

## EARLY HISTORY OF APEG

Written by Mike Thomsett and Garry Warne, 2005  
Updated by APEG Secretariat

The concept of the Australasian Paediatric Endocrinology Group (APEG) was first mooted by Norman Wettenhall. After some preliminary discussions with Bob Vines and Martin Silink, Norman organised an informal lunchtime meeting of paediatric endocrinologists and trainees. This was held on the lawns in the Fitzroy Gardens in Melbourne during the International Congress of Endocrinology in March 1980. At this meeting it was decided that paediatric endocrinology should be recognised as a subspecialty in its own right and should have its own organisation.

The first national paediatric endocrine meeting was held in Melbourne at the Royal Childrens' Hospital on the Saturday after the close of the International Congress. Speakers included Maria New, Jeremy Winter and Selna Kaplan. That evening, Norman held a wonderful international party for all the visiting paediatric endocrinologists at his home in Toorak.

At the first Scientific Meeting at Leura on 22-23 March 1982 the title "Australasian Paediatric Endocrinology Group" was adopted. The first office bearers were Bob Vines (President), Martin Silink (Secretary) and Gabriel Antony (Treasurer). The brief program (reproduced below) contrasts starkly with the extensive programs of later years.

Foundation Members of APEG were Norman Wettenhall and Bob Vines, Gabriel Antony, Geoff Byrne, Chris Cowell, Hugo Gold, Neville Howard, Jim Penfold, Martin Silink, Mike Thomsett, Garry Warne and George Werther.

Life Members elected have been Dr Norman Wettenhall (1991), and Dr. Jim Penfold and Dr Geoff Byrne (2003). Dr Charles Kilburn was elected as Honorary Life Member in 2003 for helping to organize the meeting in Darwin/Kakadu.

APEG became a legal entity in 1991 when it incorporated and adopted a formal Constitution. The goals of APEG as stated in the Constitution are:

- (a) To promote and maintain the highest standards of diagnosis and treatment of paediatric endocrine disorders.
- (b) To promote among physicians and others the free exchange of knowledge with respect to paediatric endocrinology, and to encourage good fellowship among its members.
- (c) To promote research related to paediatric disorders by individuals, hospitals, clinics, universities and other institutions and organisations.
- (d) To develop in association with interested bodies, educational methods designed to give those who have a child with an endocrine disorder a better understanding of the child's condition.
- (e) To disseminate accurate information about paediatric endocrine disorders.
- (f) To speak to and negotiate with outside organisations as the official body representing paediatric endocrinologists in Australia and, where appropriate, New Zealand.
- (g) To raise and distribute funds and to purchase or dispose of property in accordance with objectives (a) - (f) of the Association.

The early years of APEG were very busy and several major initiatives were undertaken.

**The Growth Hormone Advisory Committee (GHAC)** was established in 1988, following the release of recombinant hGH, and the disbanding by the Commonwealth Minister for Health of the Human Pituitary Advisory Committee and the Growth Hormone Subcommittee. The original GHAC was Garry Warne (Chair), Chris Cowell, Geoff Byrne and Jim Penfold. They drew up the original Guidelines for the use of hGH, allowing auxological as well as biochemical criteria to be used in diagnosing GH deficiency. The

guidelines have been amended from time to time by subsequent Committees, often using lessons from OZGROW (see below). Membership of the GHAC changes every 2 years.

**OZGROW**, the national hGH database was also set up in 1988. Until 1988, only children with severe biochemical GH deficiency could receive GH treatment. Members realised the new guidelines would allow many new children into the program and at a meeting in Sydney, agreed that a National Database was essential to monitor outcomes from these expanded guidelines. The program was written by Peter Greenacre, data manager at the Endocrine Department of the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children, Camperdown (now at Westmead), and called OZGROW. Initial funding was by Kabi Pharmacia, Eli Lilly and the Commonwealth Health Department. An OZGROW Management Committee was set up to manage the database, with Chris Cowell and then Garry Warne as Chairmen. Between 1991 and 1997, 8 reports on the Australasian experience in hGH therapy were presented, usually at specially convened national OZGROW meetings.

