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FOREWORD

Sybil Jack

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As the Journal approaches its twenty-fifth year, it is appropriate to look back at the changes it has undergone in that time. The late Malcolm Broun, whose spirit still inspires the society, in his introduction to the first issue underlined what has been a major purpose of the society and its journal—to provide those Australian Scots who revered their past the opportunity to retrieve the true facts of their history, to give them the chance to hear great international speakers and to discuss their interests with like minded people. He also spoke of the society encouraging postgraduate and honours students—a function illustrated, could he have known it, by the inclusion in the first issue of some early articles by Jonathan Wooding, who has now returned to the chair of Celtic Studies at the University of Sydney.

Malcolm hoped that the journal would feature not only scholarship but also lighter pieces, not expecting it to become a serious academic journal, but circumstances have driven it in a different direction. Even postgraduates—indeed perhaps especially postgraduates—have become desperate for peer-reviewed publications. By 1998 Malcolm was acknowledging that a journal should do more than give enjoyment and interest to its readers. It should, he wrote, be a repository of scholarship not easy bedtime reading. There was a gradual move to more substantial volumes and a wider range of articles including various studies of Scots in Australia although attempts to encourage new scholars of all ages were a continuing feature. Peer review was reluctantly introduced. Through the remarkable help of Professor Carole Cusack and Ross Coleman, the journal was also put online which made it available to a global audience.

The present volume has a wide range of contributors from Australia and Scotland and diverse topics from David Caldwell's discussion of how Edinburgh Castle could be taken by siege in the middle ages to Matthew Glozier's detailed consideration of Sydney Grammar School's Scottish alumni in the Boer war. Articles on women, heraldry and holy wells maintain the wide interests the society has always supported.

