worker wellbeing. ANZSOM provides many professional development opportunities through the local branch educational meetings which provide great opportunities to network and link in with other professionals working in the field of occupational health.



Number of state Branch members 2018.  
NOTE: The New Zealand branch is a separate incorporated entity with a separate constitution.

Federal Executive 2018	
Federal President	Ms Melinda Miller
Secretary General	Dr Virginia Li
Treasurer General	Dr Roger Lai
Nurse Liaison Officer	Ms Sandra Code

Branch Council Representatives 2018			
New South Wales / Australian Capital Territory		Victoria / Tasmania	
Chairperson	Dr Sarah Moss	Chairperson	Ms Sally Kane
Secretary	Dr Catherine Field	Secretary	Ms Hilary Oakley
Treasurer	Dr Tom Rosenthal	Treasurer	Ms Sandra Code
Event organiser / Nurse representative	Ms Amanda Tompson		
Queensland		Western Australia	
Chairperson	Dr Edward Foley	Chairperson	Dr Miguel Kabilio
Secretary	Dr Graham McNally	Secretary	Dr Thea Leman
Treasurer	Dr Therese McGrath	Treasurer	Dr Neil Ozanne
		Nurse representative	Ms Lorraine Henley
South Australia / Northern Territory		New Zealand	
Chairperson	Dr Peter Jezukaitis	President	Dr John Heydon
Secretary	Dr Bill Panayiaris	Secretary	Dr Alastair Wilson
Treasurer	Dr John Wilson	Treasurer	Dr Rosy Fenwicke

Other representatives 2018	
Australian OHS Education Accreditation Board	Dr David Middleton
Australian Safety and Health Professionals Associations (ASHPA) (up to 2018)	Dr Virginia Li
NSW State Scope of Clinical Practice Unit (SSoCPU) Working Group on Occupational Medicine	Dr Mark Burns, Dr Ian Cheng
International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH)	Ms Melinda Miller
Australian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (AFOEM) Council	Dr Miguel Kabilio

# AFFILIATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

## Australasian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (AFOEM)

ANZSOM has had a long-standing affiliation with the Australian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (AFOEM) (formerly ACOM), a faculty of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) and the organisation responsible for specialist physician education in the field of occupational medicine. Many ANZSOM members are also AFOEM members, which enables this close working relationship both at a state and national level.

Following are highlights of the shared history of ANZSOM and AFOEM, including current collaborations and initiatives, as well as early tensions.

### Early moves to amalgamate ANZSOM and ACOM

The Australian College of Occupational Medicine (ACOM) was established in 1982 to deliver training for specialist physicians in occupational medicine. As described in an account by Mannie Rathus in 'History of ANZSOM, QLD Branch', opinions were divided as to the role of the two organisations and the potential for amalgamation...

"Throughout this period ANZSOM had been faced with the mounting desire of some influential and senior members of ACOM to amalgamate ANZSOM and ACOM so as to produce a single body to represent Australian Occupational Health objectives. ACOM had been established in 1982 and had busied itself with intense planning for the future of training schedules and to attain specialist status under NSQAC acceptance (National Specialist Qualification Advisory Committee).

From 1984 discussions had been going on regarding the ANZSOM/ACOM relationship and by 1987 the viewpoints presented had been discussed at many branch meetings throughout Australia with submissions at ANZSOM AGMs and carefully worded submissions by Chairmen to the Federal Committee on the feeling of State branches. David Ferguson had submitted a very detailed "Proposal of Rationalisation", dated 6 February 1987, which he later deeply regretted as rash and ill-advised (personal communication, 1996).

The centrepiece of his presentation was that ACOM was sponsored by the Society and carried on the negotiations initiated by the Society with NSQAC, and that the interests of Occupational Health would only be served by a merger of the two bodies with the parent body, that is, ANZSOM, becoming absorbed into ACOM. The lobbying was quite intense with much persuasive argument about it. The Minutes of the General Council Meeting of 28 May 1987 reflect Branch opinion very clearly.

- WA Essentially does not support the proposal to merge
- QLD Did not support amalgamation
- SA Marginally in agreement if affiliation offered to ANZSOM members
- VIC Equivocal
- NSW Not clear-cut
- NZ Hoped to see an independent ANZSOM continue in Australia and New Zealand and that if amalgamation occurred NZ would continue as a separate Society.

The most dramatic statement in the Minutes of 28 May in the author's view is: "Federal Council of ANZSOM now recommends the dissolution of ANZSOM and will be working to effect this by 31 December 1987".