### **OZGROW Reports**

Report 1 (September 1991)	Descriptive analysis of OZGROW
Report 2 (March 1992)	First year response to growth hormone
Report 3 (November 1992)	Secular changes; High dose growth hormone
Report 4 (February 1993)	Adverse events; Growth during pubertal years
Report 5 (February 1994)	Chronic Renal Failure; Puberty; Thalassaemia Major
Report 6 (April 1995)	Skeletal Dysplasias; Dysmorphic Syndromes; Steroid-dependent Asthma
Report 7 (April 1996)	Adverse events; SSGC study follow-up; Exit criteria
Report 8 (June 1997)	Final height in Turner Syndrome

### **Clinical trials**

From the start, APEG excelled in multicentre, collaborative clinical trials. Thanks mainly to the efforts of Chris Cowell and George Werther, successful trials were completed on the use of Buserelin in central precocious puberty, GH in short, slowly-growing children and low dose oestrogen in combination with GH in Turner Syndrome.

### **Diabetes Database**

Geoff Byrne in Perth and Neville Howard in Sydney both set up diabetes databases and published incidence and incidence data from their respective States. A national database was then established with George Werther chairing the APEG Diabetes Database Subcommittee.

## APEG Scientific Meetings

<b>Mee ting No.</b>	<b>YEAR</b>	<b>VENUE</b>	<b>GUEST LECTURER – ROBERT VINES LECTURER from 1987</b>	<b>YOUNG INVESTIGATORS AWARD</b>
1	1982	Leura	None	
2	1983	Melbourne	Mel Grumbach	
3	1984	Melbourne	Lou Underwood	
4	1985	Adelaide	Les Lazarus	
5	1986	Canberra	Pierre Sizonenko	
6	1987	Sydney	Ron Rosenfeld	
7	1988	Melbourne	Reginald Tsang	
8	1989	Melbourne/Phillip Is.	Martin Ritzen	
9	1990	Perth	Doug Frazier	
10	1991	Newcastle	Robert Rosenfield	
11	1992	Canberra	Paul Czernichow	
12	1993	Queenstown	John Parks	
13	1994	Twin Waters	Harvey Guyda	
14	1995	Ballarat	Dorothy Becker	
15	1996	Glenelg	George Chrousos	Christine Burren
16	1997	Bondi	Walter Miller	Maria Craig
17	1998	Perth	Stephen Shalet	Michelle Jack
18	1999	Coolum	Denis Daneman	Esko Wiltshire
19	2000	Sydney	Melvin Grumbach	Craig Jefferies
20	2001	Southport	Charles Sklar	Craig Munns
21	2002	Darwin/Kakadu	David Dunger	Kristen Neville
22	2003	Melbourne	Gordon Cutler Jnr	Elaine Tham
23	2004	Auckland	Peter Gluckman	Louise Conwell
X	2005	Lyon	-	-
24	2006	Hobart	Martin Silink	Ann Maguire
25	2007	Broome	Joseph Wolfsdorf	Michelle O'Connell & Rochelle Ryan
26	2008	Canberra	Sten Drop	Peter Simm
27	2009	Coolum	Hamish Wallace	Shihab Hameed
28	2010	Adelaide	Thomas Danne	Paul Benitez-Aguirre
29	2011	Perth Joint Meeting with ESA	Stephen Simpson	Natasha Heather
30	2012	Queenstown	Ieuan Hughes	Jacqueline Hewitt
31	2013	Sydney	Mikael Knip	Carmel Smart
32	2014	Darwin Joint Meeting with APPEs	Ken Ong	Benjamin Albert & Vinutha Shetty
33	2015	Brisbane Joint meeting with ISPAD	Dana Dabelea	Stephanie Johnson
34	2016	Alice Springs	Wieland Kiess	Quynh-Nhu Nguyen
35	2017	Hobart	Jualiane Léger	Jessica Harbison & Marie-Anne Burckhardt
36	2018	Newcastle	Sonir Antonini	Kriti Joshi

**FIRST AUSTRALASIAN PAEDIATRIC ENDOCRINE MEETING**

Leura Gardens Motel

22-23 March 1982

**PROGRAM**

1.30 - 2pm - Distribution of Programs, Signing in.

**MONDAY**

**2 - 4pm Discussion Session**  
Chairman - R. Vines

**TOPICS**

**INITIAL DISCUSSANT**

Management of Turner's Syndrome N. Wettenhall

Delayed Male Adolescence J. Penfold

Treatment of Tall Stature N. Wettenhall

Protocol for Immediate Postoperative Treatment of  
Craniopharyngioma M.Thomsett

Hypoparathyroidism and Hypopituitarism M. Silink

Diagnosis and Management of Neonatal Hypoglycaemia, A  
Case. N. Howard

Precocious Puberty G. Warne

4.30pm **How should we organise Paediatric Endocrinology?**  
Chairman - N Wettenhall

