

RACS & TRAUMA

Photo: Traffic accident research Unit, NSW



**How you can
save his life.**

CHRONOLOGY OF IMPORTANT ROAD SAFETY MEASURES IN AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

Photo: RACS Archive



1960

- 1961** Snowy Mountains Authority makes seat belt wearing compulsory in all their vehicles
Brighton Bay Branch of Liberal Party – Peter Joubert introduces a motion for the compulsory wearing of seat belts
- 1967** Victorian Parliament introduces the Joint Select Committee on Road Safety, chaired by Walter Jona
- 1969** Select Committee recommends the compulsory fitting and wearing of seat belts in all passenger motor vehicles
'Random Stopping' - breath testing of alcohol levels introduced in New Zealand

1970

- 1970** World-first compulsory seat belt legislation passed by Victorian Parliament (enacted 1 January 1971). Seat belts were not compulsory for children under 8 years
- 1972** RACS Working Party on Drink Driving set up and campaigned for compulsory blood alcohol testing of all injured vehicle occupants
Compulsory seat belt legislation introduced in New Zealand
- 1971-1973** Seat belt legislation enacted in all Australian states and territories
- 1973** Blood alcohol testing legislation was passed in South Australia
- 1974** Blood alcohol testing of road casualties passed in Victoria
- 1976** Victorian legislation for child restraints and random breath testing

1980

- 1981** First SAA approved bicycle helmet produced
- 1982** RACS promotes bicycle helmet wearing and makes submissions for mandatory bicycle helmet wearing to Victorian Parliamentary Inquiries
- 1984** Zero Blood Alcohol count for all learner and probationary drivers in Victoria
- 1987** New Zealand becomes the first country in the world to introduce a Graduated Driver Licensing System introduced, creating a staged process for gaining a full licence

1990

- 1990** World-first Victorian legislation for compulsory bicycle helmet wearing
- 1993** Compulsory Breath Testing introduced in New Zealand
- 1994** Wearing of bicycle helmets compulsory in New Zealand
- 2003** Victorian government passed Road Safety (Drug Driving) Act
- 2006** Open speed limits abolished in the Northern Territory by the Labor government but reinstated when the Country Liberal Party came to power in 2012
- 2009** New Zealand bans the use of mobile phones when driving

2000s

- 2010** New laws regulating the use and fitting of child restraints promulgated in Victoria
Three stage Graduated Driver Licensing System introduced in NSW
- 2012** NSW legislation banning the use of mobile phones when driving
- 2017** Quad bike legislation in Queensland. Helmets mandatory when riding on roads and stock routes and illegal for children under 8 to be passengers on quad bikes

THE CAMPAIGN



Photo: RACS Archive

DEATH AT A CAR WINDOW

Belt up children, says doctor

From IAN LIVINGSTONE
SYDNEY. — Many children in cars were allowed to stand with their faces against the windscreen, Dr G. W. Trinca said yesterday. Other children were carried on their mothers' laps. Dr Trinca said an alarming number of children were seriously injured in car crashes because they were not restrained inside the vehicles.

It's open war on drunk drivers



SGT. JACK THOMAS (left), watched by Assistant Commissioner McLaren and Mr Don Hossack, tests one of the new "puff-bag" breath testers which

drunk drivers

THE State Government has declared war on drunken drivers. The Chief Secretary, Mr Rossiter, yesterday announced details of an all-out blitz on drunks on the road. And he said the Government would soon decide on whether

'GET DRUNKS OFF ROAD'

By JOHN COX

Between 1960 and 1970 the number of fatally injured road users was only 388 lives less than the total number killed during World War 2.

Fatality and injury rates per head of population exceeded those of the United States and were double those of the United Kingdom.

DRUNK FIRST, DEAD SECOND

Let's get our priorities straight

Reprinted from "The Age," Saturday, October 21, 1972

HE WAS dead drunk — or if we are going to be

The same survey found that five out of 10 pedestrians killed on Melbourne's streets also had elevated blood alcohol levels.

compared with one in five in the control group.

