

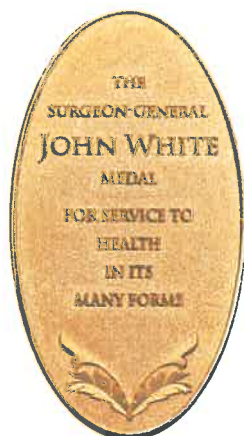
The Surgeon General John White Medal

For Service to Health in its Many Forms
Awarded To:

Dr Deborah Mills

Surgeon General John White RN
(c.1756-1832)

Surgeon General John White was the first doctor to practise in Australia and the founder of the disciplines of health in the Nation of which he was an esteemed pioneer. With resolution, courage and great professional integrity, he served as Surgeon General for the first seven years of the Colony's development. He was a fine clinician, an able administrator, a leader in preventive medicine and public health and an enthusiastic and gifted naturalist.



The Medal

The Obverse of the Medal depicts, at its centum, a stylised Aesculapian Serpent of Healing, the universal symbol of medicine and health. The serpent portrayed in this central position is Pseudechis porphyriacus, the Red-bellied Black Snake. It was first described by Surgeon General John White; and as such was the first Australian snake to be described by European scientists. The Serpent of Healing and Health is surmounted by the waratah, again first described and illustrated by White, in his journal written in 1788. One of Australia's most beautiful wildflowers, the waratah, scientifically named Telopea, is the State floral emblem of New South Wales and the insigne of the Australian Association of Neurologists. Below is the beautiful Blue-bellied Parrot, again first described by White in 1790. Two eponymic "Supporters" flank the Serpent of Health and Healing. To the right is the seahorse of Sydney Harbour, Hippocampus whitei, again first described by White in 1790; and named by Bleeker in 1855 in honour of the Surgeon General. To the left is a leaf-tailed gecko, symbolising White's interest and love of natural history. The Australian lizard, Egernia whitii, was so named in White's honour in 1804 by the French zoologist, Lacépède. The compositional ethos of the Medal is that of Health - Promoted in a Healthy Planet - where diversity is preserved and where flourish the triple desiderata of science, education and service to others.

By hand of

Dated

John Pearn
19 March 2013

The Surgeon Generals of Australia - since 1998
Major General John Pearn AM RFD,
Air Vice-Marshal Bruce Short AM RFD, and
Rear Admiral Graeme Shirtley RFD RANR