**7 for 7.30pm - Barbecue**

**TUESDAY**

8.30 - 10.30am **Symposium on Diabetes**  
Chairman - R Vines

**10 minute Papers:**

Diabetes in Adolescents P. Ryan  
An Approach to Insulin Dosage J. Penfold  
Ditzel's Work: Diabetes & Ditzel from the Outside J. Eross  
Home Blood Glucose Monitoring: An Update M. Silink  
Long Term Clinical Experience with Insulin Infusion  
in Diabetic Children G. Antony

11am - 1pm **- Symposium on Growth**  
Chairman - G. Warne

**10 minute papers:**

Growth Hormone Receptor Assay: Preliminary Experience  
J. Penfold  
A Personal Assessment of Oxandrolone N. Wettenhall  
Normal Variant Short Stature P. Gluckman

**Discussion:** with members of the Human Growth Hormone Sub-  
Committee of the H.P.A.C.

1 - 2pm - Lunch

2 - 3pm - **Calcium Problems in Children**

Chairman - S. Posen  
Discussants - S. Posen  
G. Antony  
M Silink

3.15 - 4.15pm - **Investigation of the Paediatric Endocrine Patient**  
Chairman - J. Connelly.

Speakers - M. Silink - Hypoglycaemia  
J. Montalto - Steroid Chromatography  
G. Warne - Androgen Receptor Assay.

## APEG OFFICE BEARERS

	<b>PRESIDENT</b>	<b>SECRETARY</b>	<b>TREASURER</b>	<b>VICE PRESIDENT</b>	<b>OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS</b>
1982 - 1984	Bob Vines	Martin Silink			
1984 - 1986	Gabriel Antony	Chris Cowell			
1986 - 1988	Martin Silink	Chris Cowell	George Werther		
1988 - 1991	George Werther	Garry Warne	Mike Thomsett		Executives Only
1991* - 1993	Chris Cowell	Mike Thomsett	Jim Penfold		George Werther, Neville Howard and Geoff Byrne
1993 - 1995	Mike Thomsett	Geoff Byrne	Jenny Couper		Neville Howard, Jenny Batch and Trish Crock
1995 - 1997	Geoff Byrne	Jenny Batch	Christine Rodda		
1997 - 1999	Jenny Batch	Jenny Couper	Christine Rodda	Geoff Byrne	Kim Donaghue, George Werther
1999 - 2001	Christine Rodda	Charles Verge	Kim Donaghue		
2001 - 2003	Kim Donaghue	Jan Fairchild	Charles Verge		Tim Jones, Wayne Cutfield, George Werther, Fergus Cameron, Mike Thomsett
2003 - 2005	Patricia Crock	Catherine Choong	Maria Craig	Kim Donaghue	Tim Jones Phil Bergman
2005 - 2007	Catherine Choong	Paul Hofman	Maria Craig	Patricia Crock	Philip Bergman Andrew Cotterill
2007 - 2009	Maria Craig	Andrew Cotterill	Paul Hofman	Catherine Choong	Tony Lafferty Craig Jefferies
2009 - 2011	Andrew Cotterill	Craig Jefferies	Paul Hofman	Maria Craig	Tony Lafferty Alexia Peña
2011 - 2013	Paul Hofman	Liz Davis	Craig Jefferies	Fergus Cameron	Michelle Jack Bin Moore Alexia Peña Esko Wiltshire Andrew Cotterill (co-opted)
2013 - 2015	Fergus Cameron	Alexia Peña	Craig Jefferies	Liz Davis	Michelle Jack Bin Moore Esko Wiltshire Helen Woodhead Paul Hofman (co-opted)
2015 - 2017	Liz Davis	Alexia Peña	Esko Wiltshire	Fergus Cameron	Bin Moore Helen Woodhead Matt Sabin Jerry Wales
2017 - 2019	Esko Wiltshire	Liz Davis	Jerry Wales	Helen Woodhead	Bin Moore Fergus Cameron Jan Fairchild Louise Conwell

\* 1991 APEG became incorporated so this was the first 'official' council of the Association.

## APEG AWARDS

<b>Robert Vines Medal for Clinical Excellence in Paediatric Endocrinology</b>	<b>Norman Wettenhall Medal for Research and Innovation</b>
2006 Mike Thomsett	2007 Garry Warne
2008 Martin Silink	2009 George Werther
2010 Jenny Couper	2011 Tim Jones
2012 Neville Howard	2013 Wayne Cutfield
2014 Chris Cowell	2015 Kim Donaghue
2016 Margaret Zacharin	2017 Paul Hofman
2018 Patricia Crock	

### Publications arising from early APEG Initiatives

Cowell CT in collaboration with the Australasian Paediatric Endocrine Group. Effects of growth hormone in short, slowly growing children without growth hormone deficiency. *Acta Paediatr Scand (Suppl)*. 1990; 266:29-30.

