



2002 - 2003 OFFICE BEARERS

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ISSN 1327-3620

FROM THE PRESIDENT

While ageing is much bigger than aged care, the systems that provide support and care for older people have a big impact on their quality of life. A major part of planning for Australia's ageing population is making sure the aged care system can respond to changing needs. In their present form, neither the community nor residential care systems will be able to cope with demands that are both rapidly changing and increasing. The two reviews of the aged care system underway this year will be of relevance to everyone concerned about issues of ageing. Whether we are a researcher, educator, practitioner or provider, we are all potential future consumers of aged care.

The most significant review in terms of complexity, scope and budget is the *Review of Pricing in Residential Aged Care*. This is being led by Prof Warren Hogan, Emeritus Professor of Economics at the University of Sydney. It has a budget of \$7.2m and is due to be completed by the end of 2003. Prof Hogan is being assisted by a secretariat, an Industry and Consumer Reference Group, and an Expert and Technical Advisory Group. A number of AAG members, including Patricia Reeve, Dr Diane Gibson, Prof Hal Kendig, Dr Michael Fine and Prof John McCallum are members of those groups.

Having heard Prof Hogan speak of what he has learned to date about residential aged care and the issues he has identified, I am encouraged by the open mind he brings to his task and the depth of his understanding of an extraordinarily complex system. He is very aware of the interface of residential aged care with the acute health system. The interface with the community care system, although in the terms of reference, does not seem to be emerging quite so clearly. Although the advertised closing date for submissions to the Review was March, Prof Hogan is willing to continue to receive submissions until September.

The website for the review is <http://www.health.gov.au/acc/rescare/acprtask.htm>.

It contains Background and Issues papers, and the submissions made to date. Submissions can be emailed to the Review, and Prof Hogan is particularly looking for innovative thinking about the interface of the various health and care systems.

The review of community care is much more limited. After an internal review in the Department of Health and Ageing, the Minister for Ageing, Kevin Andrews issued a Consultation Paper, *A New Strategy for Community Care* in March. It is available at <http://www.health.gov.au/acc/research/commcare.htm>. What is disappointing is that it specifically excludes the way community care interfaces

with other service delivery systems (eg health, housing and residential aged care), on the grounds that "the first priority must be to further improve the internal working of the community care system".

To make sure these issues are not overlooked, the AAG has been one of nine national organisations (including Australian Society for Geriatric Medicine, Carers Australia, Alzheimer's Australia and AMA) who have contributed to *A Vision for Community Care*, published by Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA). It is available at www.agedcare.org.au.

It was launched on 11 June at a two day National Community Care Forum in Canberra sponsored by ACSA and The Myer Foundation. The Forum brought together a range of key stakeholders to influence and shape the debate and reform process. The AAG's President Elect, Prof Tony Broe, and I represented the AAG, and a number of other AAG members contributed to the debate.

Such reviews clearly show the need to have a strong evidence base for developing policy and planning for the future. *The National Symposium on Ageing Research* is being held in Canberra on 23 – 25 September. Whether you are a researcher in ageing, or a user of research in developing policy, or in delivering clinical or care services, this is an important opportunity to shape the future of ageing research in Australia. The costs are modest, so check your diary and plan to attend. Details are on page 7.

Please make sure the AAG National Conference is in your diaries as a "must do": Wed 12 to Fri 14 November in Hobart.

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AAG

EXPANDING KNOWLEDGE ON AGEING

NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

The AAG National Council met in Sydney on 9 and 10 May. These are some of the items discussed.

AJA goes Electronic!!!

The AAG has a long and proud association with the Australasian Journal on Ageing (AJA). As one of the four partner organisations, we have contributed our support and expertise over the years, enabling the Journal to develop into an internationally recognised, scholarly publication in the field of gerontology. We now have the opportunity to support the AJA through a new and exciting phase of development.

In order for the AJA to retain its position in a very competitive, global market, it is important for the Journal to take the next developmental step in offering an electronic service. After protracted negotiations, it is expected that the AJA will be available in an electronic version in early 2004. This move will have many benefits to AAG members, as we will be able to access the Journal via the web and cross linked to other databases, including hopefully key international abstracting and indexing services such as MEDLINE. Linking with a large

electronic publisher will also give the AJA a substantial increase in international exposure, which we hope may have the added benefit of increasing our impact factor.

In order to offer this significant benefit to AAG members, there will be a modest price rise the the cost of the Journal. Details are still being finalised, and will be included with your membership renewal notice. The National Council believes the AJA is excellent value, and that the modest price rise will bring large benefits.

AAG Fellows

The award of Fellow standing is made to members who have made a significant contribution not only to the AAG but also to the field of gerontology. The list of AAG Fellows is on the AAG website.

An application form will be included with your membership renewal which will be sent out in June. It sets out in detail the criteria to be met in order to be awarded the standing of AAG Fellow.

If you believe you meet those criteria and wish to be considered as a potential AAG Fellow, please complete the form and send it to your Divisional Secretary for the support of your Division. Applications supported by Divisions will then be forwarded to the National Secretariat for final consideration by the National Council. The announcement of the successful applicants will be made at the AGM during the 2003 National Conference in Hobart.

Distinguished Service Awards

Divisions have again been invited to nominate members who have given distinguished service to the AAG for awards. Distinguished Service Award certificates will be signed by the President and Honorary Secretary and announced at the National Conference, where Tasmanian Division awards will be presented. The certificates for other Divisions will be forwarded to them for presentation at appropriate Divisional functions.

STUDENT SPACE



Taylor Dong

This small *Student Space* is the precursor of a full page *Student Space* that will become a feature of the AAG National

from the next issue. The *Student Space* is one part of a response to suggestions made to the AAG Council by Taylor Dong, a PhD student in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Sydney University, to encourage greater involvement of students in the AAG.

To date, the AAG has encouraged students to become involved by providing:

- *Reduced AAG membership rate:* Student membership rate for 2003/4 will be \$28.60 (25% of full membership).
- *Reduced registration for National Conferences.*

- *Publication of the Education Guide* (see www.aag.asn.au for current edition).
- *Direct research support through the RM Gibson Research Grants.* The 17 grants awarded over the last six years have gone to graduate students to assist in their doctoral research or to others at an early stage of their post-doctoral research. The call for applications for grants in 2003/4 is on page 5.

