

## FOREWORD

Apart from giving the promised report on the rediscovered archives of the French consulate in Melbourne, the present number of *Explorations* demonstrates once again the range of Franco-Australian interactions that ISFAR is helping to investigate. From voyages of discovery (now symbolized by the Baudin map that decorates our new cover) to the reminiscences of recent temporary residents there is nothing that lies outside our scope. Nor, as will be evident in the following pages, do we neglect *francophonie* in general in favour of France alone.

The Mauritian connection is well known to Melbourne people interested in things French and particularly to the members of the Monash University Department of French (or Romance Languages as it has become). That that link is not something of the last generation or so can easily be overlooked. Dr Duyker's many contributions to the study of Australo-Mauritian contacts forbid us to remain in ignorance of a theme that runs through the entire history of this continent since the beginning of European settlement. Leaving aside Flinders' detention in Mauritius, a much publicized episode, who now remembers that Darling governed that island before he came to New South Wales? Dr Duyker's review of Professor Brian Fletcher's monograph *Ralph Darling: A Governor Maligned* (Melbourne, O.U.P., 1984) in *The Australian Rationalist* (June 1985, p. 14) provides useful supplementary and corrective information. The Editor of *Explorations*, having discovered J.S. Gotch (co-founder of Gordon & Gotch) practising dentistry in Port Louis in the early 1850s and having seen notices concerning Mauritian convicts in the Hobart press in 1846-1847, is not in the least astonished by the numerous manifestations of our ties with another part of the French-speaking world.

W.K.