Werther GA, Warne GL, Cowell C, Silink M, Howard NJ, Antony G, Penfold J, Byrne GC, Thomsett M, Epstein MT, Hudson I. LHRH analogue (Buserelin) treatment for precocious puberty: a multicentre trial. *J Paediatr Child Health*. 1990; 26:4-8.

Werther GA, Simpson J. A multicentre double blind trial of synthetic growth hormone and low dose oestrogen in Turner syndrome: Two year analysis. In: Hibi I, Takano K, eds. *Basic and clinical approach to Turner syndrome*. Excerpta Medica, 1993.

Cowell CT, Dietsch S. Adverse events during GH therapy. *J Ped Endocrinol Metab*. 1995; 8:243-52.

Werther GA. Growth hormone measurements versus auxology in treatment decisions - the Australian experience. *J Pediatr*. 1996; 128:S47-51.

Cowell CT, Dietsch S, Greenacre P. Three-year response to Growth Hormone - the OZGROW experience. *J Paed Child Health*. 1996; 32:86-93.

Werther GA, Dietsch S. Multi-centre trial of synthetic growth hormone and low dose oestrogen in Turner syndrome - Analysis of final height. In: Albertsson-Wikland K, Ranke MB, eds. *Turner Syndrome in a Life-span perspective: Research and Clinical Aspects*. Excerpta Medica International Congress Series, 1996; 1089: 105-12.

Rakover Y, Dietsch S, Ambler GR, Chock C, Thomsett M, Cowell CT on behalf of OZGROW. Growth hormone therapy in Silver Russell syndrome: Five years experience of the Australian and New Zealand growth database (OZGROW). *Eur J Paediatr*. 1996; 155: 851-7.

Burren C and Werther GA. Skeletal dysplasias: Response to growth hormone therapy. *J Pediatr Endocrinol Metab*. 1996; 9:31-40.

Werther GA. Growth hormone measurements versus auxology in treatment decisions - the Australian experience. *J Pediatr*. 1996; 128: S47-51.

Werther GA, Wang M, Cowell CT. An auxology based GH program: update on the Australian experience. *J Pediatr Endocrinol Metab.* 2003; 16: S613-8.

## FOUNDATION AND LIFE MEMBERS

---

### Norman Wettenhall Awarded in 1992



Chris Cowell (President) presenting Honorary Life Membership to Norman Wettenhall - May 29, 1992. (Photo courtesy of Garry Warne)

Norman graduated from the University of Melbourne Medical School in 1940. He was on staff at the Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne from 1943, when illness caused his early discharge from the Navy, until 1980. He continued to see patients at his rooms for a further decade.

By 1962, he had converted one of his paediatric clinics into a *de facto* endocrine clinic. The Hospital recognized his expertise and appointed him in 1972 as the Head of the newly created Endocrine Clinic. Thus he was one of the fathers of Australian paediatric endocrinology. A highlight of his career was the time he spent learning with the founder of our specialty, Lawson Wilkins, at the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore in 1956.

He was only the second doctor in Australia to prescribe pituitary growth hormone and served for a number of years on the Human Pituitary Advisory Committee.

In the year of his retirement from RCH (1980), Norman stimulated the rest of us to establish the Australasian Paediatric Endocrine Group (APEG) and he was very proud to see it develop into a thriving organization with an international profile. He established a tradition at APEG meetings of devoting one afternoon to a non-medical activity, often a birding expedition. He was heavily involved in Birds Australia. A generous man of prodigious energy, his other interests included art collecting and philanthropy.



Norman made an enormous contribution to medicine, to RCH Melbourne, to our specialty and to APEG. He was made APEG's first Life Member in 1992. He died in 2000.

---

### Bob Vines



Bob Vines graduated with Honours from the University of Sydney in 1943 and enlisted in the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps (1944-1947), serving in Bougainville. After training at Great Ormond Hospital for Children, London, he practised as a Consultant Physician at Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children, Sydney from 1952 to 1986. In 1965 he worked in Baltimore with Dr Lawson Wilkins. Bob was one of the fathers of Paediatric Endocrinology in Australia, being instrumental in establishing the Australian Human Pituitary Program with the first child being treated with extracted growth hormone in 1963. He was Chairman of the Human Pituitary Advisory Committee for 7 years. He was co-author of a very successful manual for diabetes management. He was the first President of APEG.

