

AMMA JOURNAL VOL 6 ISSUE 3

DECEMBER 1997

1997 Military Medical Symposium

by
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The 1997 Military Medicine Symposium was held at the Marriott Hotel, Sydney, on the weekend of 15 and 16 November.

Jointly hosted by the Director Health Services – NSW, COL Bill Molloy RAAMC, and Professor Robert Lusby from the University of Sydney Professional Unit at the Repatriation General Hospital, Concord, and organised in his usual adept fashion by LTCOL Ted Kremer RAAMC, 21 high class presentations were delivered to an audience of around 70 – mostly Regular and Reserve Army.

Presentations covered a wide variety of topics, ranging from military surgical history to the forefront of specialist clinical research. The old regulars of malaria and arboviruses, and injuries consequent to training and fitness testing (will they never learn?) were covered, as were trauma and orthopaedic surgery.

Subjects not so directly related to military medicine were also presented, including the Metabolic Syndrome and one of those growing diseases – obstructive sleep apnoea. A couple of travelogues – Rome and Annapolis – provided some slightly lighter relief.

At the academic level, there were perhaps two highlights. First, an ophthalmologist presenting on mountain climbing and acute mountain sickness. Second, Associate Professor David Celemajer's erudite presentation on the latest advances in research into the aetiology and prospects for early diagnosis and intervention in atherosclerosis (the author always thought that red wine did the trick – which leads logically on to..)

On the social side, the highlight was the formal dinner on the Saturday. Attended by former NSW Governor, Rear Admiral Peter Sincalir AC, RAN (also a Councillor of the Anzac Health and Medical Research Foundation), the inaugural Thomas Henry Fiaschi Oration was delivered by Colonel C.R.B. Blackburn ED (MB, BS, BA (Hon), MD (Syd), Hon MD (Ncle), FRCP (Lond), FRACP, FACP (Hon), Emeritus Professor of Medicine – the University of Sydney, Captain 2/5 AGH Crete and 2/11 AGH Alexandria, Major 2/1 CCS Milne Bay, 106 CCS Port Moresby and 113 AGH Sydney, Lieutenant-Colonel LHQ Malaria Research Unit Cairns and Sydney, and Colonel Consultant Physician AHQ Sydney. Colonel Blackburn spoke eloquently on his experiences in casualty management during the long days of the Second World War, and kept the diners captivated by his accounts.

The dinner was also an opportunity to dine out the departing Director of Health Services, Colonel Bill Molloy, RFD, ED.