Adoption of some of Taylor's suggestions will bring more direct input to the AAG from students themselves in the near future:

- The *Student Space* in the AAG National will carry student contributions - for example, interviews with national leaders in gerontology, reports on theses, and commentaries on conferences and courses.
- Council has agreed that if there are no student members on the Executive Committees of State Divisions, they should consider co-opting a

student representative, and further, that one of these representatives should be encouraged to stand for election to the National Council at the next AGM as a General Member.

- Students will also be able to enter their research on the web-based Ageing Research Online that is being developed as part of the Building Ageing Research Capacity (BARC) project. The web-based Directory will supersede the hard copy editions that have appeared triennially since 1984 and which still provide a good resource for students wanting to track down past Australian research.

In the longer term, opportunities for exchanges between student members via the AAG website (www.aag.asn.au) will be developed and consideration will be given to establishing a formal structure that will enable a Student Section to link into the Council of Gerontology Student Organisations that was set up within the International Association of Gerontology in 2001.

AAG BUILDS CLOSER TIES WITH NEW ZEALAND

NEW ZEALAND
ASSOCIATION OF
GERONTOLOGY



Sally Keeling, President of NZAG, reports on research on ageing in NZ, and on opportunities for closer ties across the Tasman

I am delighted to be able to contribute to the AAG Newsletter, on behalf of the New Zealand Association of Gerontology. Here in Christchurch New Zealand, we are excited about making plans to host the 2004 Conference of the Association, 14-16 April, and are building partnerships with other organisations to have a strong basis for widespread participation. The title of the conference is *Expanding Horizons: The art and science of ageing*. In addition to showcasing local and national research and innovative practice in gerontology, we hope to make the conference also a stimulating and entertaining event, with opportunities for creative artists and older people themselves to share their insights and perspectives on the experience of ageing.

The National Executive of the New Zealand Geriatric Society is also currently based in Christchurch, with Prof Richard Sainsbury as President, and this Society joins with us and other allied Christchurch organisations to work towards welcoming fellow gerontologists from throughout Australasia to celebrate ageing in the Garden City.

Through our links with the New Zealand Institute for Research on Ageing (NZiRA), we have invited Prof Tom Kirkwood, from the University of Newcastle, UK, to be the opening keynote speaker at our conference. Prof Kirkwood is to be the 2004 TOWER Visiting Fellow in New Zealand, and his 2001 BBC Reith Lectures were warmly received in New Zealand. We very much look forward to hearing his views on our conference title.

An updated bibliography of recent gerontological research in New Zealand has been recently published by Gee and Davey (2002): *Aotearoa Ageing, a bibliography of New Zealand research*

on ageing 1997-2001. This is now the fourth collation of New Zealand research on ageing, with previous ones published in 1971, 1987 and 1997. At the time of the IAG World Congress in Adelaide in 1997, a commentary was published in the *Australian Journal on Ageing* (as it was then known) by Prof John Campbell (1997), on New Zealand based research in gerontology. He expressed the hope then that New Zealand's research strengths - a small research community well connected to service providers, community groups and policy makers - would "ensure continued high quality research."

Certainly in terms of quantity, our research is growing: over 400 researchers have at least one entry in the 2002 bibliography. Considering this number exceeds our national NZAG membership, which also includes of course practitioners and educators, and others interested in the broad field of gerontology, there is a new challenge ahead for us all! In terms of quality, I cannot fairly comment on this scope, but I do note impressive breadth of coverage, and a growing variety of perspectives represented in this list. It is also noteworthy that ageing research comes from all of New Zealand's Universities, and from many other settings. While both Otago and Auckland offer postgraduate qualifications bearing the Gerontology name, and each is available in either distance or block format, teaching and research in other Universities and settings is clearly finding "expanding horizons" in this field.

In recognition of this, a postgraduate student seminar is also planned in October 2003 by NZiRA to promote sharing and access to the growing body

of thesis and other work in progress in many disciplines, related to ageing in New Zealand. Within the IAG network, while we are part of the Asia-Oceania region, our nearest neighbour is clearly Australia, and I believe we each have a lot to offer the other in terms of building a constructive and collaborative relationship between our two Associations. Let the dialogue begin!

*Sally Keeling, PhD,
National President,
New Zealand Association of Gerontology*

Campbell, A.J. New Zealand based research in gerontology, *Australian Journal on Ageing*, 1997, Vol.16, 3: 131-134.

Gee, S. and Davey, J. eds (2002): *Aotearoa Ageing, a bibliography of New Zealand research on ageing 1997-2001*. Victoria University of Wellington. www.vuw.ac.nz/ageing-institute/



IV LATIN AMERICAN CONGRESS OF GERIATRICS & GERONTOLOGY Sept. 3- 6 Santiago, Chile

Organised by the Society of Geriatrics & Gerontology, Chile

IMPORTANT DATES

Abstract Submission: Before July 15 2003

Early Registration cut off: 3 August 2003

Web Site: www.socgeriatria.cl Email: sgg@unete.com

RM GIBSON SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH FUND COMMITTEE

This Who's Who profiles the members of the RM Gibson Research Committee. Four members who have retired over the last two years - Prof Gary Andrews, Prof Tony Broe, Prof Rob Helme and Dr Glenda Powell - have been replaced by four new members. Dr Anna Howe has taken on the role of Chair, and Dr Laurie Buys' membership continues.

The process for filling vacancies is for the Committee to make recommendations to the AAG Council on new members who would bring extensive research experience to the Committee and maintain the spread of expertise across the field of geriatric medical research, broadly defined. An invitation to join the Committee is then sent. As the RM Gibson Scientific Research Fund operates as an approved medical research fund for Commonwealth taxation purposes, the individual members also have to be approved by the NHMRC.

The Committee sets directions for the RM Gibson Research Fund and members assess applications for grants. To date, 17 grants have been awarded in areas as diverse as ageing related decline in verbal and visio-spatial memory, genetic factors in early onset dementia and changes in foot trajectory variables leading to falls. The call for submissions for 2003 appears below.