Bob was a caring and gifted clinician, with an encyclopaedic knowledge of medicine. He was very supportive of the psychological needs of the children and their families. He was particularly good with teenagers, especially girls who looked upon him as a father figure and kept writing to him for years after they had left the Children's Hospital.

His many other pursuits included learning foreign languages, sailing in small skiffs, cross-country skiing (taken up at age 38) and bushwalking, all of which he did with great enthusiasm until forced to stop by illness. A literary man of impeccable integrity, he is best remembered as a quiet achiever who never sought the limelight, but who had an enormous influence on paediatric endocrinology in Australia. He died in 1986.

---

**Jim Penfold**  
**Awarded in 2006**



Jim Penfold established the Department of Endocrinology at Adelaide Children's Hospital in 1972 after returning from Canada. He was one of the founding members of APEG and was a collaborator in APEG's early multi-centre trials. From 1985 he served on the Growth Hormone Advisory Committee and as one of its longest serving members, was Chairman from 1996 to 1997. He was Honorary APEG Treasurer from 1991 to 1993.

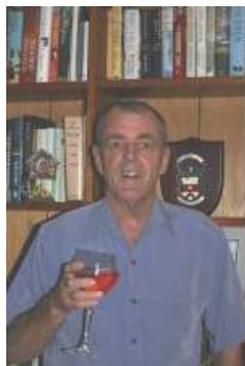
Jim was the consummate clinician: thoughtful, considered and always putting the child's interests first. He was widely competent in all areas of paediatrics and this showed in his practice. Those continuing the care of his patients have had the privilege of seeing how much he was admired by them, because Jim's modest, understated nature would never let others know this. As a colleague and mentor, he was patient and generous of his time and experience.

When Jim retired in 2002, his talents outside medicine guided him into retirement more easily than most. He is a skilled fisherman who used to carry a collapsible rod in his luggage to conferences. It was rumoured that the location of his outreach clinics may have been influenced by local fishing opportunities. He is also an accomplished athlete. He was National Shot Put Champion in 1959, and is a medal holder in shot put and rowing at the Masters Olympics. To the delight of his grandchildren, he carried the Olympic Torch in 2000 before the Sydney Olympics.

Jim was awarded Life Membership of APEG in 2006.

---

**Geoff Byrne**  
**Awarded in 2006**



Geoff Byrne was the Director of the Diabetes and Endocrine Unit at Princess Margaret Hospital, Perth from 1987 to 1999. He started outreach clinics in Bunbury, Rockingham, Wagin, Albany, Geraldton, Northam, Kalgoorlie and Esperance. A Foundation Member of APEG, his contributions to our Group have been many and varied.

He served as Councillor, Secretary and then President.

Geoff was a member of the Growth Hormone Advisory Council for many years, the last 2 as Chairman. He was instrumental in changing the GHAC from a closed group, with membership by invitation only, to the present open arrangement where the most senior member resigns each 2 years and a replacement is appointed by APEG

Council from members who apply to join.

Always the enthusiastic innovator, Geoff was responsible for the establishment of the State childhood diabetes database in Western Australia and was heavily from the outset in APEG's moves towards a National Database. He was a keen contributor to APEG's early and successful multicentre clinical trials. Two APEG meetings in Perth were great successes, largely due the organisational skills of our ex-President.

In APEG's early days, it seemed that almost all members were avid bird-watchers and lovers of the outdoors. Geoff was no exception. He is also an astute collector of antique and first edition books and a skilled furniture maker. He and Ruth are now enjoying a well-earned retirement, following their love of botany and birds and their many other non-medical interests around rural Western Australia together. Few have contributed as much to the success of APEG as Geoff Byrne. He was awarded Life Membership of APEG in 2006.

---

**Mike Thomsett  
Awarded 2009**



Dr Mike Thomsett was awarded honorary life membership to APEG in November 2009 in recognition of his long, whole-hearted and consistent service to the society.

Mike graduated with Honours at University of Queensland in 1967, winning both the Paediatric and Obstetrics and Gynaecology prizes. While an undergraduate he married his wife Judy, who was to attend many APEG meetings. He represented the University in cricket and baseball. Having been a bonded student, Mike was posted after graduation to one-doctor towns in rural Queensland for five years. In that

role he learnt what has stayed with him throughout his career, that people in regional areas need support and advice, and that travelling to the big smoke is not necessarily the best thing for a family.