Thus a police identikit of the drunken driver may be:

At .14 to .15, he says, the average citizen is intoxicated, garrulous, slurred of speech, uncertain in gait and unable to remember what he has done "the morning

Tougher law for the drinking driver.

YOU HAVE JUST BEEN OBSERVED NOT WEARING A SEAT BELT IN THE BACK SEAT



This time you have been warned. Next time you could be fined \$25 for breaking the law.

Plea for better child car safety

New standards for child restraint systems in cars were needed to increase their protection, a road safety seminar was told on Saturday.

The chairman of the road trauma committee of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, Mr. Gordon Trinca called for the standards at a seminar on restraining the child in a car.



Coroner's surgeon Mr D. W. Hossack (left) with chemist Mr Barry Pratt at the forensic science laboratory yesterday.

21% of injured drivers 'over .05'

MORE than 21 per cent of injured drivers admitted to hospital

PUTTING BLOOD ON THE BITUMEN



RACS AND ROAD TRAUMA

EARLY ADVOCACY FOR ROAD SAFETY MEASURES



'1084' school children
Photo: RACS Archive

In February 1970, the RACS Road Trauma Committee (RTC), consisting of representatives from every Australian state and New Zealand, was formed. Its inspiring first Chairman was Sir Edward 'Bill' Hughes and he was assisted by his equally passionate deputy, Grayton Brown:

We were sickened. Sickened by the sight of girls with mutilated faces and eyes, of young people with brain damage, paralysed from the waist or neck, all stinking of alcohol...

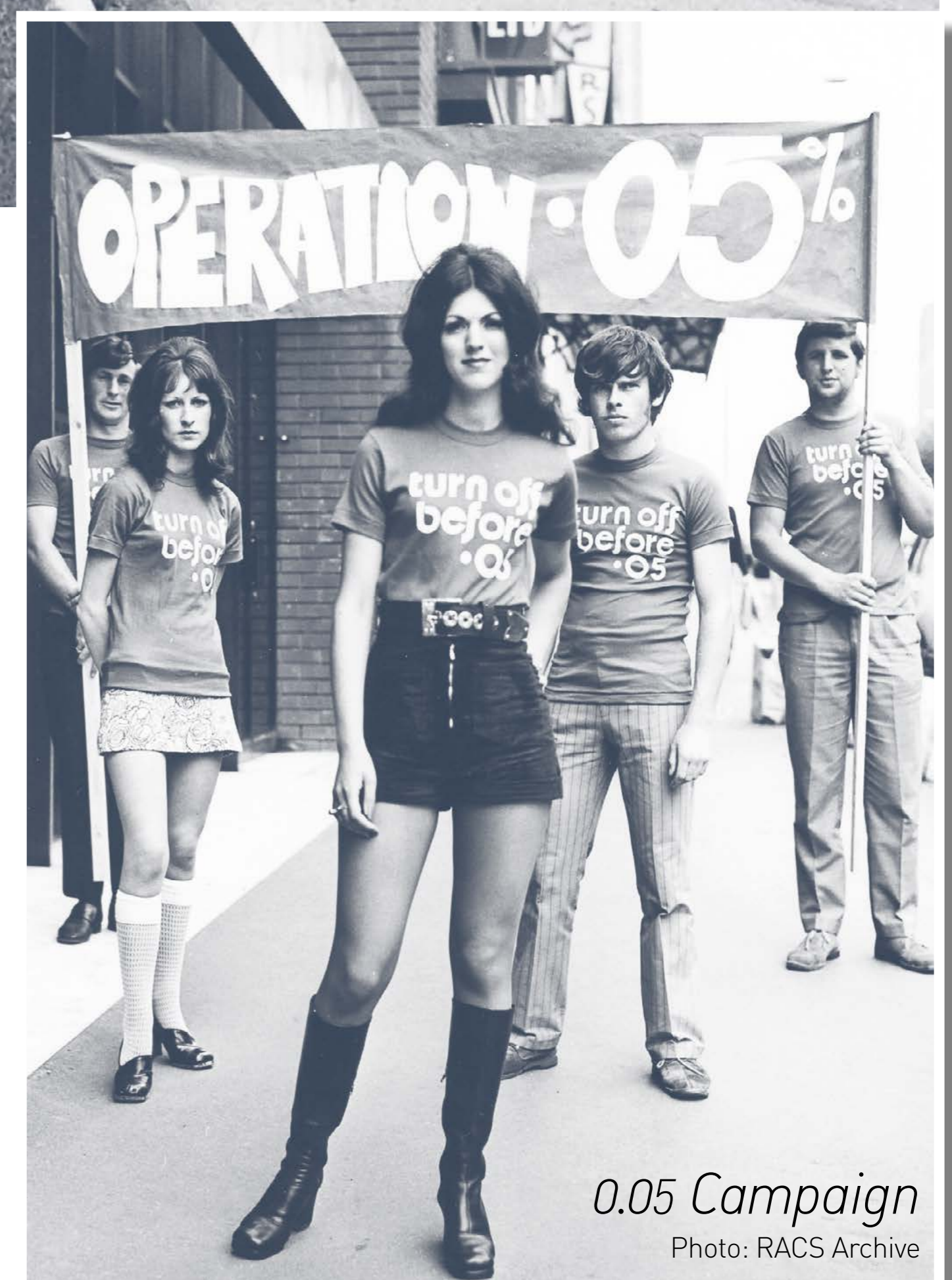
The Committee's key mission was to reduce the number of road fatalities and ameliorate the severity of injuries; and from its inception, focussed on compulsory seatbelt wearing and blood alcohol testing.