Laurie Buys
BA, MS, PhD, is the currently the inaugural Director of the Centre for Social Change Research and a

Senior Lecturer in the School of Humanities and Human Services at Queensland University of Technology.

Laurie's professional career started in the area of vocational rehabilitation of injured workers. She was a partner in a large rehabilitation company in South Australia from 1988-1991 where she worked with many older injured workers. During this time she took a leading role in establishing the Australian Society of Rehabilitation Counsellors. Following the completion of her doctoral studies in Colorado, USA, she moved to Brisbane and began lecturing in the area of ageing.

Laurie's research interests include retirement village living, older adults with intellectual disabilities, and older drivers. Her research has focused mainly on the social aspects of ageing with many studies involving in-depth personal interviews with several hundred older people. She is currently working with a team of multi-disciplinary researchers at QUT working on a national study exploring issues of productive ageing.

Laurie was President of the Queensland AAG Division from 1997 -2000 and the AAG representative on the Australasian Journal on Ageing from 1998 to the present.



Leon Flicker
MBBS PhD became the inaugural Prof of Geriatric Medicine at the University of Western

Australia in 1998. After completing his training in geriatric medicine in Sydney, Newcastle and Melbourne, he completed his PhD at the University of Melbourne and was a Senior Lecturer in Geriatric Medicine there from 1989 to 1997.

Leon's research interests have focused on the diagnosis, assessment and management of the common medical conditions of older people, particularly in the areas of osteoporosis and dementia. He has been involved in several observational and treatment studies focusing on the medical conditions of older people and their subsequent disability and has completed several randomised trials in older people including people in residential care.

He has been actively involved in the dissemination and implementation of such findings and has worked on the committees of several professional and community based organisations to achieve these aims. Leon has had a major involvement in the Cochrane Dementia and Cognitive Impairment Group and is an editor for this group. He is currently President-Elect of the Australian Society for Geriatric Medicine.



Len Gray, MBBS, PhD, is Prof in Geriatric Medicine at the University of Queensland. He trained in geriatric medicine at Melbourne University and in

health administration at RMIT University.

His career has involved clinical care, senior management appointments and health services research in aged care. As Director of the Bundoora Extended Care Centre in Melbourne's northern region from 1982 to 1997, Len established the Centre for Applied Gerontology to provide research support to the clinical, teaching and community services activities of BECC and the region. Evaluation studies carried out through the Centre have contributed to policy and program development in Victoria and nationally, particularly in assessment, community care and acute care of older people.

Len is a past President of the Australian Society of Geriatric Medicine and has been a member of many State and Commonwealth Advisory Committees. At Commonwealth level, he chaired the Two Year Review of the Aged Care Reforms which reported in 2001, and in 2002, he directed the multi-study project, *2020: A Vision for Aged Care in Australia*, for the Myer Foundation in Victoria.

Since moving to Queensland in 2002, Len has established the Academic Unit in Geriatric Medicine at Princess Alexandra Hospital. The initial research effort is focusing on improving care of frail older people in the acute care setting.



Jillian Kril, PhD, is Assoc. Prof of Geriatric Medicine at The University of Sydney's Centre for Education and Research on Ageing, located at Concord Hospital. Her area of interest is the neuropathology of ageing and dementia. Jillian completed her undergraduate training in pathology at the University of Western Australia and her PhD at Sydney University.

Following her early work focussed on the neuropathology of alcohol-related brain damage, her interest in the pathological substrates of brain dysfunction led her to the study of dementia. Investigation of brain ageing has been a necessary component of this work and studies carried out by Jillian and her colleagues have shown that brain atrophy and neuronal loss are not a major feature of normal ageing.

An integral part of Jillian's work has been the establishment of a brain donor program which is jointly co-ordinated with Prof Glenda Halliday from the Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute.

Jillian is the Secretary and Treasurer of the Australian and New Zealand Society for Neuropathology, Vice President of the Ageing and Alzheimer's Research Foundation and an active member of the Australian Neuroscience Society. Jillian was awarded the AW Campbell Award for her contribution to neuroscience in 1999.



David Le Couteur, MB BS (Hons I), Grad Cert Ed, FRACP, Ph D, is Director of the Centre for Research and Education on Ageing, Prof of Geriatric Medicine at The University of Sydney and Senior Staff Specialist in Geriatric Medicine in the Central Sydney Area Health Service.

David trained as a geriatrician and clinical pharmacologist. NHMRC-funded research in which David is currently involved includes studies of the effects of ageing and oxidative stress on the liver, and how such effects may predispose to altered metabolism of drugs and lipids. The practical applications of this research are taken up in David's work on regulatory aspects of the registration of prescription medications, as a core member of the Australian Drug Evaluation Committee and chair of its Pharmaceutical Subcommittee. He also has research interests in Parkinson's disease and falls in older people. He currently supervises six PhD students and has published over 80 research and review articles.

David is the Director of the Ageing and Alzheimer's Research Foundation and serves on the NHMRC discipline panels. Most significantly for the AAG, David took a leading role in the Scoping Study on Ageing Research which was commissioned by the NHMRC to provide an overview of the key domains of Australian ageing research, focusing on the biology of ageing.

RM GIBSON SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH FUND CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

\$15,000 is available for the award of up to three grants to members of the AAG for medical research.

Research can include any investigative project undertaken by a person practising in the field of gerontology. Research projects must be related directly to issues or disorders associated with ageing. Projects must be innovative. There is no age limit for applicants but grants are intended for beginning researchers. Applicants must be able to supply evidence that appropriate supervision will be available.

The fund supports research projects by contributing to salaries, equipment and materials, computing charges and other essential expenses. Grants are in the form of a single

amount and will not be repeated for the same project. Grants may contribute to a larger project.

Grant awardees will be expected to present the results of their research project at an AAG National Conference. A free registration will be provided and additional support for travel may be granted for this purpose.

The RM Gibson Scientific Research Committee will make the final decision regarding the award of grants.