After completion of the bond Mike trained in Paediatrics at Royal Children's Hospital, Brisbane. He pursued his dream to be a Paediatric Endocrinologist. He did it tough and without a great deal of support, working first in Adelaide in adult endocrinology in 1977 and then self-funded as a Fellow at the University of California San Francisco under guidance of Professor Grumbach in 1978-79. He published his first major paper there on Craniopharyngioma.

Returning to Brisbane in 1980 he grafted the sub-speciality of Paediatric Endocrinology out of nothing. He started a private practice in both paediatric and adult endocrinology, gradually gaining hospital endocrine sessions, first at Mater Children's Hospital with Geoff Bourke, then seeing adults at Princess Alexandra Hospital, and finally at Royal Children's Hospital.

The practice grew and became very busy and after 10 years Mike was finally able to stop seeing adults. His down to earth practical advice encouraged paediatricians in their own practices and this allowed the decentralised approach of Paediatric Endocrinology to be established in Queensland, much to the benefit of families living in rural and remote communities. He also performed outreach clinics in Darwin for many years. Mike retired from hospital practice in 2004 and from his private practice in 2007, just after presenting at the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary ASM in Broome a summary of the 9062 referrals he saw – a study since published.

In retirement, Mike and Judy have at last had time to enjoy together their interests of golf, bushwalking, birdwatching, photography, gardening, growing orchids and travel.

Mike' enthusiastic involvement in our society extended back to its very beginning and his contributions to its success were many. He was present at the famous meeting in Fitzroy Gardens, Melbourne in 1980 when Norman Wettenhall mooted the establishment of APEG. As a Founding Member, Mike presented at the first Scientific Meeting at Leura in 1982 and at many subsequent meetings. He was an avid contributor to APEG's three early collaborative studies and to OZGROW. In 1995 he performed a major OZGROW review of the effect of hGH in children with dysmorphic syndromes, from which several APEG papers resulted.

At a time when he was busy doing 10 clinics a week, Mike was Treasurer from 1988 to 1991, Secretary from 1991 to 1993 (during which time APEG was incorporated and the Constitution was drawn up) and President from 1993 to 1995. He served as a long-standing member of the GHAC and the OZGROW Subcommittee and was instrumental in setting up the National Diabetes Database to amalgamate the separate databases established by Geoff Byrne in Perth and Neville Howard in Sydney. He organised the Clinical Weekend at Kooralbyn in 1986 and Annual Scientific Meetings at Twin Waters in 1994, Coolum in 1999 and Darwin – Kakadu in 2002 (with Charles Kilburn of Darwin). Together with Garry Warne, Mike wrote a History of APEG in 2005.

In 2006 he was awarded the inaugural Robert Vines Medal for Clinical Excellence. It is fitting that it was at Coolum, the site of one of his many contributions to APEG, that his well-deserved honorary life membership was awarded in 2009.

---

### **Garry Warne Awarded in 2011**



Garry studied Medicine at Melbourne University, and soon arrived at RCH as a JRMO after a brief dabble into adult endocrinology. He trained in paed endo in Winnipeg with Jeremy Winter. Jeremy Winter had a significant influence on Garry, as he recalls that at the end of his fellowship with Jeremy Winter, he said, "Don't be afraid to blow your own trumpet because no one else will blow it for you".

Garry returned to RCH as Assistant Endocrinologist in 1977, taking over the service from Norman Wettenhall in 1980, when Norman retired.

Garry began to build the Department at RCH that we recognise today. From the beginning clinical care was of course paramount, but Garry very quickly recognized the critical role of research – relevant research, well before the concept of "Bench to clinic" or clinic to bench. For this is what he did. It was clinical problems, in his case mostly in the intersex area, and decided to manage them in the broadest possible way. Firstly he provided the clinical service, then he established the research infrastructure to investigate the problem, initially focused on Androgen insensitivity – so he set up fibroblast androgen receptor assays.

Garry also saw the need to involve allied health people – social workers and others to help support the affected families.

Importantly he thought even more broadly, establishing parent support groups, which thrived in intersex, growth, Turner, CAH, Prader-Willi syndrome (in which he established the first clinics).

He realized that parents and health professionals needed literature to help them understand the difficult and complex issues affecting their children. His AIS and CAH booklets are used internationally, having been translated into many languages.

