



new deal, 'what makes this such a pleasure is that the staff have been so open to change and actually embraced it after being fully informed'.

Dr Moji Mogare, secretary general of SAMA, said that even before Roberts gave notice of his leaving, the SAMA board had asked him (Mogare) to oversee the transformation of the HMPG

into an independent business unit.

Mogare, who becomes the executive director of HMPG, working closely with Professor Ralph Kirsch and the Publications Committee, said the deal, which became effective on 1 January would 'unlock value' in the HMPG staff. 'This partnership will optimise the operation here. Andrew is well known

and respected in the publishing industry and it will open doors for us,' he said.

The Publications Committee will constitute the interim board of HMPG until SAMA's national council meeting in July decides on what its new mandate will be.

**Chris Bateman**

## FAREWELL TO PETER ROBERTS



*Outgoing head of HMPG, Peter Roberts*

Peter Roberts, Publisher and Head of the Health and Medical and Publishing Group (HMPG) takes leave of us at the end of January 2005 to join his wife who has settled in the UK. SAMA has been fortunate in having a leader with his expertise and dedication for 25 years in its publishing enterprise.

Peter had 10 years of experience in various publishing activities before joining the Medical Association as Advertising Manager in 1979. In this capacity he launched the *CME* journal, developed new marketing strategies and

opened a marketing office in Johannesburg, resulting in sales increases. In 1985 he was appointed Publications Manager and in 1992 was appointed to his present position.

As Head of the publishing operations Peter has been responsible for an enterprise that has grown in size and in stature. There are currently 27 staff members producing 17 successful periodicals published in some 100 editions each year. Among many achievements Peter initiated, commissioned and launched the *South African Medicines Formulary*, conceptualised and developed South Africa's most popular CPD programme, initiated and established the successful mail-order book sales outlet and considerably expanded other new business.

Without Peter's initiative and drive to develop the business of publishing, the Medical Association would have found itself in major financial difficulties. For the past 3 years Peter has worked tirelessly towards establishing a sounder and more viable independent business unit for the publishing group. This has culminated in the agreements reported elsewhere in this issue of the *SAMJ*. His sacrifices in remaining with the HMPG until succession plans were properly developed were typical of his loyalty to SAMA.

While these achievements are readily visible, his contribution to staff development and their satisfaction are equally important. Publishing entails a delicate balance between the demands of the market and the editorial content, which are not always compatible. Peter's relationship with the editors has been a winning combination of mutual respect and cooperation.

For family reasons, Peter and his wife Cathy are going to settle in the UK for the foreseeable future, and we wish him and Cathy all the very best in their new life together.

**Dan Ncayiyana, JP van Niekerk**