Application forms are available from:
Australian Association of Gerontology
**C/- The Centre for Ageing Studies
Laffer Drive, Science Park,
Bedford Park SA 5042
Phone: (08) 8201 7552
Fax: (08) 8201 7551
Email: aag.secre@flinders.edu.au
Or can be downloaded from the web
www.aag.asn.au**

CLOSING DATE 30 JULY 2003

NATIONAL CONFERENCE UPDATE

Where & When

Wrest Point Convention Centre, Hobart,
12-14 November, 2003

The Program

The program for the AAG 37th National Conference is taking shape. Prof Clare Ungerson (profiled in the March issue of AAG National) will give the RM Gibson Lecture and Prof James Vickers has been invited to present the David Wallace Address. Prof Tony Broe will convene the President's Symposium.

Keynote Profile - Professor James Vickers

James Vickers completed a BSc(Hons) at the University of Tasmania and PhD at the Flinders University of South Australia. Following postdoctoral studies at the Mt Sinai Medical Centre (New York), he returned to Tasmania to establish a laboratory in 1994. He is currently a NHMRC Senior Research Fellow and Chair of the Department of Pathology at the University of Tasmania.

The laboratory Professor Vickers began is part of the cross-discipline 'NeuroRepair Group' at the University of Tasmania. Their main focus is on the cellular basis of the degeneration and regeneration of the nervous system. The laboratory is involved

in studies related to Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, motor neuron disease, glaucoma and brain trauma. They apply a variety of modern cell biology techniques to human brain studies as well as experimental models related to human brain disorders. Their overall aims are to contribute towards an understanding of how disease and injury affect the brain as well as to develop therapeutic agents that may inhibit the degeneration of nerve cells.

Call for Papers

This year's program is designed to maximise the time for free papers and AAG members are encouraged to submit an abstract. A copy of the Call for Papers was included in the last newsletter. If you would like another copy, or several copies to distribute to non members, please contact Melinda Andrews at aag.conf@flinders.edu.au. Abstracts can also be submitted via the internet at <http://www.aag.asn.au/conf/call.html>. The deadline is 9 August 2003.

Social Program

As well as an interesting and challenging scientific program this year's event will include some exciting social events. The conference dinner on Thursday 13 November will be held at Moorilla Estate. Moorilla is the birthplace of Tasmania's modern

wine industry located just 10 kilometres from the city centre.

After the closing session there will another opportunity to network and socialise at the wrap up and farewell drinks.

Tour Tasmania

Have you considered spending the weekend (or longer) in Tasmania after the conference? Stay Saturday and visit Hobart's Salamanca Market, one of the nation's brightest and busiest street markets. Stay the weekend and explore Tasmania's unique wilderness and wildlife.

For ideas visit the Tourism Tasmania web site at <http://www.discovertasmania.com.au/>

AAG National Conference Secretariat

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<http://www.aag.asn.au/conf/>

36th National Conference of the AAG

EXPANDING KNOWLEDGE ON AGEING

Wednesday 12 to Friday 14 November 2003

Wrest Point Conference Centre, Hobart, Tasmania

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Call for Papers is now available. If you would like copies or information on possible pre or post tours in Tasmania please contact Melinda Andrews at aag.conf@flinders.edu.au or 08 8302 1051.

Important dates: Deadline for abstracts
Close of early bird registration

9 August 2003
19 September 2003

AAG National Conference Secretariat
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GPO Box 2471 Adelaide SA 5001

Phone: (08) 8302 1051 Fax: (08) 8302 1054
Email: aag.conf@flinders.edu.au
Web: <http://www.aag.asn.au/conf/>

National Symposium on

Ageing Research

Building evidence, policy and practice

23 – 25 September 2003

Manning Clarke Centre
Australian National University
Canberra ACT

The structural ageing of the Australian population poses increasing challenges for policy makers and expanded opportunities for researchers. Now as never before there is a need to improve the quality and relevance of the research and statistical information available to guide both policymakers and practitioners. Improved collaboration and communication among policy-makers, researchers, industry, practitioners and consumers are required to meet the challenges of an ageing society.

The *National Symposium on Ageing Research: building evidence, policy and practice* is the first such event to be convened jointly by the

Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing's Office for an Ageing Australia and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Developing the Australian Ageing Research Agenda, through a process which now culminates in the Symposium, has been a major objective of the Building Ageing Research Capacity (BARC) Project, an emerging initiative of the Minister for Ageing's National Strategy for an Ageing Australia.

The Symposium has two key components:

1. A program of invited speakers which includes not only ageing experts but also speakers drawn from a broad range of fields because of their expertise and involvement at the interface of research, policy and practice; and
2. A showcase of current Australian Ageing research expertise and activities using a poster format, incorporating both traditional A2 wall mounted posters (if desired) and A4 'take away' mini-posters to give participants key details of current major research activities.

The structure and substance of the Symposium has been designed to draw together a broad spectrum of stakeholders. Speakers have been invited from

leading ageing research Centres and Universities around Australia, prominent industry bodies, and both Commonwealth and State Government Departments. For the Symposium to reach the desired audience participants are invited from academic ageing and ageing related disciplines, policy groups from all tiers of Government, peak industry bodies and particularly those with a keen interest in the evidence/policy interface.

Registration costs have been kept as low as possible to make it easier for student researchers to participate:

- "Early-bird" registration (by 15 August) \$340.00
- Standard (after 15 August) \$400.00
- Concession "Early bird" (by 15 August) \$170.00
- Concession (after 15 August) \$200.00
- Conference Dinner \$55.00

For further information on cost and registration, please go to the Symposium website: <http://www.ageingsymposium.com.au> or contact the BARC Project Secretariat at BARCsec@aihw.gov.au.

International Academy of Law and Mental Health

An opportunity not to be missed

AAG members will get many special benefits from the partnership between the Association and the International Academy of Law and Mental Health when the Academy's world congress is held in Sydney in October 2003 (see Diary Dates for full details).

1. Special registration rates are available to AAG members. Registration for the Ageing Day, on 2 October, has been set at \$275 for AAG members, compared to \$330 (both incl GST).
2. The difference will cover the registration for the special workshop on *Ethics of Dementia Care*, to be held on 29 September, from 5-7.30pm. The Workshop is open to all AAG members for the \$55 registration, compared to \$165 otherwise (both incl GST). AAG members do not have to register for the Conference to qualify for the \$55 registration.

