

Daniel Christian Wilson, J.P., President of the Australian College of Ophthalmologists, 1971 - 1972

Daniel Wilson was born on 17 January 1915 in Victoria and died in WA on 9 August 1986. He married in 1938 and was father to two daughters and one son. His primary education was in Bendigo where his father was a draper. He attended Scotch College Melbourne for his secondary education, and graduated from Melbourne University with MB BS in 1937. He was appointed RMO at Fremantle Hospital in WA, and seeing the great opportunities in WA he settled there. From 1939 to 1948 he practised as a GP in remote areas of WA including Wiluna, Northampton and Leonora and it was not until 1956 that he became a full-time ophthalmologist. A lung abscess cut short his posting in Wiluna, where he did a locum for seven months. Having been pronounced medically unfit for war service it was to Northampton that he went in 1939. Next he went to Leonora, a gold mining town, where he remained for seven years until a move to Perth to educate his children became necessary.

Daniel moved back to Perth in 1948 and set up practice as a GP in Victoria Park. He gained ophthalmological experience as an Honorary Clinical Assistant with Dr Barnard, and then with Robert Linton in the Ophthalmic Department at Royal Perth Hospital. In 1952 he returned to Victoria to the RVEEH to formalise ophthalmic training before attending Moorfields and Royal Westminster Ophthalmic Hospitals in London. In 1955 he returned to Perth as consultant at Royal Perth and Fremantle Hospitals where he mentored younger clinicians, by lending them instruments, allowing them to assist at operations, and providing referrals.

He represented WA on the Council of the OSA and RACO from 1961 to 1973. He assisted Robert Linton in organising the 1963 Perth Congress and again helped Tim Yates organise the 1976 Congress when he was President in Perth. He also served on the Orthoptic Board and the Prevention of Blindness Committee of the College.

Issues he dealt with during his Presidency were mainly issues faced by the Qualification and Education Committee (QEC). The QEC was established to meet all the responsibilities of creating a vocational training program (VTP), the establishment of an examination process, and the awarding of a diploma of Fellowship. Dr Ken Howsam, the QEC Chair and his team tackled the compilation of a syllabus and conditions for training; and establishment of teachers and examiners to assess candidates' qualification. He and Dr Geoff Harley worked together to compile the Memorandum of Articles of Association of the College.

Daniel's enjoyments included boating, fishing, wine appreciation, and contemporary Australian Artists and spent time with Hans Heysen at Hahndorf. In his retirement he took up lapidary and silver-smithing to mount the finished stones.