A considerable amount of horse-trading went on in an endeavour to entice entrenched ANZSOM members, but the viewpoint of the Qld Branch was successfully expressed by Pat Doughty at a General Council Meeting on 28 August 1987 where he stated that most Queensland members were against dissolution, feared a loss of State autonomy, distrusted ACOM and were seriously concerned at the possible appropriation of their very healthy local Branch funds, as the original donation by Mount Isa Mines in 1979

remained ear-marked for the benefit of Occupational Medicine Education in Queensland as pointed out earlier in this review.

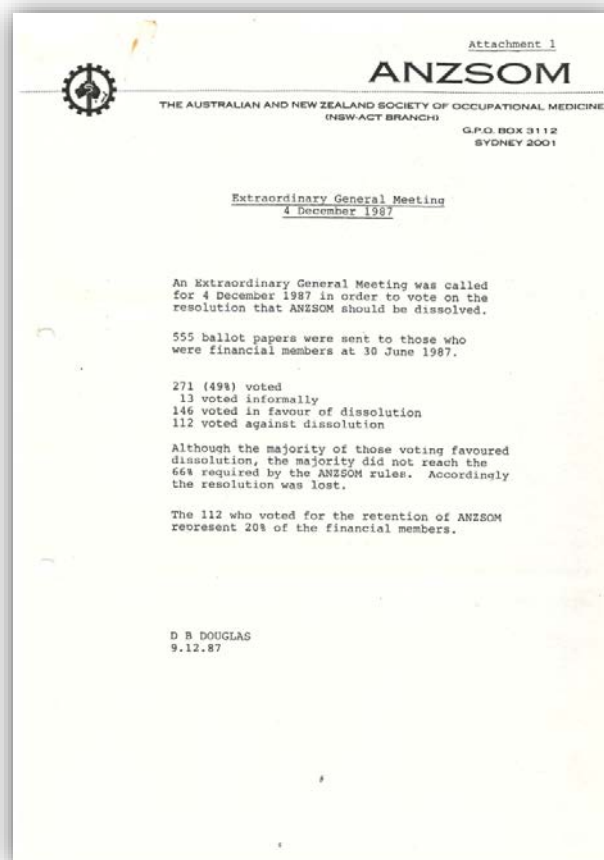
A decision to call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) prior to 3 December 1987 was passed and eventually it was decided to hold the EGM on Friday, December 4th, 1987. On the 11th December 1987 Associate Professor Charles Mitchell (Qld), who was the President of ANZSOM, had the unenviable task of declaring the result of the vote, and writing an explanatory note for the advice of all members. This he did with aplomb, and an immediate call to arms for continuing co-operation between the Society and the College (ANZSOM and ACOM). The fact is that only 49% of the membership voted and the necessary 2/3rds (two-thirds) of voters for dissolution was not attained. The result was that the Society was to continue, and very early in the piece it became apparent that a mood existed for friendly cooperation between the Society and the College.

The Queensland Branch has every reason to congratulate Charles Mitchell and Pat Doughty for their calm appraisal of circumstances during the period of determination of the ultimate direction of ANZSOM/ACOM, both Chairmen fielding dispute and contention at both Branch and Federal level on numerous occasions.

Expectations for the future were well expressed in the NZ Branch report of ANZSOM in September 1988 by the Chairman Michael Burley. The following paragraph is quoted from the text:

*"When I attended the ANZSOM Federal Council Meeting in March (1988) I found the "hatchet had been buried" so to speak, and that most Australian States are now holding joint ANZSOM/ACOM Meetings, and our Branch agreed last month to do the same thing in New Zealand. A friendly relationship such as this can only be of future benefit, both to the Society and to ACOM."*

This virtually brings the story of ANZSOM, Queensland Branch into the present day and there would appear to be constant activity and interest with input from both the Society and now the Faculty. ANZSOM sponsored ACOM and ACOM with RACP spawned AFOM..."



*Results of vote – Dr DB Douglas communicates the results of the Extraordinary General Meeting, December 1987 to NSW-ACT Branch Members*

## Health Benefits of Good Work

AFOEM leads the Health Benefits of Good Work (HBGW) initiative based on the compelling Australasian and international evidence that good work is beneficial to people's health and wellbeing and that long-term work absence, work disability and unemployment generally have a negative impact on health and wellbeing. In 2010, AFOEM released the *Realising the Health Benefits of Work Position Statement*, followed by the *Consensus Statement on the Health Benefits of Work* in 2011. The companion position statements, *What is Good Work? Position Statement* and *Improving Workforce Health and Workplace Productivity* were released in 2013.

ANZSOM is proud to be a signatory to the Consensus Statement; we support the principles and share the desire to improve the welfare of individuals, families and communities, to create safe, healthy workplaces. We acknowledge that good work can play a central role in contributing to people's health and wellbeing.

ANZSOM is also a member of the HBGW Australian Signatory Steering Group (HBGW Australian SSG) to further champion the integration of the HBGW policy agenda in the industry sector exploring opportunities to collaborate with government and industry leaders to influence public policy and workplace practices.