3. The AAG - IALMH partnership has resulted in a program for the Ageing Day with an outstanding mix of Australian and international speakers on legal, policy, service delivery and ethical perspectives. Following the keynote address by the Hon. Kevin Andrews, Commonwealth Minister for Ageing, two international speakers who will address the question *Who is responsible for care of the frail aged?* Dr Jane Tilley from the US will speak on increasing client autonomy through consumer directed care, and Dr Gerdt Sundstrom will examine changing societal responsibilities and the social contract in long term care in Sweden. Session 2, on *Intergenerational Responsibilities*, presents comparative perspectives on Australia and the UK, Japan and the US.

4. The sessions on *When is old age a basis for special legal provision?* and *Advance Care Directives and End of Life Decision Making* offer

timely updates for practitioners in these rapidly changing fields of practice. Speakers from Australia and Canada point to areas of commonality and differences in approaches in the two countries.

5. The 2003 Conference is the first time IALMH is meeting in Australia and so brings a host of new ideas to the local scene. Sessions on guardianship, euthanasia and mental health in other parts of the program will be of interest to AAG members attending the full conference.
6. A new Journal, *The Elder Law Review*, has a special edition on *Elders - Care and Accommodation Agreements* that is to appear in mid 2003 and is very relevant to all those involved in residential aged care. *The Elder Law Review* is edited by Katrina George, School of Law, University of Western Sydney. It is an electronic journal, accessible via www.uws.edu.au/about/acadorg/clb/sl/research/elderlaw.

AAG Member News

Present and former AAG members have been recognised in the Order of Australia honours announced on the Queen's Birthday. Both were made Members of Order of Australia.

Prof Margaret Steinberg AM, is an Adjunct Prof at the Faculty of Business, Queensland University of Technology, and has been honoured for "service to public health and welfare policy through research in the areas of ageing, disability and social justice".

Sr Margaret Randall AM, of the Sisters of Mercy, Marsfield, NSW has been honoured for "services to older people as a gerontologist and diversional therapist, and to the community".

We congratulate them on their awards.

Dr Jennifer Abbey, a long standing member of AAG's Queensland Division, has been appointed as the inaugural Professor of Nursing (Aged Care). The Chair has been established by a partnership between Queensland's University of Technology, Prince Charles Hospital and the Kedron-Wavell Services Club.

The Dementia Epidemic

Alzheimer's Australia has released a major report by Access Economics. The report, *The Dementia Epidemic: Economic impact and positive solutions for Australia*, is available for downloading from www.alzheimers.org.au.

The report draws attention to the impact of the expected threefold increase in the number of Australians with dementia in the next 40 years.

It is 100 pages long, but well worth downloading as a reference document. It not only contains a wealth of statistics on Australian and international prevalence, costs and projections, but detailed information on the various types of dementia, range of interventions (from pharmaceutical to carer support), and a four page bibliography. The document has had input from a number of AAG members, especially Professor Henry Brodaty, UNSW and President, Alzheimers' International.

Ageing and Trauma Study in Development

A team at the School of Public Health and Community Medicine at the University of NSW, including health professionals from South East Sydney Area Health Service and the Multicultural Health Unit at Prince of Wales Hospital is working

on a project on the service delivery impact of trauma and ageing.

The project was sparked by a geriatrician pointing to problems experienced by Holocaust Survivors in public hospitals. In addition, the range of service responses on the part of health care providers indicated a lack of experience, skills and some attitudinal issues in working with this group. The literature indicates that trauma survivors generally can experience a wide range of psychological and behavioural problems as they age, and especially so when dementia begins to compound this situation.

The two groups identified at this stage are Holocaust Survivors and Australian Veterans. This study is taking a broader systemic approach with a core research foundation. The intention is to inform not only health policy but also best practice in the service delivery and care of trauma survivors along the chain of care. A key focus is on building the workplace competencies of health professionals working with traumatized client groups.

For further information on the project contact Hamish Robertson on hrobertson@optusnet.com.au or Mobile 0425 237 942.

Life Extension Symposia 2003

The first *Life Extension Symposium* in Australia was held in March 2002 at The University of Sydney. In 2003 three symposia were held in turn at The University of Melbourne on 10 May, The University of Sydney on 17 May and the Brisbane Convention Centre on 24 May. The National Organiser was Professor Brian Morris (University of Sydney), the local organiser in Melbourne was Dr. Ian Gillam, and in Brisbane Prof Helen Bartlett. At each symposium there were 12 speakers, most of whom were local academic authorities in their field discussing the questions of how to slow ageing and how to live longer.

An international speaker, Dr Simon Melov (Buck Institute for Age Research, Novato, California, USA) discussed the development of drugs to counter the oxidative damage in tissues, which is a major cause of ageing. This theme was also considered by Prof Tony Linnane (Monash University), who spoke about the rejuvenative action of coenzyme Q10 on ageing human muscles. In Melbourne, Dr Ian Gillam discussed the use of antioxidants to aid recovery of muscles from exercise and to prolong their life-long health. In Brisbane, Dr Jeff Coombes pointed out that there

is a wealth of data supporting the use of antioxidant-rich diets of fruit and vegetables which protect against degenerative diseases. However, Prof David Celemajer (University of Sydney) said that clinical trials with vitamin antioxidants have failed to reduce cardiovascular mortality.

Prof Boyd Swinburne (Deakin University) spoke about the obesity epidemic which is reducing both health expectancy and life expectancy from childhood.



Arthur Everitt

A/Prof Arthur Everitt (University of Sydney) described a two year study of 20% calorie restriction in healthy human subjects, which significantly reduced the risk factors for cardiovascular disease

and diabetes. Prof Trefor Morgan (University of Melbourne) listed the risk factors for cardiovascular disease as high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, high cholesterol, inactivity and smoking. Prof Jennie Brand-Miller (University of Sydney) described how low glycemic index foods inhibited the development of diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Dr Dale Nyholt (Queensland Institute for Medical Research) said that genetic factors play a greater role in determining the life duration of centenarians than in shorter-lived people. Prof Brian Morris (University of Sydney) spoke about gene mutations that increase lifespan in lower animals.

