Conference Report

5th AMMA Scientific Conference, Hyatt Hotel, Canberra

The 5th Annual Scientific Conference of the Australian Military Medicine Association was held at the historic Hyatt Hotel, Canberra, from the 6th to the 8th of September 1996. Over 100 delegates from both the Permanent and Reserve Defence Forces, as well as civilians with an interest in military medicine, were treated to a range of scientific and topical papers and posters during the three days of proceedings.

The Conference was opened by the Minister for Defence Science, Industry and Personnel, the Honourable Bronwyn Bishop MP, who spoke highly of the contribution the uniformed health services provide to Australia’s defence capability. She noted also the frequent involvement in humanitarian relief, both on a large and small scale.

The Conference themes were:

* Operational Military Medicine
* Training Aspects of Military Medicine
* Research in Military Medicine
* Military Medicine and its Challenges

There were two keynote addresses. In “Primum non nocere - above all, do no harm”, Ms Fiona Terry of Medecin Sans Frontiers provided a thought provoking insight into the activities of non-government humanitarian relief agencies. In the second, and perhaps the most telling address of the Conference, Rodney Franks and Peter Stride recounted their experiences during the 1996 Port Arthur massacre.

‘Weary’ Dunlop Award

The ‘Weary’ Dunlop Award, presented annually for the paper adjudged the best original work at the AMMA Scientific Conference, was won by Annette Owttrim for her work entitled “The role of the Nurse Practitioner in the Australian Defence Force” (to be published in a future issue).

Poster Award

An award of two books was presented to the author of the best poster - David Andrew His presentation, “Potential dangers during operations on victims of gunshots or fragmentation devices”, gave an excellent overview of the risks to medical staff of different types of ordnance.

Patron’s Address

Air Vice-Marshal Graeme Moller addressed the Conference delegates on the last day in his capacity as Patron of AMMA. Air Vice-Marshal Moller succeeded Major General David Rossi as Surgeon General in 1996, and took the opportunity to provide his support for AMMA and its aims and objectives.

Social Programme

Conference delegates were welcomed to Canberra on the first night at a Cocktail Reception hosted by the Chief Minister of the ACT, Mrs Kate Carnell.

The Conference Dinner was held on the Saturday, and was addressed by the Deputy Chief of Naval Staff, Rear Admiral Chris Barrie, AM, RAN. Admiral Barrie spoke on aspects of the future of the Defence Force into the 21st century.

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AMMA Merchandise

A variety of new merchandise featuring the AMMA logo was available for sale.