

Remington John Pyne, President of the Australian College of Ophthalmologists, 1982 - 1983

Remington Pyne was born on 6 March 1929 and died on 8 April 1988 at the young age of 59. He was the father of five children: one girl and four boys, the youngest of whom is Christopher. He grew up at Jamestown, SA where he received his early education: his father was headmaster of the local school. He matriculated from Rostrevor and entered the faculty of Medicine at Adelaide University from whence he graduated with MB BS in 1952. He served with the Army from 1952 to 1955 and attained the rank of Captain in the 26th Field Ambulance RAAMC and in 1954, after completing his residency he left for Japan and Korea as Medical Officer with the 23rd battalion, Royal Australian Army Regiment, serving also with the British 26th Brigade Field Ambulance.

On his return to Australia he took up an appointment at Alice Springs with the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Whilst there he developed empathy for the Aboriginal people and saw at first hand their health problems, particularly with trachoma. He married in 1956 and joined the Department of Immigration where he was employed as Medical Officer in Europe. Whilst in Rome he met Professor Bagolini and became interested in Ophthalmology

Remington moved to London in 1959 and became clinical assistant at Moorfields where he passed the London DO from the Royal College of Physicians. He moved to Northampton as Senior Registrar before returning to Australia in 1960 where he set up a successful practice with Glynn Davies in Adelaide. His interest was in paediatric ophthalmology and because of his fluency in Italian he had a large Italian following. From 1960 to 1987 he was Senior Visiting Specialist at the Adelaide Children's Hospital and was appointed as Honorary Ophthalmologist to the Royal Adelaide Hospital from 1960 to 1964 and for the same period was Medical Officer to the Defense Services at Maralinga. From 1960 to 1982 he was Senior Consultant to the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Army from 1960 to 1987. He was also Honorary Consultant to the South Australian Cranio-Facial Unit.

After serving as the State President of the SA Branch College in 1971 he served as President of RACO from 1982 to 1983 and was awarded with FRACO and FRACS in 1982. Through the vision and hard work of many, the College had experienced 15 years of rapid growth, increased maturity, confidence and regional importance, since its inception in 1968.

During his term as President, Dr Ronald Winton was commissioned to write a history of the College in time to celebrate its half-century in 1988, the OSA having been founded in 1938. Patient education leaflets on Macular Degeneration and Glaucoma were produced and a library of ophthalmic video tapes was established (and housed at the RVEEH Conjoint library). The National Trachoma and Eye Health Program was re-activated in an on-going way in all mainland States and in the Northern Territory as after the change in the Commonwealth Government in March 1983 the College offered to continue their cooperation in the program. In the meantime, government instrumentalities turned more often to the College for advice. At the same time the close and harmonious workings with the OSNZ continued to grow. In the training field, a register of trainees was well established while Australian candidates holding the Part I Examination in Ophthalmic Basic Science were given preference for vocational training posts. Enquiries from overseas trained specialists were given individual consideration by the Censor-in-Chief. The Continuing Education Committee included the Co-ordinator of Workshops and the Convenor of Self-Assessment Programs, and a section of the journal was devoted to Continuing Education. Another issue was the suggestion that integration of Undergraduate Education and that of General Practitioners under one committee may be desirable. The editorial committee was expanded because ophthalmology had become more specialized and expertise in the many facets of the specialty was required for the task of refereeing and editing manuscripts. Collection, identification and storage of archival material was continued while further progress with the Museum was made. Although the Orthoptic Board no longer conducted examinations, it saw its role as monitoring the courses and conduct of orthoptic schools to ensure that they were relevant to the needs of the graduates and appropriate to allow admission as Associate Members of the College. The lack of a blind Register continued to be of concern and efforts were made to obtain records from State Branches of Social Security to form a basis for a Blind Register. Other issues for the Prevention of Blindness and Sight Rehabilitation Committee were: the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Road Safety; the report on Eye Injuries in Adults in NSW which would form the basis of statistics relating to eye injuries in Australia; and a request from ACROD for comments regarding Periodic Eye Examinations.

In his Presidential Address Remington Pyne covered these accomplishments by the College as follows:

1. An increase from one to six professorial chairs and academic centres across Australia with improvement in educational, clinical and research standards;
2. The institution through the QEC of a series of regular seminars on specific subjects with speakers being of an international standard without detracting from the general program of the Annual Congress;
3. Continuing Medical Education through multiple choice assessment questionnaires, provision of American Academy booklets, and video recording of the scientific meetings;
4. Consideration of the feasibility of a program to improve ophthalmological content of undergraduate training in medical schools under trial at Flinders University for future general practitioners;
5. Introduction of a seminar at Congress for general practitioners;

6. Development through the professorial chairs of community initiatives such as the Lions glaucoma screening; Lions diabetic screening; formation of Ophthalmic Research Groups for scientists engaged in research and ophthalmologists to discuss problems of mutual interest; early recognition and education of dyslexics through SPELD;
7. The National Trachoma and Eye Health Program conducted by Fred Hollows from 1978 to 1980 and implementation of his recommendations left as a difficult problem for the College;
8. Ocular problems addressed by visiting teams from the College in countries of South-East Asia, Pacific Islands, India and Bangladesh;
9. Establishment of a protocol to follow for internal discipline of the College;
10. Development of closer ties with the OSNZ with joint representation on the QEC and with a Deputy Censor-in-Chief in New Zealand.

Of his many other interests he was named Father of the Year in South Australia in 1976, having extended his family to include those with dyslexia. He was a foundation member of SPELD; served for over 20 years on the council of Aquinas College and assisted in establishing the Centre for Catholic studies at Flinders University. He was made a *Commander Military Hospitalia of the Order of St Lazarus of Jerusalem* for his services to medicine and to children. In his leisure time he enjoyed golfing, painting, and reading, and he participated in many of the cultural activities in Adelaide. He had a farm at Victor Harbour and was an active member of the Adelaide Club.