From the Editor

This year is the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the RANZCP and a number of commemorative events are planned across Australia and New Zealand (please see College website). I hope you will find the opportunity take part in some celebrations, either locally or at the congress in Sydney in May.

The binational FPOA committee are also keen to highlight the growing contribution of the FPOA to the proud history of RANZCP. During the year, this newsletter will feature articles regarding the extensive contributions that FPOA members have made to the development of psychiatry in Australia, New Zealand and internationally since the establishment of the FPOA in 1998.

In this edition, there is an article from Prof. Brian Draper detailing the establishment of the FPOA training program – which directly benefited many of us professionally and also led to the growth of specialist mental health services for the elderly. Prof Pam Melding, another highly regarded pioneer of the Faculty, is retiring this year and some of her many achievements are highlighted within.

This is the last newsletter before the new binational committee is elected in May, so it seems a good time to reflect on the leadership of the Faculty - both past and present. In my view, we have been extremely fortunate in the calibre of our colleagues that have established, developed and led the College to date. They have been outstanding academics, clinicians, managers, policy advisors, teachers and mentors, who have set high standards for us all and been generous with their time. They have overseen the development of a new generation of home-grown psychogeriatricians and successfully lobbied for new services and treatments to be made available to older people in Australia and New Zealand.

It is timely to thank the current binational committee members and the RANZCP corporate staff for their contributions over the past 2 years. Rod McKay as Chair has provided energetic and tactful leadership while representing FPOA issues in multiple arenas and settings and roles. In particular, Rod has championed the development of linkages with colleagues from South-East Asia and other health organisations within Australia and New Zealand (Older Person’s Mental Health Network). These initiatives are fostering the development of broad-based collaborative working groups that can unite to better represent the interests of the elderly with mental health issues. Rod has also been closely involved in the development of service planning frameworks both in NSW and nationally.

In the absence of effective leadership, our services and patients are likely to be overlooked and marginalised. There is still clearly significant unmet need, and sobering projections of growth of the elderly population, but inadequate and patchy focus on planning of the reforms and expansions required to meet this need. It is therefore important that effective alliances are formed with other key stakeholders such as primary care, allied health colleagues, aged care, carers and consumers. This underlines the strategic importance of the recent initiative to form the Older Person’s Mental Health Network.

Our leaders have set a rather daunting standard, but I would encourage you to consider how you can contribute to the College and FPOA and either nominate for leadership positions or support and feed back to those who do.

Dr Helen McGowan
From the Chair

A belated welcome to 2013 in my final Newsletter report as Faculty Chair. I hope the New Year is not too distant a memory!

It has been a pleasure both representing the Faculty, and working with fellow members of the Faculty committee. Contrary to earlier vague warnings, even participation in General Council has been marked by collegiality and a clear desire to improve services for College members and the community.

FPOA Prizes
The new FPOA prizes to promote excellence in advancing the Quality of Life in Older People with Mental Illness have been successfully launched this year, with competing entries for all three prizes (Basic Trainee, Scholarly Project and Mental Health Service Improvement Prize). The winners will have the opportunity to present aspects of their work in a session titled ‘Excellence in Psychiatry of Old Age’ at 1715 on Tuesday 28th May during College Congress. Please come and celebrate with them, and hear about the work they have completed.

Scientific meetings.
A very successful meeting was co-hosted with the IPA in Cairns in September. Many thanks are due to Prof Daniel O’Connor and Prof Gerard Byrne from the Faculty, and for the strong support from the College organisers and Australian non-Faculty IPA members.

This year holds a wealth of opportunities for meeting up with colleagues and updating of knowledge.

The Faculty's 2013 Annual Scientific Meeting will be held from 14 to 16 November 2013 in Auckland. Prof Dilip Jeste, psychogeriatrician and Chair of American Psychiatric Association is a keynote presenter not to be missed!

An earlier opportunity for meeting up with colleagues comes with the College Congress in Sydney from 26 to 30 May. A wealth of oral presentations, posters and symposia focussed on POA are scheduled. These will include Professor John Snowdon as the Faculty’s invited speaker who will reflect upon the Faculty’s history and achievements; and Professor Masatoshi Takeda, President of the Japanese Society of Psychiatry and Neurology. Other presenters will be covering a range of topics including delirium prevention, the Faculty’s development of a BPSD Handbook, Recovery, squalor, and challenges in managing depression.

Finally, the 16th IPA Congress is in Seoul from 1 to 4 October and offers a wealth of opportunities.