Brian Morris listed his recommendations for life extension as follows:

- don't smoke
- don't drink alcohol
- exercise daily
- eat a healthy varied diet
- eat low glycemic index foods
- have a low salt diet
- avoid animal and hydrogenated fats
- use soy products
- avoid milk, meat and chicken
- take antioxidants such as Gilko biloba
- don't overeat and stay slim
- meditate for 20 minutes twice a day.

It is hoped that these Life Extension Symposia will continue to be annual events, which will be organised in all major cities of Australia and possibly New Zealand.

A. Everitt and B. Morris

QLD



The second education seminar for the year for the Queensland Division was held on 12 May, 2003. The overall theme for this year is *Community Care - Old Issues, New Challenges* and the topic for this seminar was *People with Mental Illness Grow Older Too*. The interest in this topic was quite overwhelming, with the audience including people from the mental health and aged care sectors, as well as from academia and the retirement village area.

Guest speakers for the evening were Dr Vicki Naumann, Psychiatrist with the Sandgate Community Mental Health Service, and Ms Elaine Collins, RN from the Mental Health Centre, Royal Brisbane Hospital. Dr Catherine Yelland provided a case study which set the scene for the presentations.

Dr Naumann used the term *graduates* which referred to people with chronic mental illness who have grown old. She indicated that there were many uncertainties for these individuals including:

- unclear history
- knowledge of previous treatment and its effectiveness
- effects of institutionalisation, given that many would have spent time in and out of institutions and hospitals

Other significant factors for these individuals are that they often have a high dependency on services and have a broad range of needs. The majority would suffer from:

- Schizophrenia
- Bi-polar
- Chronic depression
- Severe neurosis
- Personality disorders
- Multiple disabilities

Dr Neumann described some of the psychological issues for “graduates” which included cognitive deficits, social withdrawal, poor self care, disturbed behaviour, aggression, disinhibition. “Graduates” were rarely married or had spouses, few had recently been employed or had roots in

the community, due to constant relocating. Many had been cared for by their parents who were now quite elderly themselves and needing services.

Ms Collins’ presentation provided insight into the day-to-day management of “graduates”, the challenges presented including trying to find an appropriate placement. She questioned the appropriateness of placing such individuals in an aged care facility, and said that on many occasions requests were made to her service to find alternative placements when the individual became “too much” for the facility to manage appropriately. Audience members contributed their experiences with this issue.

Lively discussion occurred amongst the seminar participants. The consensus appeared to be however that groups should join together to lobby for more appropriate resources and more flexible accommodation choices.

Copies of the presentation are available by contacting spa@ihug.com.au

The next seminar will be held on 30 June, when the guest speaker will be Ms Irene Gibbons, Chief Executive Officer of the Carers Association of Australia. Ms Gibbons will provide an update on the issues pertaining to carers within the Australian community and provide some perspectives from overseas.

Sandra Woodbridge
President

NSW



The NSW rural conference held in Coffs Harbour in March proved to be our largest conference to date with 180 delegates attending from all parts of NSW, ACT, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia. Prof Helen Bartlett, Director, Australasian Centre on Ageing, University of Queensland, summed up the conference in the following words:

“Judging from the number of delegates who remained until the very end, this conference was a great success! As expected at an AAG event, a comprehensive range of papers was offered from research, provider and policy sectors. While

many familiar topics were covered including health and residential aged care, demographic, work and retirement and income, attention was also paid to other recent issues such as sexuality, grand-parenting, the use of computers, life-long learning and the needs of older people in rural areas”. Helen concluded her overview of the conference with the following remarks. “Questions were raised at the beginning of the conference about how we would cope with uncertainty. In conclusion, this conference has offered plenty of evidence that whilst we can’t crystallise the future, we are coping well with uncertainty and creating a future for ageing that promises to be both exciting and challenging”.

In her summing up of the conference, Helen identified gaps in the research agenda, most importantly the absence of ethnicity and indigenous issues, poverty and homelessness and older people’s migration patterns and experiences. As Helen stated, it is inevitable that, in any conference program, some areas will be missing. In order to address some of these gaps, the NSW Division has decided that the remaining seminars this year will focus on the issues of older Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. On 25 June 2003, we will be holding a membership evening in at The Marigold Restaurant, George St, Sydney where Prof John McCallum will be the guest speaker. The topic he will address is *Ageing in Asia: an Australian view on the Japanese experience*. For further information contact Adelaide Bornmann email: abaust@smartchat.com.au or phone: (02) 9523 1715. On 29 August 2003, prior to our AGM, a day seminar will discuss in more detail the research and policy directions for ageing Australians from culturally diverse backgrounds.

At our executive meeting in May, the committee reviewed the strategic plan and decided that increasing membership and education through seminars were the most important strategies to focus on for the next two years. We were very encouraged by the number of new members who joined at the Coffs Harbour conference, and we will continue to support our members and encourage new membership through our various activities and regular newsletters and information which can be found on our NSW State web page, accessed through the AAG website.

Jill Pretty
President and Newsletter Representative.



The Obesity Epidemic:

The health of older Australians is one of the most important medical and economic issues facing Australia in the coming years. Dr Stan Bennett from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) addressed a recent ACT Division seminar in Canberra. He discussed the concept of healthy ageing, and illustrated some principles by examining from his ongoing work, the joint effect of an ageing population and the obesity epidemic. He said that the number of older, obese Australians was a matter for concern. Dr Bennett also advised that a National Obesity Taskforce had recently been established, under the auspices of Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council, to develop a national approach to tackle overweight and obesity. Dr Bennett, who has a doctorate in epidemiology and population health from the Australian National University, and an Honours degree in mathematical statistics from Bradford, UK, has made significant contribution to national surveys of cardiovascular health, risk factors and nutrition. The seminar was both interesting and enlightening. Dr Bennett's work will be published from the AIHW.

ACT Webpage

The ACT Division now has its own page on the AAG website, www.aag.asn.au/act.html - thanks to Felicity Barr.

*Margaret Hodge,
Secretary*



The Division has been busy conducting four forums in the first half of the year. Three of the presentations have been the usual bi-monthly metropolitan forums (see examples below), and the other presentation, a practitioner update on restraint use, continence, falls, delirium, and so on, was for non-metro members in the East of the State. There will be another non-metro

presentation later in the year for those in the Western regions. Other activities undertaken by the Division include the ongoing construction of our web site, development and advertising of a research scholarship hosted by the Division (contact Prof Rhonda Nay), and discussion of the 2004 National conference in Victoria.

