



**AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
(SOUTH AUSTRALIA) INC**

Dr Lehonde L Hoare, AMA(SA) President 1986 – 1988

My presidency of the South Australian branch of the AMA began in July 1986 when I was handed a 'wild card' invitation by the Council, of which I was not then a member! I remained President for the subsequent two years.

A State Labor Government was in power under Premier John Bannon and the feisty Health Minister was Dr John Cornwall.

On first entering Newland House I was struck by its dilapidation and that the main front room on the first floor was occupied, not by the president but by the secretary. Mr Ian Dobbie made me welcome and afforded me continuing support throughout my time as president, for which I was most grateful.

Following my first impression of the building, I felt something better was needed to be achieved to welcome members and visitors from interstate and overseas in a manner befitting the status of the South Australian branch of the AMA. After many meetings and considerations by the council, it was decided to refurbish Newland House; to demolish the 'add-on' at its rear; and to build a new AMA building facing Ward Street.

All of this was achieved to improve overall accommodation for members and staff, and to provide ongoing rental income.

The achievement was not without some financial anxiety and required the establishment of a 'Building Fund' which met with considerable success with great support by the late Bill Scammell.

At my first council meeting, I noticed that student representatives sat at the end of the long table furthest away from the president. We arranged for the students to sit proximate to the president, and they were made to feel much more 'a part of things' and were given voting rights.

Later, during my time on AMA Federal Council, I was able to put forward and support voting rights for students on the national body.

An annual welcoming event was cosponsored by the AMA and the University of Adelaide for new graduates; and a mentor scheme was also set in place further to make students feel part of the medical fold.

The '*Medical Review*' was a successful innovation and over the years it frequently won the 'best publication' award from among all the Australian States. It continues as '*MedicSA*'.

My first AMA golf day at the Royal Adelaide Golf Club concluded with only about six chaps having a beer at the end of the day. I thought this was sad, and asked Trevor Pozza to help out. With his initiative and influence the next golf day was a 'sell-out' with the maximum numbers of participants and massive sponsor support. A great dinner for the players and their partners saw in the end of the day.



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Various problems arose in hospital, medical and state health matters which required discussion with the then Health Minister Dr Cornwall. In response he set up an 'Eminent Doctors Group' from among senior members of the medical profession and a monthly forum of frank discussion between the parties saw some general improvements.

The council had to deal with problems besetting country doctors, general and specialist practice, full-time and part-time hospital specialists, visiting hospital specialists, the Medicare system, foreign doctors, and so on. And hopefully, most outcomes achieved were of benefit to members.

I remain greatly indebted to the salaried staff of the AMA and to all my colleagues of the AMA and in general for their support and guidance during my term as president. I felt it a great honour to have had the opportunity to play some part in furthering the very significant role the AMA plays in upholding the highest standards in medical care for the benefit of South Australians.