

# FOREWORD

At the Annual General Meeting in March this year the Institute for the Study of French-Australian Relations decided to change the name of its journal from *Explorations* to *The French Australian Review*. This decision was not taken with a light heart: members of ISFAR and subscribers to the journal have been attached to a fine name, rich in suggestions, which has served the publication well for fifty-five issues and almost thirty years. The name was equally appropriate in French and in English, it evoked the period of the great explorations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (so relevant to the early contacts between France and Australia), and it could also be interpreted metaphorically, suggesting probing, enquiry, research.

However, *Explorations* being a multi-layered title, it does not directly evoke French-Australian links. In fact ours is one of eight English-language journals bearing that name. We have been increasingly aware that the title was working against a better dissemination of the publication, especially now that much consultation and research take place online. We felt that to attract new readers we needed an immediately recognisable title which could be easily located and identified using today's search engines.

After a great deal of soul-searching, *The French Australian Review* was chosen: the rhythm of the words is striking and the meaning is self-explanatory. We are confident our readers will understand the reasons for the change and we look forward to their continuing support of the journal under its new appellation.

The numbering of our issues will be continuous. The current issue, n° 56, has been constructed around the memory of 1914, the Great War and military graves.

The opening article, by Tom Lockley, discusses the centenary of the first postal flight in Australia carried out by French pioneer airman, Maurice Guillaux. That historic flight between Melbourne and Sydney took place in July 1914 and will be re-enacted this year, at the time of the publication of this first issue of *The French Australian Review*. After his stay in Australia Guillaux returned to France to serve in the war. The article tells the story of Guillaux's life and career, focussing on his two hundred days in Australia and on the refutation of the absurd allegation that in 1917 he was shot as a German spy.

The second article is devoted to the history of the French-Australian League of Help, a most unusual organisation founded by a group of French

Australians and Australian Francophiles in 1914. The aim of the League was to provide help to French soldiers, their wives or widows and their children, in the form of clothing and cash. The organisation functioned throughout the war and achieved amazing results, with its greatest success obtained on 'France's Day' 1917 (14th July), with the collection of over seven million eight hundred thousand dollars in today's currency. The article, by Peter Brown and Jacqueline Dwyer (the latter a descendant of one of the founding families of the organisation), tells the story of this unique venture of French-Australian cooperation, setting the record straight on some misrepresentations of the creation of the League.

Another World War 1 related article is Marie Ramsland's account of the Wenz family's contribution, in both action and writing, to France during the war. The best known member of the family, Paul Wenz, a Forbes-based grazier and French-Australian author, and his Australian-born wife Hettie, spent the war years in France, helping the Red Cross look after the wounded. The article also discusses the writings of members of the Wenz family on war subjects.

In Australia there have been recent debates about whether those Australians who died serving on foreign fields should rest with their comrades in the soil where they fell and/or in Commonwealth War cemeteries, or whether their bodies or ashes should be repatriated for burial in Australia. In this issue Edward Duyker offers readers of *The French Australian Review* a record of French military and naval graves in Australia. This is an unexpected topic as the public is generally unaware of the existence of French graves in this country. The text we publish is an edited version of a talk Edward Duyker gave to the Francophone Association of Southern Sydney earlier this year.

Finally, *The French Australian Review* n° 56 concludes with a review by Colin Nettelbeck of a book on a World War 1 related subject, and the journal's French-Australian Bibliographical Notes.

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Note: The cover of this first issue of the journal under its new name features horizon blue and pea soup green, the colours worn respectively by the French and Australian armies in the post-1915 period, evoking the themes of several texts in this number.