Surgeons had become increasingly concerned with the burgeoning road toll and in the 1960s, individuals like Ken Jamieson (inaugural member of the RTC) in Brisbane and Gordon Trinca (Chairman of the RTC, 1971) at the Preston and Northcote Community Hospital (PANCH), had begun to collect data about road traffic injuries. And from 1967, Donald Hossack

(Co-opted to the RTC, 1971), part-time surgeon advisor to the City Coroner, did autopsies on all passengers, drivers and pedestrians who had been killed on the roads. As well as testing for blood alcohol levels and occasionally, drugs, his important work established a pattern of injury for road deaths. In 1976, Hossack's influential report the Joint Select Committee on Road Safety and led to random breath testing.

In 1970, the RTC, assisted by individuals such as journalist, Donald Gibb and Sun Pictorial editor, Harry Gordon, began the 'belt up and live' campaign to promote seat belt wearing. In 1969, there had been 1084 deaths on Victorian roads and Gordon '...had 1084 school children lie down on the road to show what 1084 meant in bodies'. He also convinced the MCG to have 1084 put on the Grand Final scoreboard.

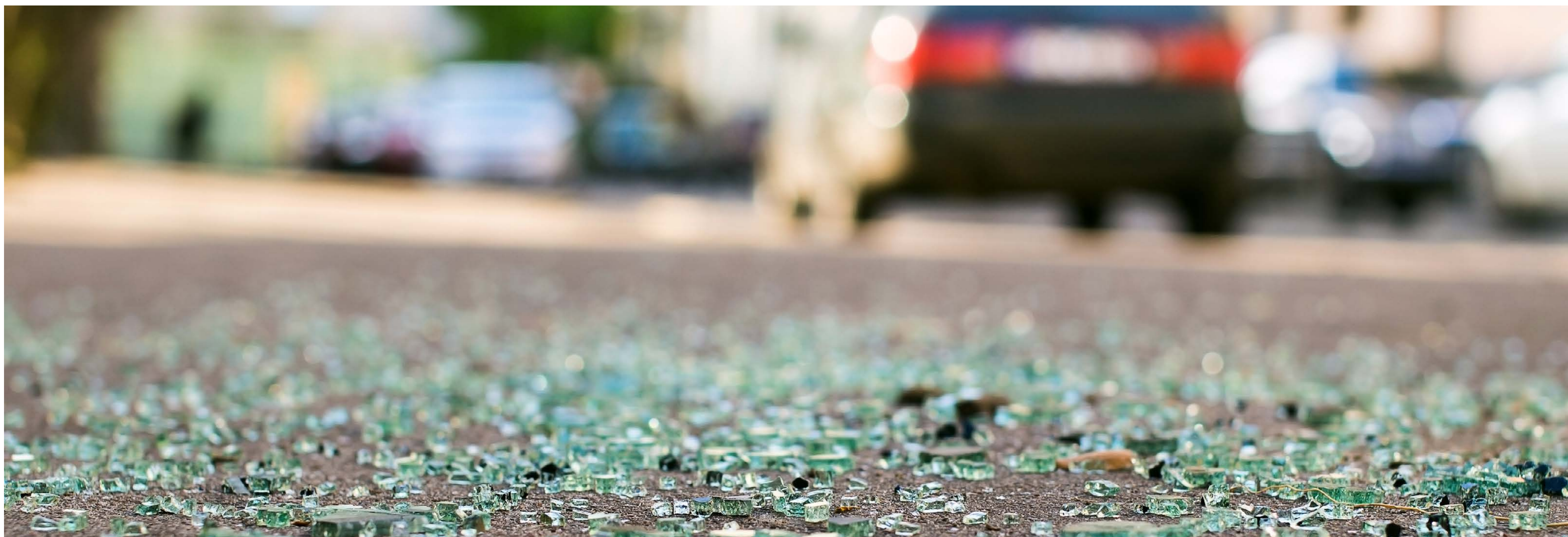
Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the RTC promoted all aspects of road safety including child restraints, helmets for cyclists and motorcyclists, zero blood alcohol levels for learner and P-Plate drivers, research and development of the EMST (Early Management of Severe Trauma) program.



0.05 Campaign
Photo: RACS Archive

RACS AND ROAD TRAUMA

THE RACS ROAD TRAUMA COMMITTEE EVOLVES



From 1976-1993, the RTC Chairman was Gordon Trinca – ‘...a Jiminy Cricket Character who pricked the conscience of politicians...’ and was a consummate advocate for seatbelt improvement. During this period, the RTC together with the regional and New Zealand Road Trauma Committees worked on new initiatives and pushed for improvements in existing road safety measures.