The first forum conducted by the Division in 2003 was on the new Nurse Practitioner (NP) Aged Care Project, presented by nurse researchers and practitioners from the Royal District Nursing Service. Anne-Marie Fabri, a nurse practitioner candidate, defined the role of advanced or extended practice in aged care as responding primarily to older people with complex health needs where clinical practice might require additional diagnostic tests, prescribing some medications (with GP agreement), and admitting rights aimed at enhancing access to appropriate care for the older person. She also explained the criteria being developed for NP endorsement in Victoria, such as research involvement, leadership in a particular area of practice, and having a Master's degree, and the greater autonomy in the role and higher salary.

Anne-Marie was followed by Jacqui Allen, the project evaluation officer, whose task is to assess whether the role of NP was actually implemented as designed, to document the clinical protocols developed in aged care, and assess what difference the role made to both older people and other involved health professionals. As there are currently no approved NPs in Victoria, the outcome of this project will be of great importance to our field. The presenters provided some references for those who want to follow up the nurse practitioner project: Department of Human Services. (2000), *The Victorian nurse practitioner project: Final report of the taskforce* (On-line), Available: www.dhs.vic.gov.au/vnp.

The second forum for the year was on the topic *Depression in the Elderly*. Prof Ian Hickie, CEO of the beyondblue organization presented an excellent paper on Late-life Depression. Beyondblue is a national Depression Initiative established by the Commonwealth and Victorian governments aimed at making a significant contribution in the field of depression intervention and prevention. Prof Hickie pointed out that depression ranks equal third in the

proportion of Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYS), and is predicted to rise to second in the future (behind Ischaemic Heart Disease). Figures from the National Mental Health Survey identified 800,000 people with a significant impairment in this area, with a female to male ratio of two to one, due to women being much more likely to report and seek treatment. However, community awareness and knowledge of the disease is low with only 3% from beyondblue community surveys rating mental health as a major health problem. Interestingly, and in contrast to the high suicide rate particularly for men aged 75 years or more, no one in those surveys identified suicide among older people as a major health problem. Major depression amongst older people is estimated to be 1% - 3%, compared to 5% - 10% amongst younger cohorts. Prof Hickie differentiated late-onset depression from lifecourse depression in a discussion of genetic and environmental causes, and spoke positively of their current trial of the impact of folate intake in reducing homocysteine levels. He believes we are on the threshold of some major advances in treatment and prevention of depression. The presentation went well over time, with many questions from the audience. Prof Hickie referred people to their website at www.beyondblue.org.au for more information.

*John McCormack
Newsletter Rep.*



This year's education program commenced on 26 February with a well attended seminar titled *Innovative Interventions: Acute Care in Aged Care Settings*, devised and run jointly with The Royal College of Nursing and Geriatrics. Informative presentations addressed:

- The experience and effects of hospitalisation for people with dementia - results of a recent Alzheimers' Australia (SA) study.
- The Advanced Community Care Association, a new partnership between three large residential and community aged care services,

Royal District Nursing Service and SA divisions of General Practice. The aim of the project is to work together to quickly respond to acute health events for elderly residents at the community level to head off the problem before it becomes any more serious than it should be.

- Residents' rights to return to aged care facilities following hospital admissions, and issues for facilities in providing appropriate care.

On 30 April a second stimulating seminar, *Health Promotion and Early Intervention in the Aged Care Sector*, presented an overview of the current international, national and state perspectives on health promotion, and showcased two examples of exciting programs. Helping Hand Aged Care presented the well established Healthy Lifestyles Program, which responds to the emotional and mental health needs of older people, while COTA National Seniors presented a new initiative utilising mainstream fitness services to promote physical health and wellbeing.

SA/NT will soon make references and materials from these presentations available on the AAG website.

Preparations are almost complete for the annual AAG (SA/NT) Conjoint Scientific Meeting, presented with support from Metropolitan Domiciliary Care and Geriatrics, to be held on 13 June. This year's conference theme is *Us and Them* and will explore the many meanings of 'Us and Them' in gerontology and aged care, including

- Us the expert and Them the clients/patients/ subjects
- Us (the individual) and Them ('older people', that is, 'not me')
- Us the institutions and Them the clients
- Us ('normal' people) and Them ('different': Indigenous, marginalised, poor, gay and lesbian, non-English speaking)

Keynote speakers will include Prof Freda Briggs and Dr Peter Last, and Dr Diane Gibson will

present the Sir Keith Wilson Oration. The AAG SA/NT Research Award for researchers in the formative phase of developing a research profile in gerontology will also be announced and presented at the conference.

Cathy Lock
Newsletter Rep.



The WA Division is off to a busy start to the year with the planning of the Regional Seminar, *Listening to the Elders*, to be held at Edith Cowan University's (Bunbury) South West Campus on Friday 27 June. Novice researchers will be presenting their work at the seminar as part of the WA Division's drive to encourage the ongoing development of gerontological research in the state. Contributions from several invited speakers are also to be featured, including one from Prof Kateryna Longley, Executive Dean of the Division of Social Sciences, Humanities and Education at Murdoch University. Prof Longley's special interest is in the role of autobiographical story-telling in the lives of elderly immigrants who have been forced to leave their homelands.

WA also hosted a prominent speaker at its recent public forum, held on the evening of Tuesday 8 April. Prof Osvaldo Almeida, Chair of Psychiatry of Old Age at the University of WA, presented on the topic of suicide in the elderly. Prof Almeida comes from Brazil, where he set up psychiatric services for older people, and completed his PhD at the Maudsley Hospital in London. In his Western Australian position, he has developed psychogeriatric services for Perth's inner city and is working with a colleague, clinical psychologist Jon J. Pfaff, on a program

that will assist general practitioners (GPs) in the prevention of self-harm in older people. The presentation stressed the high level of lethality of suicidal behaviour in the elderly and the preventative role that can be played by the GP. In this Commonwealth funded program, 61GPs are using a guide to the identification and management of elderly people at risk of suicide that was developed by Prof Almeida and Jon Pfaff. Prof Almeida also heads a flourishing research group so it is likely that WA members will hear more of his work and that of his co-researchers in the near future.