Older Persons Mental Health Network
General Council has approved the formation of an Older Persons Mental Health Network. This will primarily be a communication network to assist collaboration between Faculty members, other College members, and other professionals who have an interest in mental health for older people. The Faculty committee will now work through the practicalities required to ‘launch’ the Network. I hope in particular that this network can be used to facilitate closer working relationships with our multidisciplinary colleagues, and encourage more engagement of College Fellows who may wish to become more involved in working with older people.

Faculty involvement in promoting POA issues
It is expected that the Assessment and Management of People with Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD): A Handbook for NSW Health Clinicians will soon be launched. It will then be publically accessible. Many thanks to Dr Chanaka Wijeratne for his leadership of this project, and the support and time contributed by many Faculty members and College staff.

In recent months the Faculty has also:
- made submissions regarding the proposed amendments to the Aged Care Act 1997 and PBAC review of anti-dementia medicines for Alzheimer’s Disease,
- contributed information regarding suicide prevention in older people for Life News,
- contributed to the development of a training resource by the Aged Care Channel for residential aged care staff regarding Schizophrenia and Bipolar Disorder,
- revised and renewed the joint position statement with the Australian and New Zealand Society for Geriatric Medicine (ANZSGM) Relationships between geriatric and Aged Care Psychiatry services.
Communication with the Faculty Chair
It is essential that the Faculty remains meaningful to all its members, and the Faculty Chair in touch with their concerns. Thank you to those who have been in contact with me via the ‘FPOA Chair’ email address.

Members are welcome to contact me, or future Faculty Chairs, via fpoa.chair@ranzcp.org

Rod McKay

From the Secretary

September 2012 saw the FPOA jointly host the IPA regional meeting in Cairns. The event was a great success, with well over 400 registrants attending, and it was a pleasure to meet with the 36 Fellows who attended the Faculty General Meeting during the conference. A key issue raised during the GM was an apparent decline in the vitality of activity at the Branch level within the FPOA, as evidenced by the underutilisation of the existing Faculty Grants scheme, intended to support educational activities hosted by the Branches. It was noted at the time of the GM that a number of Branches had not held a formal meeting for some years!

Likely reasons for the decline in activity within the branches include the growing and competing pressures of work and family life, the increasing tendency for Fellows to structure their work around a public/private split, the tyranny of distance impacting on attendance, and ‘meeting fatigue.’ A number of suggestions were made that might encourage fellows to attend Branch functions, including encouraging Fellows to combine existing Peer Review Group activities with a Branch function, and the concept of ‘piggy-backing’ Branch functions on to other educational events. This latter approach was shown to work successfully in Victoria last month, when a Branch function that attracted over 20 responses was conducted following a combined educational meeting organised by the FPOA and the ANZSGM.

I would remind Branch Chairs of the availability of up to $2000 to support Branch functions. The committee has gone to some lengths in 2012 to ensure that the application process for these grants is not onerous, and to ensure that reimbursement for expenses can be made in a timely manner on production of receipts. Applications for Faculty Grants can be made directly to the Faculty Secretariat (leah.jackson@ranzcp.org).

Another discussion arising from the GM was around increasing the engagement of the Branches with the business of the binational committee. Specifically, it was suggested that where local branches felt passionately about a particular area of interest they should feel empowered to liaise with the binational committee regarding the development/review of position statements on the Faculty’s behalf.

Efforts continue to raise the profile of the FPOA within the broader College. We plan to hold an annual FPOA symposium within the College Congress, being held this year between 26 - 30 May at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Sydney. The highlight of this year’s symposium, in keeping with the Congress’ celebration of the 50th anniversary of the RANZCP, will be a talk from Professor John Snowdon on the history of Old Age Psychiatry in Australia and New Zealand.

Steve MacFarlane
Development of the Advanced Training Program in Old Age Psychiatry

When the Section in Psychiatry of Old Age (SPOA) was established in 1988, one of the objectives specified in the Terms of Reference from the General Council of the College was “to develop and participate in training programs in psychiatry of old age for training psychiatrists...”. In 1992 SPOA set up a Working Party in Training Issues chaired by Brian Draper and comprising Ed Chiu, David Ames and Peter McArdle. As little was known about the availability and adequacy of old age psychiatry training in the College training program or about the trainees’ perceptions of their needs for such training, SPOA funded surveys of College trainees and training program coordinators. The surveys focused on basic training because in that era, child & adolescent psychiatry was the only area of subspecialty advanced training available in the College. Over 94% of the 420 trainees that responded felt that they required at least 3 months’ old age psychiatry training, but only 70% obtained a rotation by the end of their fourth year of training. Interestingly, 17% of the respondents indicated that they were considering a career in old age psychiatry.

