
Editorial

This issue of the *Bulletin* marks in a small way an event which might otherwise have gone officially unacknowledged—the 25th anniversary of the Australian Historical Association as an entity separate from its parent, ANZAAS. Bev Kingston, who was present at the conception, and Geoffrey Bolton, one of the midwives to the infant association in Perth in 1973, have both chosen to share their recollections of aspects of the AHA's history in this issue and it is worth taking seriously Geoffrey Bolton's suggestion that the AHA consider some more formal recording of its own history. Let this be a call to others, who might also have long memories, to reminisce.

Like most post biennial conference *Bulletins*, this one attempts to give readers — those who got there and those who didn't — some titbits from the rich smorgasbord that was available. There is a diverse selection, but it is appropriate to pick up on one or two of the offerings which have a particular bearing for AHA future directions. The AHA Executive is currently committed to forging better institutional links between the profession and libraries and archives across the country. With so many now under threat, librarians and archivists are experiencing the 'mood of embattlement, despondency, defensiveness' which currently characterises history, as Ann Curthoys suggested at the AHA Conference in 1996. The AHA conference gave the New South Wales State Librarian an opportunity to put her case for the changes occurring at the Mitchell, changes which, she says, have been partly misrepresented and have been a cause of some anxiety amongst users, and her words are repeated in this issue. Though historians and some echelons of library management will no doubt remain in opposite camps (the recent fight for the Noel Butlin Archives confirms this, and there are countless other local examples), one outcome of the push for improved relations will be an IT conference to be hosted jointly through the AHA and the State Library of NSW. More on this in a future *Bulletin*.

The other piece which requires particular comment is Alan Ryan's, which derived from his conference paper on curriculum design for the 1990s. Some of the ideas expressed in this paper, provocatively entitled 'Developing a strategy to "save" history', have already generated some negative press for the senior school history curriculum here in WA. The article calls for responses and so does the AHA. We hope in the next issue to feature replies from historians teaching in secondary schools or working on upper school history curricula across Australia. Creating a greater mutual awareness and encouraging dialogue

between historians in secondary and tertiary education is another priority being addressed by the new AHA Executive.

At the AHA AGM, the issue of Correspondents' Reports was raised. As part of the AHA's push to develop its IT capacity, the former practice of publishing reports in the *Bulletin* has been dropped, with correspondents henceforth to notify the Secretariat of amendments and changes, which are to be updated and recorded electronically. Those of you who have attempted to access the AHA's website, as advised in the *Bulletin* of December 1996, at

<http://www.arts.edu.au/AHA/>

will be aware there is a black hole out there. However, the co-opting of members onto the new Executive specifically for their IT skills should ensure this is soon amended. In this issue we include a lengthy report tabled by the AHA's new IT Sub-Committee, which outlines exciting prospects for future AHA IT developments.

Finally, the AHA Secretariat has now moved to Melbourne, at least for the next four years. Anyone wishing to join the AHA should contact the AHA Secretariat at the address given below.

Jan Gothard
Editor

STOP PRESS

"It is understood that Prime Minister John Howard has come close to conceding that the Coalition's deep 1996 budget cuts to universities may have gone too far..."

The Weekend Australian, Dec 12 - 13, 1998

The *AHA Bulletin* continues to welcome unsolicited manuscripts addressing the concerns of the profession. Contributors are requested to use endnotes, and to accompany their clean, clear, double-spaced hard copy with a floppy disk, program specified.

We also welcome notices of conferences and calls for papers
Send your articles and notices, requests for memberships and renewals to:

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