

FOREWORD

Once again *Explorations* has to apologize to its readers and subscribers for a long hiatus in its publication schedule. The reasons or something like them would be familiar to anyone who has ever had anything to do with "little magazines". The final breakdown of the IBM electronic composer formerly at our disposal and a change in the arrangements at Monash University for our access to keyboarding personnel have caused an even more spectacular delay than in 1987. However, at the cost of producing an abnormally short number now, we believe we are about to enter into a period of greater stability and regularity. With luck we should be able to catch up with our notional rhythm of two fascicles per year. This means that two further issues of our journal will appear over the next few months.

Predictably the Bicentenary of European settlement in Australia is continuing to stimulate interest in and research on the French presence in this part of the world. In a year or so it may be appropriate to try to summarize what has been achieved in the various centres where investigations have been undertaken. Meanwhile we can foreshadow a report on the sensational rediscovery of a substantial part of the archives of the French consulate in Melbourne. The special 1988 enterprise of ISFAR turned out to be a first vetting of this material before it was shipped off to its proper home in the French archives.

Our thoughts have already turned to another commemoration, that of the bicentenary of 14 July 1789. This event is to be given a certain prominence in Australia as well as in France and all other countries of the civilized world. *Explorations* will be producing a special number on the theme of Australia and the French Revolution. ISFAR members will be involved in addition in exhibitions to be arranged at Monash University and the State Library of Victoria. The Institute is formally represented on the Victorian Comité pour la Célébration du Bicentenaire de la Révolution Française.

W. K.