

FOREWORD

The present number of *Explorations* has been delayed by some changes in the editorial committee. Illness and the pressure of other work have made it impossible for the team of Patricia Clancy, Jacques Pollet de Saint-Ferjeux and Colin Thornton-Smith to maintain the enviable record of productivity they have set over the last few years. Pending the discovery of someone prepared to undertake a stint as Editor, the collective responsible for the magazine has been reshaped. Wallace Kirsop has returned to see numbers 31 and 32 through the press, and Ivan Barko has agreed to look after number 33. Arrangements for 2003 and following years will be decided and announced in due course. The support of our readers and contributors remains crucial in all this. Articles on any aspect of French-Australian relations since the eighteenth century may be submitted for consideration by the committee.

The Baudin expedition is not a new subject for *Explorations*. Ever since the splendid *Baudin in Australian Waters* (Melbourne, Oxford University Press in association with the Australian Academy of the Humanities) came out in 1988 there has been growing interest, in France and in Australia, in a major scientific enterprise linking both countries. The series of bicentenary events being celebrated in these early years of the twenty-first century can be seen as a concrete expression of this. Margaret Sankey's paper published here was delivered at a conference at the University of Western Australia held from 10–13 July 2001 on "Cultural Encounters in the Indian-Pacific Region 1200–1800". A special number of the *Australian Journal of French Studies* in 2003 and a growing number of monographs, of which one is reviewed below by Elliott Forsyth, will help to keep the subject in front of experts and a wider public.

There are other topics that are becoming perennials for us. One of them is Vice-Consul and later Consul Paul Maistre, whose achievements and misadventures in Melbourne over two decades we have already examined. A brief note promises further archival revelations on this talented but ultimately unhappy official.

W. K.