

EDITORIAL

Five years ago, the Australian Society of Archivists was launched at a small but enthusiastic gathering in Canberra. Has all the blood, sweat and tears, pre- and post-1975, been worthwhile? In this *Archives and Manuscripts*, Michael Saclier, the Society's Inaugural President, looks back at the A.S.A.'s initial years and ponders the future.

Sound archives, local resource archives, ethnic archives and school archives are four areas in which important developments are beginning in Australia. The articles by David Lance (a recent visitor to this country), Wendy Lowenstein and Morag Loh, Franca Arena, and Beverley Lindley, deal with projects and activities in these areas and will, hopefully, provide assistance, encouragement and useful advice to others interested in similar undertakings.

This issue sees the commencement of *Conservation Notes*, a series to be prepared by Robert Morrison. The aim of these articles is to assist readers seeking information or advice about conservation matters; readers' queries and/or suggestions are warmly welcomed. In this issue also, Tim Walsh and Deborah Keane provide a salutary reminder that the tools of conservation (in this case, ethylene oxide) need also to be assessed for their effects on people.

As the Bicentennial draws closer, considerable attention is being focussed on what is held in the archival and manuscript collections of this country. The who, how and why of archive-keeping, on the other hand, attracts little interest in Australia although internationally, the reputation of some of our institutions and practitioners is high. If the archival profession is to make Australian researchers recognise its methods and expertise, it is essential to publicise the achievements which have been accomplished in Australia. This issue of *Archives and Manuscripts* sees the continuation of the important — for archival theory and practice — series of articles by Peter Scott, Gail Finlay and Clive Smith on Archives and Administrative Change and contains an informative article by Clive Smith on the history and functions of our national archival agency, the Australian Archives.