By the mid 1990s, there was concern that SPOA was unable to have a broader influence on College policy or to advocate strongly for the needs of older people without having a seat on the College General Council. To achieve that, SPOA needed to become a Faculty. According to the College by-laws at that time, there were two criteria required for the formation of a Faculty. First, that the Faculty represented an internationally recognised body of knowledge in psychiatry and second, that there was a College accredited training scheme in old age psychiatry – in other words an advanced training program. The survey results provided encouragement that there was sufficient trainee interest to sustain such a program.

The experiences of subspecialty training in psychiatry of old age in the UK, USA and Canada were canvassed in meetings and correspondence with key international leaders such as Burton Reifler, Ivan Silver and Gary Kennedy, and by literature searches of curricula and training guidelines. Our own curriculum and recommendations for clinical experiences drew from each of these sources, with adaptations for local conditions, to form the ‘Guidelines for RANZCP Training in Psychiatry of Old Age’, which were completed in early 1995 after extensive consultation with senior SPOA members. The 1996 SPOA annual meeting reached the decision to formally apply to General Council for Faculty status and for the next two years, the Working Party worked with Fellowships Board to redraft the curricula and training guidelines into a format similar to that used in the Faculty of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry.

This was achieved and SPOA’s submission to become a Faculty was approved by General Council in October 1998, with the 2-year advanced training program and a new Committee for Advanced Training in Psychiatry of Old Age (CATPOA) formally commencing in January 1999, the International Year of the Older Person. The purpose of CATPOA was to discharge its delegated responsibility from Fellowships Board for accreditation and assessment of advanced training in psychiatry of old age culminating in making recommendations for the award of the Certificate in Psychiatry of Old Age. The foundation committee comprised of the Chair (Brian Draper) and three other FPOA members - Gerard Byrne, Pam Melding and Kuruvilla George. Brad Smith was the initial trainee representative on CATPOA, an involvement of trainees ahead of what was happening at the time.

The main challenges that had to be addressed in the early years related to the development of generic advanced training bylaws and procedures by Fellowships Board, setting up of a system of accreditation of POA training programs around Australia and New Zealand, obtaining a full complement of Directors of Advanced Training in POA in the College branches, development of a formal education program and support of trainees and their supervisors as they encountered the training log book and the 6-monthly report system for the first time.

The development of generic advanced training bylaws was the forerunner of the advanced training system now familiar to all College trainees. At the time one of the key issues to resolve was the relationship between the College dissertation that all trainees had to complete to obtain their Fellowship, and the POA advanced training research project. Although the project was allowed to be substantially similar to the dissertation, the expectation was that it would have extra detail and that the dissertation would need to have been approved for the Fellowship before submission as the advanced training project. These conditions were to avoid the potential embarrassment of the same piece of work being passed for one purpose but failed for the other.

Due to having a relatively small number of trainees spread across the two countries, we attempted to utilise the Internet as much as possible for both communication and formal training. We were insistent that all trainees, su-
Development of the Advanced Training Program in Old Age Psychiatry continued

supervisors and Directors of Training had an email address and that this was the primary means of communication. In 1999 this was somewhat ahead of the pack in College training. We also wanted to set up a Faculty web page on the College website to include information for trainees such as training bylaws, curriculum, reading list (this was initially put together by Ruth Kipen in 1995 and then revised in 2001 by a combination of 30 FPOA members), application forms and other details, just as it is now, but this proved to be a major challenge as in the early 2000’s the College IT capacity was rudimentary at best and we were unable to achieve this for many years as the College was quite slow in getting its IT capacity up to scratch (a situation that was a significant factor in the debacle of the introduction of the 2004 College bylaws). Indeed we trialled an independently hosted bulletin board with chat capacity for tutorials led by senior FPOA members that we used for a year or two but it never really took off and so we abandoned it.

The difficulties that we had in getting Internet-based formal training was a major contributing factor to the decision to run our first annual advanced training weekend in Melbourne in 2001. At that time pharmaceutical company sponsorship was both easy to obtain and acceptable in the College (with the proviso of having no involvement in content) but in more recent years the Faculty funded it without sponsorship. Trainees’ expenses were largely covered; accommodation was basic such as in a university college. In the early days they were run like a master class with senior FPOA members leading sessions often with the involvement of international luminaries such as Peter Rabins and Jeffrey Cummings. These were a wonderful way for trainees to intermingle and we were keen at the outset to encourage a Collegial approach to welcome the soon to be Faculty members.