*Realising the Health Benefits of Work Position Statement*

## Model of Collaboration and representation on AFOEM Council

A significant milestone in the collaboration with AFOEM was the signing of the Model of Collaboration (MOC) at the ANZSOM ASM in Fremantle on Sunday 20 August 2017.

The MOC frames domains and activities to collaborate including in the areas of training, education, policy and advocacy. It also acknowledges our shared goals as we seek to advance the knowledge, practice and standing of occupational and environmental medicine. ANZSOM recognises and supports these collaborative opportunities which ultimately support improvements in the health and wellbeing of workers.

The first outcome of the MOC was the inclusion of an ANZSOM representative on the AFOEM Council,



*Signing of the Model of Collaboration, August 2017. From left to right: Dr Kevin Sleight, Dr Miguel Kabilio (Chairperson ANZSOM WA Branch), Dr David Scott (President, ANZSOM New Zealand), Ms Melinda Miller (President, ANZSOM), Associate Professor Peter Connaughton (President, AFOEM), Dr Beata Byok (President-Elect AFOEM), Professor Malcolm Sim*



formally invited in March 2018. The purpose of the position is to assist the Council President in guiding the governance framework and direction of the Faculty in a mutually co-operative and consultative atmosphere: further enhancing communication and collaboration for both our organisations.

**First collaborative Annual Scientific Meeting 2019 in South Australia**

Collaboration in relation to member education is also a key aspect of the MOC. Reflecting this, ANZSOM is pleased to welcome AFOEM as a Scientific Program Partner for ASM 2019 in Adelaide. This inaugural collaborative event will no doubt be a stepping stone to future opportunities.


The ANZSOM SA/NT Branch, in collaboration with the Australasian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, invite you to the

**ANZSOM Annual Scientific Meeting**

**ADELAIDE**

**20 – 23 October 2019**

AFOEM is proud to be a Scientific Program Partner for the 2019 ASM



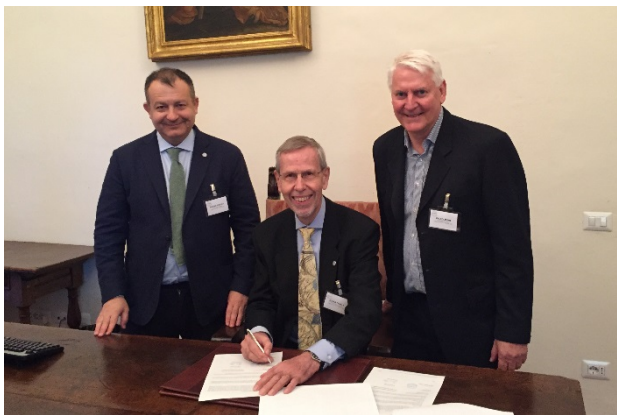
## International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH)

ANZSOM has long been a member of the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH). Melbourne will host the ICOH Congress in 2021, and ANZSOM looks forward to the opportunities that this will bring to the cause of workplace health in Australia.

The International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH) is an international non-governmental professional society whose aims are to foster the scientific progress, knowledge and development of occupational health and safety in all its aspects.

Founded in 1906 in Milan as the Permanent Commission on Occupational Health. ICOH is the world's leading international scientific society in the field of occupational health with a membership of over 2,000 professionals from 93 countries. Recognised by the United Nations as a non-governmental organisation, it has close working relationships with ILO, WHO, UNEP and ISSA. The most visible activities of ICOH are the triennial World Congresses on Occupational Health.

ANZSOM is proud to be hosting the 33rd International Congress on Occupational Health in Melbourne in 2021.



*Contract signing, March 2017. Left to right: Prof. Sergio Iavicoli (ICOH Secretary General); Dr Jukka Takala (ICOH President); Prof. Malcolm Sim (ICOH2021 National Organising Committee Chair)*



*Traditional hand over of the ICOH flag to ANZSOM as hosts of the next 2021 congress in Melbourne*

The congress theme “Sharing solutions in occupational health: locally, regionally, globally” will bring together occupational health researchers, practitioners and policy makers from around the world to share their collective knowledge about improving worker health and safety.

ANZSOM looks forward to the opportunities this will bring for our members as we continue to grow developing and raising the profile and significance of ANZSOM locally, regionally and now globally.

# ICOH 2021

[www.ich2021.org](http://www.ich2021.org)

HOSTED BY

ANZSOM

## SHARING SOLUTIONS IN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH: Locally, Regionally, Globally

33rd International Congress on Occupational Health

21-26 March 2021 | MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

Visit [www.ich2021.org](http://www.ich2021.org) for further information



# SIGNATURES





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