

## FOREWORD

During the last year *Explorations* has suffered from the slow transfer of responsibilities within the editorial team of the *Australian Journal of French Studies*, which has officially been under the direction of Professor Brian Nelson since May 2002. A series of mishaps and illnesses meant that the convener of the *Explorations* group had to maintain his commitment to *AJFS* till the completion of volume XL (2003). This is now very close, since publication is scheduled for late September. Consequently *Explorations* can expect to receive more attention henceforth. However, it has to be said too that our little magazine needs more support from people doing research on and writing about French-Australian contacts over the last two centuries. Issues 34 and 35, those normally slated for 2003, are in active preparation and should appear during the next few months. In 2004 and 2005 there are plenty of opportunities for ambitious authors. The formula of alternating editorial control between Melbourne and Sydney will remain.

The present number shows not only that there is no diminution in the production of monographs of relevance to us and therefore deserving of review, but also that there are many topics that can be appropriately treated in notes or in short articles. The account of the Mayfield Open Day is a prefiguration of something much more substantial on Francis de Castelnau, one of the more eminent French consuls in nineteenth-century Victoria. On the other hand the text on the French collections of the State Library of Victoria should be seen as the first in a series on the resources available to those of us who do not see Australia as something purely British or as a neatly self-contained unit adrift in the South Seas.

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