

Maxwell Clifford Moore AM, President of the Ophthalmological Society of Australia (OSA), 1964 – 1965

Max Moore was a founding member of the Australian College of Ophthalmologists (ACO).

He graduated from the University of Adelaide in 1946 and was appointed resident medical officer at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. He was awarded the Diploma of Ophthalmology, Sydney, in 1949, the FRACS in 1966 and FRACO in 1978. In 1947 he was appointed as clinical assistant in the departments of Ophthalmology in both the Royal Adelaide and the Adelaide Children's Hospitals, as well as joining a private ophthalmic practice. He resigned from the Royal Adelaide Hospital in 1983 but was Emeritus Senior Surgeon at the Adelaide Children's Hospital from 1968. Despite the demands of a large private practice and his hospital obligations, he managed to find time to contribute to the Ophthalmological Society of Australia (OSA), the Royal Australian College of Ophthalmologists (RACO), the Australian Medical Association (AMA) and the Royal Australian Air Force.

In 1949 Max had joined the OSA, becoming Chair in 1961, and he became a member of the Prevention of Blindness Committee in 1956, which he chaired from 1963 to 1968. From 1963 to 1972 he was a member of the Federal Council of the OSA and the ACO, becoming President of the OSA in 1964 to 1965. The OSA was not an examining or qualifying body and its main activities were centred on the Annual Scientific Conference, which was the main vehicle for continuing education. When the ACO was formed in 1969, Max became an inaugural member of the Qualification and Education Committee, where he worked hard for 16 years. He became a Part II examiner and was appointed Chairman of the Part II Examination Board for 8 years in 1977 with the co-Chairman of the Court of Examiners of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS). These years were critical to the consolidation of the assessment processes and credentials as a body of higher education. In later years, Max was a source of sensible and practical advice to College Presidents, particularly as ideas on governance changes were being evolved.

In 1949 he had joined the RAAF reserve and by 1971 had attained the rank of Group Captain, which he held until 1981, serving as Consultant Ophthalmologist to the Director-General of Air-Force Health Services, and Honorary Surgeon to the Governor-General from 1975 to 1981. He was a member of the Orthoptic Board of Australia and Patron of the Orthoptic Association of Australia; and he was also a member of the Board of Studies in Optometry for the South Australian Institute of Technology. In 1971 he was elected to the Council of the SA Branch of the AMA, becoming its Vice-President in 1978 and President in 1979. In recognition of his services to that body he was elected a Fellow of the AMA in 1983.

During his term as President, the main issue that was dealt with was the proposed formation of a College of Ophthalmologists. The AGM was to be remembered as the longest and most contentious ever with the notice of motion to change the name of the OSA with the formation of a College with the ultimate aim of establishing a training program and a qualifying examination of high standard, uniform throughout Australia. Debate revealed strong feelings. Some feared loss of prestige and recognition built up over 30 years by the OSA while some believed that the specialty was too small to take on the duties of a College, and lose reciprocities with the Royal Colleges. On the other side, attention was drawn to the unsatisfactory state of multiple diplomas and dependence on the inappropriate examination of the RACS. The subject was too important to close down the debate so it was adjourned to a later time in the week of the Conference when, eventually it was agreed that a committee be set up to continue discussions with RACS and the AMA and to report back. At the same time an Academy of Ophthalmology had been mooted which was considered to be worthy of consideration but it was feared that this may create a second professional body of ophthalmologists.

Other matters during his term of office as President included:

- public relations to educate undergraduates and General Practitioners regarding ophthalmology as a valuable part of medicine;
- political approach to Eye Care and the NHS in relation to Optometrists;
- inappropriate involvement with Optical Industries by holding of shares by 4 ophthalmologists;
- conjoint meeting with the Ophthalmological Society of New Zealand (OSNZ) in fostering further relations;
- investigation of holding the International Council of Ophthalmology (ICO) in Sydney;
- efforts to have ophthalmic drugs evaluated before being placed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits list.

In his presidential address, Max developed a theme along the lines of the heavy demands on a doctor's time for the persistent striving towards perfection in all aspects of ophthalmic practice and related that to the many diseases for which previously there had been no treatment but which now required intensive investigation and therapy. He used demographics to illustrate the exponential growth of the world's population, and compared the population density between Australia and South East Asia. He pointed out that Australia had recognised its obligations of contributing to the education of SE Asian students, and by means of the Colombo Plan had provided for the training of a large number of medical students who graduated from our universities. As there were limitations to the number of students the universities could accept, such students were trained at the expense of Australians, demonstrating Australia's willingness to help our neighbours, and teaching by example the code of ethics and assumption of responsibility to every patient. He also touched on the science explosion which had commenced 300 years before and had been likened to Parkinson's Law. Medical manpower in Australia was touched upon with a relative shortage of doctors

foreseen contributing to the requirement for increased efficiency in whatever form of employment was followed, whether it be in independent private practice, as a member of a team, or in a teaching hospital post. He warned that it would be essential to pursue the highest standards of teaching but to beware such tendencies which could represent the beginnings of a medical "Parkinsonism".

Max was recognised for his services to medicine, particularly in the field of ophthalmology with the award of Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 1981; and he was awarded the College Medal in 1983 for distinguished, meritorious and selfless service to the College.

His hobbies were clay target shooting, water skiing, flying and gliding. He was married with two daughters.