

A new house for a grand old dame

The Journal has a permanent home

On 31 July, the new AMPCo House was officially opened by Dr Rosanna Capolingua, President of the Australian Medical Association, in the presence of AMPCo staff, AMA officials, and distinguished guests including past Editors of the Journal and Chairs of the company. AMPCo (the Australasian Medical Publishing Company) was established in 1913, with the express purpose of publishing the *Medical Journal of Australia*, the first issue of which appeared on 4 July 1914.

At its inception, the Journal was subtitled “*The Journal of the Australian branches of the British Medical Association*”, reflecting our colonial heritage, and its one editor, one manager and one typist resided at the old BMA building in Elizabeth Street, Sydney.

In 1925, the Journal moved to its own purpose-built premises, “The Printing House”, in Arundel Street in Glebe, a triangular building across the road from the University of Sydney. Here, everything was done on the premises, from copyediting and typesetting in hot metal, to printing and binding. The company expanded to include printing tradesmen as well as editorial and administrative staff. In 1962, the AMA was founded, taking over all state branches of the BMA and the publishing company. The Journal thus became “*The Journal of the Australian Medical Association*”. In 1990, the AMA sold The Printing House to help fund its new headquarters in Canberra, and the Journal moved into rented premises, first in Kingsgrove, then North Sydney, and then Pymont.

Last year, faced with ever-spiralling Sydney rental prices, AMPCo bought the new building at 277 Clarence Street, a stone’s throw from the Sydney Town Hall. The new AMPCo House is

about the same age as the Journal and, at five storeys, is a relative dwarf among the more modern giants of the city. But it has character, with original timber floors and solid beams, and arched windows that look out to the Town Hall clock. AMPCo staff now number over 50, comprising the Editorial department, staff who manage and maintain the database for the Medical Directory of Australia, sales and marketing staff, information technology staff, coordinators of medical book sales, and administrative staff. All printing is outsourced, but the Journal is otherwise “desktop published” in-house. We have our own medical library and now have space to display the books and accessories available through our online medical bookshop.

The Journal is now 94 years old, and remains Australia’s premier peer-reviewed general medical journal. With a home of our own once more, we look forward to many productive years at AMPCo House.

Bronwyn Gaut, Deputy Editor
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A: AMPCo House

B: AMPCo staff and distinguished guests at the official opening

C: AMPCo board members Dr John Kessell, Dr Sam Lees, Mr Ben Armstrong, Mr Francis Sullivan, Dr Ross Glasson and Dr Peter Garcia-Webb, with AMA President Dr Rosanna Capolingua (centre)

D: MJA Editor Dr Martin Van Der Weyden with Deputy Editors Dr Bronwyn Gaut, Dr Tatiana Janusic, Dr Ruth Armstrong, and (inset) Dr Tanya Grassi and Dr Ann Gregory.

