

APLA

BY GEOFF COATES, BALLARAT

medical negligence special interest group conference



30-31 March 2000
Grand Hyatt, Melbourne

Members from every State and Territory and a high proportion of the Branch Presidents travelled to Melbourne to experience our beautiful Autumn weather, sample the best shopping district in Australia, and hear from a brace of impressive speakers.

A fantastic program was assembled by the organising committee led by national convenor of the special interest group, Irene Lawson and assisted by Tamara Dickson of The Strategic Issues Group.

I was amazed at the number of emi-

nent medicos who were persuaded to walk into this lion's den. I particularly enjoyed the presentations of Dr. Charles Siles from The Royal Womens' Hospital in Melbourne on pre-natal testing and Dr. Neil Collier of the Royal Melbourne Hospital on Laparoscopy.

However as has often been remarked the social or networking interactions are at least as important. I took part in and overheard many conversations where ideas were exchanged, experiences shared, and even the odd bit of gossip passed on.

The highlight for me however was bumping into past present Peter

Semmler QC in the vast lobby of the Grand Hyatt, fresh off the plane from Sydney, his pockets bulging with press clippings about the case he had settled the day before. "Look at this" he cried showing me a copy of the Telegraph in which he was described as "Hollywood Pete".

I did not get to the Dinner but I am told this was a great success. I did manage to get to The Supper Club where Simon McGregor hosted a drink and had quite a good time.

So my verdict on the conference - informative, entertaining and highly repeatable. 