



November 2019

LeW honored with first Brien Holden Memorial Award ... and makes his own trophy!

The inaugural Brien Holden Memorial Award and Lecture were delivered at the CCLSA's 17th International Cornea & Contact Lens Congress in Australia last month. IACLE's Director of Educational Development, Dr Lewis Williams, was one of the first recipients and sends this report



[The Cornea and Contact Lens Society of Australia](#) (CCLSA) has introduced the Brien Holden Memorial Award and Lecture to perpetuate the memory of the late Professor Brien A Holden, a major contributor to the society and contact lenses in Australia, and a world-renowned contact lens researcher. Brien was a founding member of IACLE and served as President from 1991-2000.



Joint award

The inaugural award was presented at the recent congress of the CCLSA, its 17th, which was held at Peppers Conference Centre, Noosa, Queensland in early October. **Dr Steve Zantos** (pictured left) and **Dr Lewis Williams** (above) were presented with the award jointly and each delivered brief lectures detailing their early experiences in the nascent Cornea & Contact Lens Research Unit (CCLRU), headed by Professor Holden within the Department of Optometry (as it was then) at the [University of New South Wales](#) (UNSW).

The recipients were Professor Holden's first and third PhD candidates respectively.



Pink Floyd theme

Medals commemorating the award were presented at the congress to the recipients by Brien's widow, **Yvonne Holden** (pictured). The Award session, subtitled 'Wish You Were Here', was held on the final day of the three-day program which was billed as 'A Breath of Fresh Air' and which had a Pink Floyd theme. Given the ages of most of the delegates, it is almost certain that there was also a significant amount of Pink Floyd education happening in among the contact lens education.

The Award lectures were illustrated by numerous images kept in the unofficial archive of the Department of Optometry (later the School of Optometry and now the [School of Optometry and Vision Science](#) [SOVS], UNSW). Currently, Dr Zantos is an [Optometry Australia](#) NSW/ACT division committee member. Dr Williams is IACLE's Director of Educational Development, Clinical and Technical Editor of *Insight* magazine, and an Adjunct Senior Lecturer in SOVS.



The trophy

A perpetual trophy for the award based on design input from Yvonne Holden, **Alan Saks** (the Society's CEO), Steve, and Lewis, was made by Lewis using historical items also from the archive, including the original Holden-Zantos adaptor for high-magnification and endothelial photography from the mid-1970s. Also featured are an optical pachometer, a yellow Wratten filter, unexposed rolls of Kodachrome 64 film (expired 02/1988), a small Holden-type wet-cell, the MC's badge from the 20th

anniversary celebration of the CCLRU (1976-1996), and Professor Holden's original place name tags from his 2005 address to the National Press Club of Australia in Canberra.

Inside the hexagonal (the trophy has an endothelial leaning) base is a circa 1973 magnetic program card for the Sharp programmable calculator the department acquired in 1973 along with a program listing that calculated a contact lens back vertex power. The paper sleeve bears Professor Holden's distinctive handwriting in his characteristic jet black ink.

Traditionally, the CCLSA's congresses were held every three years (since 1972) but plans are now in place to increase that frequency to every two years. Almost 300 delegates registered and a sizeable trade display accompanied the lecture program. The date and the venue for the Society's next Congress have yet to be announced.

- [Find out more about CCLSA](#)