We adopted a parsimonious approach to the organisation of site visits to accredit the various advanced training programs as we were mindful that the costs for site visits came out of training fees. We decided that the most cost effective way to achieve this was to as far as possible link our site visits to the travels of CATPOA members for conferences or other meetings, e.g. we would site visit the day before or after College Congress or FPOA annual meetings. This kept expenses to a minimum and was quite a contrast to how other Committee for Training site visits were organised at the time. These site visits were an extremely important way of supporting, encouraging and standardising advanced training across the two countries and were thoroughly enjoyable to undertake.

Another aspect of training that we were at the cutting edge was the accreditation of training in rural and regional Australia. Within a few years of setting up the program we had trainees based in Bendigo, Shepparton and the Sunshine Coast. We linked these trainees with a major urban training program that they visited on a regular schedule and allowed the trainees to do the bulk of their training in the regions. This was well received by all involved and provided a model for rural and regional training in the College.

In 2000 we proudly acclaimed the first three trainees to obtain the Certificate in Psychiatry of Old Age – Petra Muir, Nick Manduci and Patrick Wong. The program grew quickly - 6 graduands in 2001 and 11 each in 2002 and 2003. By late 2012 there had been over 100 trainees that had completed the Certificate.

In looking back now it all seems that it developed without too many hiccoughs but I do recall having the occasional sleepless night in 1999 when nothing much had really changed at the training coalface yet now there was an advanced training certificate in operation that hadn’t been there in 1998. In those days there was minimal College secretarial support for the training program so the monitoring of trainee progress and virtually all the queries came to CATPOA Chair. Fortunately it seems that we managed to successfully skate on thin ice in those early years to set up the base of the currently flourishing advanced training program.

Brian Draper, March 2013

Bibliography
We regard Pam as the grandmother of old age psychiatry in New Zealand; her energy and enthusiasm resulted in a new generation of mental health services for older people.

When she started work in Auckland as a newly-qualified psychiatrist in 1990, her job was to create a modern, regional psychogeriatric service to replace the dreary, institutional back wards of Carrington Hospital. With great determination and persistence on her part, the Kingsley Mortimer (Inpatient) Unit was opened, in 1992 on the North Shore and three community teams in the north, centre and west of Auckland developed.

At this point, Christchurch had the only other established older persons’ service in New Zealand, and there were eight old age psychiatrists in the country. Pam’s love of teaching and developing registrars led to a great blossoming of interest in the psychiatry of old age; there are now over 40 psychogeriatricians in NZ.

She maintained her interest in psychiatric training throughout her career; many Fellows of the College can be grateful for pre-exam practices with Pam. She was instrumental in setting up the advanced training in old age psychiatry and also a Senior Lecturer in Psychiatry at Auckland University. In this latter post she was able to interest a wider audience in the previously neglected area of mental health in old age.

Pam went on to produce two books on old age psychiatry. *Geriatric Consultation and Liaison Psychiatry* edited with Brian Draper (OUP 2001) was the first text in the field and was translated into several other languages. The second was *Psychogeriatric Service Delivery: an international perspective* with Brian Draper and Henry Brodarty (OUP 2005). As well, Pam published many journal articles and contributed chapters to many books.

She was the bi-national chair of the Faculty of Psychiatry of Old Age of the RANZCP from 2000-2004 and was a member of the International Psychogeriatric Association Board of Directors from 2002. She also had an interest in administration, holding positions as Clinical Director of Pain Clinic and Old Age Psychiatry and later as associate chief medical officer for Waitemata District Health Board. She was on several ministerial working groups and even spoke to Parliament on one occasion about mental health in older people. Never one to go into anything without learning more about it, Pam obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in Health Service Management from Massey (with Distinction, of course).

Pam also had an interest in ECT and was an advocate for its ongoing use despite the negative views of many prominent people. She presented at a Parliamentary select committee on ECT, defending the practice “because it works”. She went on to research the cognitive effects of ECT and developed a training program so that ECT could be administered safely and effectively.

For her extensive contribution to psychiatry, Pam was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2006.

She retired in 2012 after 37 years in the New Zealand health service. Last year (still learning) she completed a Masters level creative writing course. I cannot get her to check this article for accuracy as she is off somewhere in India or Bhutan, researching for her novel. We look forward with interest to her next book.