The 1980s were highly productive years at RCH, with a number of highly talented fellows joining the team. The word had got around that Garry Warne ran a superb outfit. And here it was again – training young fellows by example that medicine is not just about treating patients in the classical sense. Garry set the example of teaching at all levels, post-graduate, undergraduate, health professional, community and families. This was a part of what was inculcated into the fellows and still is. He taught them that research is an intrinsic part of what we do – for good reason, to answer clinical questions, to come up with new approaches, through the lab and the clinic and the community. And he taught them about wide collaboration, not being afraid to seek advice from others, both locally and internationally, and to advocate for families and children where it is needed – even if it may be painful.

In the mid 80's Garry organized the first Departmental review – one of the first ever at RCH, with three external reviewers. It was initiated because the department was growing so fast we needed more space.

The outcome was highly positive, to the extent that the CEO at the time accused Garry of “rigging” it. He clearly did not know Garry – nothing could be further from the truth – the Department he led really was that good.

In that same period Garry oversaw radical changes in the growth hormone guidelines, when synthetic GH serendipitously became available when Creutzfeld-Jacob disease struck. This was a difficult national issue, and Garry’s leadership and people skills served him and us well.

In the early 1990s Garry looked to Asia for the first time, setting up an Asean Paediatric Endocrine Fellowship with Novo Nordisk – a fellowship, no longer limited to Asia, which still exists today. Garry’s humanitarian passion led him to Cambodia and subsequently Vietnam, establishing in 1998 CHAPHA, renamed RCHI, and then funded largely by Chuck Feeney (Atlantic Philanthropies).

Garry has received many awards, all highly deserved:

- 2005 “For The People’s Health” medal, awarded by the Ministry of Health, Socialist Republic of Vietnam
- The Royal Children’s Hospital Gold Medal
- Victorian Public Healthcare Awards - Minister’s Award for Outstanding Individual Achievement
- Australasian Paediatric Endocrine Group (APEG): the Norman Wettenhall Medal for Excellence in Research and Innovation
- Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia (AM)
- in 2011 the Indian Society for Paediatric and Adolescent Endocrinology made him an Honorary Life Member.

Garry’s most recent major project has been to attempt to set in place a framework for dealing with Disorders of Sexual Development (Intersex) in Australia in a manner which as far as possible avoids the need for the Court to be involved, as has unfortunately begun to happen following a Queensland case. Garry, once again thinking laterally, has put in place a structured ethical approach involving review by a specially constituted internal ethics committee. He presented these ideas at 5th World Congress of Family Law and Children’s Rights (which endorsed our set of principles by a vote of the congress in the closing session) and in New York at the Joint Meeting of LWPES and ESPE. This has been put in place at RCH, and is a work-in-progress, once again in very good hands following Garry’s departure.

---

## **Hugo Gold Awarded in 2017**



Hugo Gold graduated from Melbourne University in 1960 and undertook most of his undergraduate and residency training at the Royal Melbourne hospital. After his initial training at the Royal Children’s Hospital he was awarded the Cleveland fellowship by the Royal Melbourne hospital to continue post graduate training at Case Western Reserve University Rainbow Babies and Children’s hospital. Whilst in Cleveland in 1965-67 he studied the effects of human growth hormone treatment on the carbohydrate metabolism of children with hypopituitary dwarfism who had never previously been treated with growth hormone. These children were amongst the first to be treated with HGH derived from human cadaver pituitary glands. The pituitary glands were obtained at post mortem examination and the HGH extracted in Dr Maurice Raben’s lab.

On returning to Melbourne in 1969, Hugo began a career in general paediatrics in private practice, and with sessional appointments in several public hospitals, including the RCH. In 1976 he took up a senior consultant position at the Queen Victoria hospital, which was soon to become part of Monash medical centre. Soon after, Hugo picked up his

interest in endocrinology and began a specialist paediatric endocrine clinic. With the relocation of Queen Vic to Monash medical centre in Clayton, the need for paediatric endocrinology and diabetes services became obvious. However, no funding was provided for this purpose. Nevertheless, Hugo succeeded in setting a multidisciplinary service by innovative financing arrangements using a combination of private practice funds and his single endocrinology session. He supplemented this by obtaining support for a fellowship in paediatric endocrinology from Kabi Pharmacia for 5 years. This was awarded to Dr. Christine Rodda and was the essential ingredient in allowing the service to develop and flourish. Amongst the registrars and fellows who trained there was Dr Patricia Crock.

Throughout this time, Hugo continued a busy general paediatric career, and in 1988 returned to a senior position at the RCH. In his later years there, he founded the Children's Bioethics Centre, which has established itself as a world leader in the field of clinical ethics consulting.

