

Emmanuel Gregory, President of the Royal Australian College of Ophthalmologists, 1993 - 1994

Emmanuel Gregory was born in Sydney of Greek Immigrant parents on 15 December 1941. He graduated in medicine from the University of Sydney in 1965 and after two years as a resident at Liverpool Hospital he moved to Melbourne for Postgraduate study at the Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital, gaining a Diploma in Ophthalmology in 1969 and FRACS in 1970. He returned to Liverpool Hospital as Honorary Ophthalmologist conducting Eye Out-Patients' Clinics and In-patient surgical sessions while establishing a private practice at Liverpool. After his return to Liverpool he pioneered the use of the operating microscope for ophthalmic surgery in Sydney and the use of intraocular lenses for cataract surgery. In 1975 he added FRACO to his credentials and became a Federal Councillor of the College in 1976 until 1992 before becoming Vice-President then President of the College. In 1997 he joined the Day Surgery at Strathfield Private Hospital.

Emmanuel took over as President from Ian Favilla during the 25th Annual Congress which was held in Hobart in November 1993. This was opened by Dr Brendan Nelson who was President of the AMA at the time. Registrations exceeded expectations with an attendance of 367 registered delegates. This included 36 vision scientists who registered for the Basic Sciences meeting, sponsored by the Ophthalmic Research Institute of Australia (ORIA) and held in conjunction with the Congress.

During his term as President, the 26th annual conference was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in conjunction with the Malaysian Ophthalmological society: Pal Singh was their President and Steve Cains was Congress Chairman. A number of initiatives were also introduced to the College including the following topics:

- Fee Relativity Study. Professor Mark Hirst from the Australian Graduate School of Management at the University of NSW was engaged to undertake a fee relativity study on ophthalmic procedures in preparation of a Government study to compare the fees of the various medical professional groups within Medicare.
- Continuing Medical Education. A Certificate of Participation in Continuing Medical Education was adopted to be awarded on a point collection assessed over a three year period.
- Clinical Indicators in Ophthalmology. The Australian Council on Health Care Standards was commissioned to undertake a pilot study on Clinical Indicators in Ophthalmology in relation to length of stay, readmission rates and ocular infections for certain operations.
- Visual Development in Childhood. Guidelines on the Management of Children with Learning Difficulties/Learning Disabilities was developed in association with the Education Authorities in each State and distributed to all Fellows.
- Aboriginal and Rural Eye Health Committee was set up.

The theme of Emmanuel Gregory's Presidential Address was "What has the College done for me?". This was aimed at informing the younger ophthalmologists of the history of their College and the way in which the functions of the College benefit the Australian community and Fellows of the College. He explained that there had been a bewildering array of courses in ophthalmology in the late 1960s and that a formalisation of the training programmes was required in order to satisfy the Australian community of appropriate standards. With the development of the College and its Qualification and Education Committee, a formalisation of training programmes for 1st and 2nd part examinations was established, leading to a Fellowship of the Royal Australian College of Ophthalmologists (RACO), although a conjoint examination with the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons was still in existence.

Dr Gregory covered the functions of the College by dividing them into the academic and administrative components: the academic including education at a basic science and clinical level; continuing education; research; and the training of future generations of ophthalmologists. Surgical training in particular required a one on one relationship between teacher and student and would not be possible without the involvement

of many College Fellows. The continuing education through Annual Congresses allowed the opportunity for interaction between colleagues from other disciplines and countries for greater understanding of problems, ways of life, and attitudes of others. He encouraged Fellows to support the ORIA in raising funds for grants for future research and he thanked the individual industries for their support for further education of young ophthalmologists through scholarships. On the administrative side he covered the many requests for information and submissions to government.

He then turned the tide and asked "What can Fellows do for the College?" and proceeded to encourage them to be involved, first of all in branch committees in order to democratically promote appropriate change; and involvement in other committees at state and federal level for the best ophthalmic care to be provided to the community. He acknowledged the contributions made by fellows of the College in overseas locations such as the Solomon Islands, Bangladesh, Nepal and Vietnam and concluded by announcing that the International Congress of Ophthalmology was to be held in Sydney in 2002.

Emmanuel's special interests are in surgery of the Anterior Segment of the eye including Cataract, Corneal transplantation, Glaucoma, Laser Refractive Surgery (LASIK), and Ultraviolet collagen cross-linking for stabilizing cornea in Keratoconus.

For his recreational activities as a balance to his professional career, Emmanuel has had a passion for outdoor activities including boating, fishing, shooting and big game hunting, the latter taking him to many remote areas of the world including the Alaskan Peninsula, Canadian Arctic and the Yukon, Mongolia, Zimbabwe and South Africa.