Chris Toye
Newsletter Rep

Appreciation

Thanks to Pam Bongers (ACT Division) who has generously assisted with editing this edition.

COPY DEADLINE

Copy for the September 2003 issue of the *AAG National* is due on 30 July 2003. Please email to dianne.langridge@flinders.edu.au or fax: (08) 8201 7551

NEW FEATURE ON WEBSITE:

You will now be able to access past copies of the AAG National Newsletter on the web. The AAG's web address is: www.aag.asn.au



The Asia-Oceania Regional IAG Newsletter will be available shortly on the AAG web site. www.aag.asn.au

2003

June 26 - 27 SYDNEY

The Hammond Care Group
Challenging Depression in Aged Care
 Sponsored by Commonwealth Dept. on Health
 & Ageing University of New South Wales
 Email: conference@hammond.com.au
 Web: www.hammond.com.au/conference

July 1- 4 BRISBANE

International Nursing Conference
Nursing in a Technological World
 Queensland University of Technology
 Hilton Hotel, Brisbane
 Tel: 07 3864 2452
 Web: www.hlth.qut.edu.au/inc2003

July 2- 5 SPAIN

Vth European Congress of Gerontology
Quality of Life for an Ageing Society
 Barcelona, Spain
 Email: barcelona2003@biotour.es
 Web: www.eriag.com/barcelona2003

Aug. 6 - 8 BRISBANE

National Demonstration Hospitals Program
 Phase 4
A Better Third Age: Health Care for Older People
 Carlton Crest Hotel
 Tel: 1800 814 611
 Email: ozaccomm@ozaccomm.com.au

Aug. 17 - 22 CHICAGO

11th International Congress
International Psychogeriatric Association
 Email: chicago2003@ipa-online.org
 Web: www.ipa-online.org

Aug. 27 - 30 FLORENCE

2nd Congress of the European Union Geriatric
 Medicine (EUGMS)
 Web: www.eugms.org

Sept. 3-6 CHILE

IV Latin American Congress of Geriatrics and
 Gerontology
 Web: www.socgeriatria.cl

Sept. 9 - 10 MELBOURNE

Hospital Health + Aged Care
 Melbourne Exhibition Centre.
 Web: www.healthandagedcare.com

Sept. 9 - 12 ADELAIDE

Palliative Care Conference
Time to Reflect
 Tel: 08 8274 6060
 Web: www.pallcare.org.au

Sept. 18 - 19 CANBERRA

Carers Australia National Conference
Caring Matters
 Email: carers@con-sol.com

Sept. 22 - 23 CANBERRA

The Dynamic Processes in Ageing
 Manning Clark Complex
 The Australian National University
 Web: www.anu.edu.au/cmhr/symposium

Sept. 23 - 25 CANBERRA

National Symposium on Ageing Research:
Building Evidence, Policy and Practice
 Australian National University
 Email: heather.logie@aihw.gov.au
 Web: www.ageingsymposium.com.au

Sept. 28 - Oct. 3 SYDNEY

28th International Congress on Law and Mental
 Health
 Email: Sydney2003@ialmh.org
 Web: www.ialmh.org

October 13 - 15 CHINA

4th International Symposium on Chinese Elderly
*Responding to the Changing Needs of the
 Elderly: Ethics and Policy*
 Beijing, The People's Republic of China
 Fax: 86-10-62751976
 Email: chengong@pku.edu.cn

October 19 - 22 PERTH

Aged & Community Services Australia
 16th National Conference & Trade Exhibition
Journey to the New Aged
 Burswood International Convention Centre
 Perth WA
 Web: www.acswa.org



Nov 12 - 14 HOBART

Australian Association of Gerontology
 36th Annual Conference

Expanding Knowledge of Ageing

Call for Papers is now available

Tel: 08 8302 1051
 Fax: 08 8302 1054
 Email: aag_conf@flinders.edu.au
 Web: www.aag.asn.au/conf

Nov. 12 - 15 INDIA

International Conference on Ageing
Challenges & Answers
 Jananeethi Institute for Justice, Education,
 Research and Development
 Thrissur, Kerala, India
 Email: jananeethi@zyberway.com
 Web: www.jananeethi.org



Nov 24 - 28 TOKYO

7th Asia Oceania Regional
 Congress of Gerontology

Email: 7thaog@convention.co.jp
 Web: http://www.convention.co.jp/7thaog/
 Tour Brochures are available from the
 IAGR Secretariat
 Tel: 02 9331 6920
 Fax 02 9331 7296
 Email: management@apcsyd.com.

Dec. 8 - 12 CANBERRA

International Conference on Population Ageing
 and Health
Modelling Our Future
 Email: conference@natsem.canberra.edu.au

2004

April 14 - 16 CHRISTCHURCH

NZ Association of Gerontology (NZAG)
*Expanding Horizons: The Art and Science
 of Ageing*
 Christchurch Convention Centre
 Web: www.3.vuw.ac.nz/ageing-institute/

October 15 - 17 JAPAN

20th International Conference of Alzheimer's
 Disease International
Dementia Care in an Aging Society
 Kyoto, Japan
 Email: adi2004@jtbcom.co.jp
 Web: www.alzheimer.or.jp

2005

Feb 22 - 25 SYDNEY

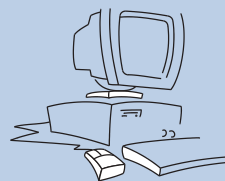
Alzheimer's Australia National Conference
 Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre
 Darling Harbour
 Web: www.alznsw.asn.au

June 24 - 29 BRAZIL

18th World Congress of Gerontology
 Rio De Janeiro, Brazil
 Tel: 55 11 3081 6247
 Fax: 55 11 3083 0473
 Email: iag2005@unicamp.br

NEWSLETTER SPONSORSHIP

The Australian Association of Gerontology is fortunate in gaining the support of the Board of Management of the Elderly Citizens Homes of South Australia in the production of this publication. The Association is most appreciative of this support.



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