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FORMER AMA PRESIDENT BILL GLASSON RECEIVES AMA’S HIGHEST HONOUR

AMA GOLD MEDAL 2017 AMA NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2017 #amanatcon

Dr William Glasson AO, the AMA President who steered a course through the medical indemnity crisis in the early 2000s, has been recognised with the highest honour the peak medical body can bestow – the AMA Gold Medal.

Dr Glasson, universally known as Bill, received the Medal in recognition of his exceptional service to the AMA over many years, and his long-term and ongoing commitment to the eye health of Indigenous people.

AMA President, Dr Michael Gannon, who nominated Dr Glasson for the Medal, said that the distinguished ophthalmologist is one of a kind.

“Bill was always a strong and passionate advocate for the AMA, the medical profession, the health system, and patients throughout his time as President, at both State and national level,” Dr Gannon said.

“Bill always wears his heart on his sleeve. His style of advocacy is direct and to the point, tinged with a typical Queensland bush sense of humour, which reflects his origins in outback Winton, and characterised by his expert use of the Australian vernacular.

“Bill’s turn of phrase could cut through equally in the corridors of Parliament House and in the front bar of the Globe Hotel in Barcaldine. To call it ‘colourful language’ is an understatement.

“Bill’s term as federal President is perhaps best remembered for his work in bringing home the political solution to the long-running medical indemnity crisis.

“Bill’s leadership produced a very positive outcome for the profession and the Australian people, following many years of hard work by his predecessors, the AMA Federal Council, and the State and Territory AMAs.

“His hours, days, and weeks of tense negotiations with the then Health Minister Tony Abbott paid off. Bill and Tony survived those tough days, and remain close friends to this day.

“At the end of his term as Federal President, Bill did not pack up his political will and curry back to a life dedicated solely to his busy ophthalmology practice.

“He had caught a bad case of ‘political addiction’ and has spent his post-Presidential time in a range of senior medical and quasi-political roles.

“Following in his father’s footsteps, he has even been a political candidate, most notably taking on then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in the seat of Griffith.

“Bill’s generosity and altruism know no bounds. His work extends to outback Queensland, Indigenous communities, and East Timor.

“Throughout his many crusades and causes, Bill Glasson has at all times worn his AMA hat. He is AMA, through and through.

“Bill Glasson is a champion, true blue, and one of a kind – a truly deserving recipient of the AMA Gold Medal.”

Dr Glasson was presented with his Award at the AMA National Conference 2017 Gala Dinner in Melbourne tonight.

The full citation is attached.

AMA GOLD MEDAL FULL CITATION

DR BILL GLASSON AO

MBBS, FRANZCO, FRACS, FRCOphth, FAMA, FRACGP (hons), DIP AppSc (Qph)

Dr William Glasson – universally known as Bill, and affectionately referred to by some in the media as ‘Wild Bill’ – was Federal AMA President from 2003-2005, following a term as AMA Queensland President from 2001-02.

Starting out as an optometrist, Bill soon saw the light and became an ophthalmologist. Bill was always a strong and passionate advocate for the AMA, the medical profession, the health system, and patients throughout his time as President at both state and national level. Bill always wore his heart on his sleeve.

His style of advocacy was direct and to the point, tinged with a typical Queensland bush sense of humour, which reflected his origins in outback Winton, and characterised by his expert use of the Australian vernacular. Bill’s turn of phrase could cut through equally in the corridors of Parliament House and in the front bar of the Globe Hotel in Barcaldine. ‘Colourful language’ is an understatement.

Bill’s term as Federal President is perhaps best remembered for his work in bringing home the political solution to the long-running medical indemnity crisis. Bill’s leadership produced a very positive outcome for the profession and the Australian people, following many years hard work by his predecessors, the AMA Federal Council, and the State and Territory AMAs. His hours, days, and weeks of tense negotiations with the then Health Minister Tony Abbott paid off. Bill and Tony survived those tough days, and remain close friends to this day.

At the end of his term as Federal President, Bill did not pack up his political will and scurry back to a life dedicated solely to his busy ophthalmology practice. He had caught a bad case of ‘political addiction’ and has spent his post-Presidential time in a range of senior medical and quasi-political roles. Following in his father’s footsteps, he has even been a political candidate, most notably taking on former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in the seat of Griffith.

Bill has been President of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists. He is a member of professional organisations such as the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the Australian Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery, the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery, and the

Australian Optometry Association. He is an Adjunct Associate Professor with the University of Queensland School of Medicine.

He was the inaugural head of Cancer Australia, and served as Chair for many years.

He was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2008.

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Bill Glasson is a champion, true blue, and one of a kind – a truly deserving recipient of the AMA Gold Medal.

27 May 2017

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