By the 1990s, it was clear that road trauma was just one aspect of trauma surgery. Consequently, in 1993 the RTC became the Trauma Committee and under its first Chairman, Glen Merry, the Committee considered... ‘all types of Trauma and [sought] to increase community awareness and involvement’.

From the 1990s important aspects of the Trauma Committee’s work include farm and sports injuries, gun control, disaster management and

trauma management in developing countries such as Papua New Guinea. Road Trauma was still on the agenda and fatalities decreased from 30.4% per 100,000 people in 1970 to 8.8% in 2004.

In 2000 the Australasian Trauma Verification program was established, enabling ‘... standards to be set for trauma services and their provision of care verified’. The EMST courses set up in the late 1980s continued to flourish and in 1996, the first Definitive Surgical Trauma Care Courses (DSTC) were run in Australia and New Zealand.

The RACS Trauma Committee is an advocate for bi-National Trauma Registries and in 2017, celebrated federal government funding for a National Trauma Registry. The Committee is committed to trauma prevention and supports advances in the campaign to ban the use of Quad Bikes for children under 16.



RACS TRAUMA COMMITTEES

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Past Chairs of the RACS Trauma Committee, L-R Glen Merry, Peter Danne, Brendan Dooley [Deputy Chair], Gordon Trinca Danny Cass and Daryl Wall. (Current Chair: John Crozier); 2004 Trauma Verification Subcommittee; 2004 Members of the Trauma Committee with past and current chairs, [back row] Martin Richardson, Ian Civil, Michael Sugrue, Daryl Wall, Peter Danne, [front row] Damien McMahon, Scott D’Amours, Annette Holian, John Crozier.