Chris Perkins,
March 2013
FPOA Prize Winners

In 2012, the Faculty of Psychiatry of Old Age introduced three prizes to promote excellence in advancing the Quality of Life in Older People with Mental Illness. The FPOA is thrilled to announce the following recipients of the inaugural FPOA prizes.

The awards will be formally conferred at the College Ceremony during RANZCP’s Annual Congress and the Prize winners will present their work during the Congress session Excellence in Psychiatry of Old Age, FPOA Prize Winners on Tuesday May 28 from 5:15-6pm.

FPOA Basic Psychiatric Trainee Prize – Dr Philip Mosley
FPOA Psychiatric Trainee Prize for Scholarly Project – Dr Sires Bharathan
FPOA Prize for Best Mental Health Service Improvement – Dr Anne Wand

FPOA Congress Dinner

An FPOA dinner has been organised during the RANZCP Congress and will provide attendees with an opportunity to catch up with colleagues and friends.

Further details are below, please contact A/Prof Carmelle Peisah if you would like to attend (CPeisah@nsccahs.health.nsw.gov.au)

Golden Century Seafood Restaurant
393-399 Sussex St Haymarket
Tuesday May 28
7:30pm

Branch News

Letter from New Zealand

Greetings from Aotearoa

What a wonderful summer New Zealand has had and it has started the year off with energy. I am not sure production has been up however, with the lure of cool waters for many.

Many of the lead clinicians in each region have been focused on developing Dementia Care Pathways trying to coordinate and walk with patients through our complex systems. Others have been involved at a national level in the newly formed National Dementia Cooperative with similar goals but also as a vehicle for sharing of information.

There is ongoing good work being done in relation to untangling the use and misuse of anti-psychotics in older age and it is hoped that this research can add to the revision of FPOA guidelines.

A couple of regions have identified the unsatisfactory state of addiction services for the older adult and new approaches are beginning to blossom. Indeed with the focus on Dementia at a government level some of us with our hearts in functional old age psychiatry are beavering away trying to ensure that these populations are not forgotten about. The needs of the looming graduate cohort are yet another issue of concern in NZ.

The theme for our Autumnal National Meeting in Queenstown is Suicide in the Older Person and we will touch on some of the above highlighted areas as well. Australian colleagues are most welcome to join us on April 15 and 16th with the Advanced Trainee morning on the 16th. NZ currently has 15 trainees and if my current incumbent is anything to go by, they are a high quality enthusiastic bunch.

My email is jcasey@adhb.govt.nz.

Warm regards in the Year of the Snake
Jane Casey
**Letter from New South Wales**

Save the dates! The NSW BRANCH RANZCP Faculty of Psychiatry of Old Age, together with the Psychogeriatric Nurses’ Association will run a joint Annual two-day conference 6-7th September, at the Parramatta Leagues Club.

We are excited to announce two major plenary speakers:

- Professor Gavin Andrews presenting: "What’s in DSM-V for Old Age Mental Health?", and
- Professor Ian Hickie presenting "The Role of Glial Cells in Neurodegenerative Brain Disease".

Also look out for the pending release of the FPOA/NSW Health BPSD Handbook, a great resource soon to be launched.

*Carmelle Peisah and Sharon Reutens*

**Letter from South Australia**

The SA branch has been more active in the past 6 months, with regular meetings and 2 recent educational functions sponsored by the Faculty where advanced trainees presented their projects. Two candidates have recently completed their training requirements.

There has been considerable interest expressed by Basic Trainees to do further training in Old Age Psychiatry in SA, unfortunately this has been tempered by the fact that no new jobs are likely to become available for consultants in the foreseeable future.

A new purpose-built 20 bed unit is due to open at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital in late April, and the current 23 bed unit at Glenside Hospital will close. This is associated with a further loss of 3 acute beds, and while different models of care in each of the states make comparisons difficult, it does seem that SA will have a significant shortfall of beds. This is heightened by the most rapidly ageing population of the Australian mainland states.

On a more positive note, the Southern Older Persons Mental Health team have successfully completed a pilot project in conjunction with selected residential care facilities. Rapid access to an assessment and management service led by Dr Jo Hill based at the community team together with a strong educational focus has been associated with significant numbers of patients diverted from being sent to emergency departments. The project has now been funded for the longer term.

The establishment of Local Health Networks has meant yet another change in management and governance for Old Age Psychiatry and ramifications are yet to make themselves known.

*Sally Rischbieth*