

# Historical Collections

The Historical Collections Committee wishes to acknowledge all the Fellows, Members and Friends who have once again generously supported the work of the Historical Collections through financial donations and by donating rare and valuable items. This year financial donations to the Friends of the College Collection amounted to a total of A\$8350. The College gratefully acknowledges the generosity of the donors. The funds are used to expand, maintain and conserve the Collection.

During the year, arrangements were made to commission photographs of the two glass sculptures Faith and Hope which were donated to the nation by the Royal Australian College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RACOG) in 1988 as a bicentennial gift. The sculptures, by artist Paddy Robinson, are held in the permanent collection of the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney. The resulting photographs are now framed and displayed at College House to provide a historical record of the gifts.

There are currently 143 oral histories collected in the Archives. Dr Struan Robertson has continued his excellent work of recording interviews with senior Fellows of New South Wales. The recordings are systematically being saved onto the College hard drive for preservation purposes. Copies of the oral histories are available for loan by Fellows.

The College assets of art, furniture and decorative arts are being entered into a new database, which will greatly assist in the management of the assets. A photograph will be included with each entry to assist with identification of individual items. Recent purchases have included early 19th century engravings relating to the Foundling Hospital in London, depicting views of the hospital and also some of the young charges being discussed by the Board of Governors. The antique French onyx and ormolu clocks in the Collection have been recently assessed by a clock expert and are undergoing maintenance. The Collections were enhanced by the addition of the sterling silver mace belonging to the former Royal New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RNZCOG). This was sent to the College as a permanent loan and will be on display at College House in the near future.

Recent donations of instruments to the College Museum included a pelvimeter; a Bozeman uterine flushing catheter; a dilating mucus catheter; a Tiyoda microscope, c1934; and a Chassignac's ecraseur. One of the treasures of the Museum Collection, the Smellie's straight forceps, c1750, has been on display in the entrance foyer of College House, creating much interest.

Accessioning and cataloguing of donations to the Museum during the year has been completed. The Historical Collections are again grateful to Dr Geoffrey Bishop and Miss Helen Johnson for their time spent in instrument identification and research. Their work has been invaluable.

The Frank Forster Library purchased a number of books by College Fellows and others during the year, including two rare books:

- Raulin, J. *Traite des maladies des femmes en couche*, 1772.
- Getchell, F (ed). *An illustrated encyclopedia of the science and practice of obstetrics*, 1890.

Since the catalogue of the Frank Forster Library has been entered into the Libraries Australia database and is now available for searching on that website, the demand for loans of books and journal articles has increased considerably. The searching facility has enhanced the value of this unique collection of medical history in the area of obstetrics and gynaecology and encouraged researchers in the field.

A new Honour Board for Distinguished Service Medal recipients has been purchased and is on display in the function room at College House with the other Honour Boards.

## **Dr John Wilson**

Chair, Historical Collections Committee

## **Grainne Murphy**

Museum Curator

## **Di Horrigan**

Librarian

## **Ros Winspear**

Archivist/Records Manager



STANDING FIGURE 1999/2000 Stone Lithograph. RANZCOG Research Foundation.