Hugo is an Associate professor in the Melbourne University department of paediatrics, a Fellow of the Academy of Clinical Teachers at Melbourne University, and has honorary life memberships of the AMA, the RACP, and now APEG.

He was awarded the RCH Gold medal and the Elizabeth Turner medal.

---

### **George Werther Awarded in 2017**



George Werther graduated in Medicine from the University of Melbourne in 1971, and soon entered paediatric training at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne. He then spent time training in paediatric endocrinology and diabetes in Oxford, UK and Cincinnati and Stanford in the USA.

He returned to Australia in 1983 to join Garry Warne, Norman Wettenhall and John Court in setting up the Department of Endocrinology and Diabetes at the Royal Children's Hospital. He developed a laboratory-based research program based on diabetes and growth, which over 30 years provided insights into growth disturbance in diabetes, and the role of growth factors in the developing and injured brain and skin. His work in skin using "antisense" provided the basis for a biotech company, via a potential new therapy for the skin disease psoriasis, and more recently his work suggested new potential cancer therapies via manipulation of

growth factors.

George led early trials of growth hormone in short children with a variety of disorders, and also served as Chair of the Australian Growth Hormone Advisory Committee, where Australia led the way internationally for growth hormone therapy in short children who were not growth-hormone deficient. He was also involved in clinical and laboratory studies examining novel methods of growth regulation in children, including a landmark study following up tall girls treated with oestrogen in the 1960s-80s. This study, published in the Lancet, showed that such therapy had adverse effects on fertility, and led to an international change of practice, whereby such therapies were no longer used.

During the 1990s George led the establishment of the Centre for Hormone Research at RCH and the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, in recognition of the strong endocrine research consortium comprising the groups of Garry Warne, Andrew Sinclair and George, covering a broad spectrum of laboratory and clinical research in paediatric endocrinology. A common purpose of the groups in the Centre, which remains today, was a focus on "translational" research, namely that research directions were informed by clinical issues, and where possible, research outcomes are applied to those clinical needs.

In 1999, George took over the directorship of the Department at RCH from Garry Warne, and he remained head for some 16 years. During his tenure George maintained the principle that research played a critical role in support of both clinical practice and training in paediatric endocrinology. In 2015 he stood down as director, and Matt Sabin took over.

George has served on various national and international scientific committees, including the APEG Presidency, and more recently on the Endocrine Specialist Advisory Committee of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, overseeing training qualifications in Paediatric Endocrinology. George has always had a keen interest in training of young paediatric endocrinologists, and has trained many fellows, who have become established paediatric endocrinologists in Australia and overseas. This includes some six professors.

He was humbled by his being awarded the Wettenhall Medal by APEG in 2009 for his achievements in research and innovation, and more recently the International Award of the European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology, for scientific achievement in paediatric endocrinology.

George's other passion outside medicine is theatre both acting and directing, with a particular interest in theatrical representations of science and scientists. Following his retirement in 2019 he looks forward to spending more time with his wife Mary, children and grand-children, as well as in theatre and travel - especially visiting his son and family in California.

---

#### **Neville Howard Awarded in 2017**



Neville Howard is a foundation member of APEG, past councillor, life member, and winner of the Robert Vines Medal For Clinical Excellence in 2012. His career spans four decades, two continents, and two Children's Hospitals in Sydney. He graduated from the University of Adelaide and trained in paediatrics in Adelaide and Toronto. He won a Research Fellowship at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto followed by a Staff Specialist appointment there.

Returning to Australia he worked in Sydney at Prince of Wales Children's (now Sydney Children's Hospital) and Children's Hospital at Camperdown (now Westmead). He has made significant contributions in many areas of clinical endocrinology, with over 90 publications.

Neville's lasting legacy is his advocacy for improved outcomes for children with diabetes.

He has served on the board of Diabetes Australia, New South Wales for 26 years (president for 12 years) and on the medical panel of the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation of Australia. Above all, Neville is a very patient-centred clinician who always puts his patients first. He has an amazing memory for the details of families and huge experience of rare disorders that he willingly shares with colleagues and trainees.

Other Life memberships award in 2017



Martin Silink



Chris Cowell

## PHOTOGRAPHS



**Some of the Foundation Members at Leura.** (Photo courtesy of Trish Crock)

From left: Geoff Byrne, Martin Silink, Garry Warne, George Werther, Hugo Gold, Chris Cowell, Mike Thomsett



**The First Council after Incorporation, May 1992.** (Photo courtesy of Garry Warne)

From Left: George Werther, Jim Penfold, Mike Thomsett, Geoff Byrne, Neville Howard, Chris Cowell