

## *EDITORIAL*

---

---

... the Faculty of Arts has been subjected to severe external stresses and internal strains ... Lecture rooms [are] too small, staff too few and Library facilities pitifully inadequate.

The liberal arts are in a curious position today.

Everywhere student numbers are creating strains and thwarting the very purpose of a University.

These are sadly familiar remarks. They come from articles in the first three numbers of *Arts*, over forty years ago. The first was written by W. M. O'Neil, then Dean of Arts, the second by an anonymous contributor, and the third by R. B. Farrell, who was later to become Dean. They invite comparison with the bleak information about current funding and the courageous defence of the Faculty, on the broad grounds that less yields more, by the present Dean in this issue.

The Arts Association was founded in 1953. In 1956 *Arts* Volumes 1:1, 1:2 and 1:3 appeared, in January, May and September, as three twenty-four page issues under the editorship of Gavin Souter. (These dates give the journal a claim to be the longest standing academic journal in the University of Sydney.) In 1958 the series began again, in a larger format and for some years with somewhat erratic numbering. A new Volume 1:1 appeared in March 1958, with an editorial committee. Volume 1:2 was dated March 1959, with no editorial information given; volume 1:3, September 1959, gave an editorial committee. After a gap of two years or so, volume 2:1 appeared in 1961, with Duncan MacCallum as editor. MacCallum produced issues for 1962 (2:2). 1963–4 (2:3) and 1966 (3:1), with an editorial committee (which, in my own recollection, was never convened).

From 1967 to 1969, and then from 1972 to 1975, *Arts* appeared annually, with Thelma Herring as editor (volumes 4, 5, 6, and then 7, 8, 9, 10). There was an issue in 1978 (volume 11), with no editor recorded. Volume 12 appeared in 1984, with James Tulip as editor. There was another gap, after which volume 13 (1987–8) appeared in a new format. That, and succeeding volumes up to this one (which offers a redesigned cover) have been under the present editorship. The current volume presents a redesigned cover page. The thirtieth issue, in 2001, will restore an editorial committee, probably with members representing the four Schools recently established in the Faculty.

One reason among others for earlier interrupted appearance is no doubt that *Arts*, at least in its second coming, was devoted mainly to the publication of inaugural lectures. In lean times, such lectures come about irregularly. Over the last decade or so, however, *Arts* has expanded its scope, to publish articles of scholarly interest not only to Faculty, its graduates and associates, but to a wider academic readership. It is now a refereed journal which meets the criteria (insensitive as they may be) for recognition by the relevant government department in Canberra.

The content of this volume is evidence of another successful year for the Association and for its contribution to the Faculty of Arts. In addition the Association has been actively involved in other important events. These include the annual J. M. Ward Foundation lecture (delivered this year by the distinguished historian Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Bolton), the functions presented by the Department of Social Work, Social Policy and Sociology in celebration of its sixtieth anniversary (with addresses by eminent speakers), and the programme of the Friends of the University of Sydney Library.

The Dean's address holds out constructive hope for a reorganised Faculty (even if, to the retired eye, reorganisation sometimes seems to entail more and more senior academics being separated from their departments to become administrators, supporting the body of professional administrators which grows as Faculty numbers shrink). Perhaps the situation is not so bleak

as in 1956, when, *Arts* recorded, the entire Faculty had 69 members. What followed soon after 1956 was the Report of the Murray Commission, which led to enormous expansion within Australian universities. Just as this issue is being readied for press, it is reported that 'The impact of market forces and funding cuts are among the areas to be investigated in a comprehensive Senate inquiry into higher education'. Should we hope for an outcome like that of the Murray Report; or should we expect the new inquiry to go the way of the West Inquiry—west?

The annual general meeting of the Association has recommended some changes in the charges for membership and for *Arts*. These are inevitable in the face of rising costs and the impossibility this year of Faculty or College support through the Research Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences. We acknowledge gratefully assistance from the Union's Clubs and Societies committee, and hope to strengthen that bond by including Union representatives on the Association's committee. Two other changes are needed. The first is an increase in membership: in 1956, 345 members were recorded—a target to match. The second is a greater awareness among Faculty members and graduates, potential contributors, of the opportunity offered by *Arts*. It could be said that with some twenty-five libraries in America and Europe, including Eastern Europe, subscribing, *Arts* is better known overseas than in Sydney.

We congratulate Emeritus Professor Angus Martin, President of the Arts Association, and Associate Professor Margaret Sankey, of the Department of French Studies, on the award by the French Government of the *Palme Académique* for services to culture.

We record with deep regret the deaths this year of four long serving members of the Faculty. A. J. Dunston held the chair of Latin from 1953 to his retirement in 1986. He was Dean from 1957 to 1960, and in the five years before retirement was a Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Dunston was active in the Arts Association from its beginnings. He contributed a vigorous defence of classical studies, 'Of Classics and Oil Companies',

to the first issue of *Arts*. His inaugural lecture, 'The Literary General', a topic perhaps prompted by his service in the second world war, was printed in the issue for 1959. Besides his research interests, Dunston was active in public examinations in the State. He was sometime President of the Classical Association, member of the Board of Trustees of the State Library of New South Wales, and President of the Dante Alighieri Society. Dunston was honoured in the early 1970s by the Italian Government, which made him Cavaliere nell'Ordine al Merito della Repubblica, and, following retirement, by the University, which conferred the honorary degree of D. Litt.

Sir Peter Platt held the chair of Music from 1975 to 1989. Previously he had been lecturer and then senior lecturer. He returned to Sydney from the chair at the University of Otago. Under his leadership the Department established a formidable academic reputation. He established the contemporary music ensemble the Seymour Group in the early 1980s, and was editor of the journal *Musicology Australia*. Platt's particular love was Stravinsky, and he had deep interests in Indian and Asian music. He is remembered for his edition of the seventeenth-century composer Richard Dering. In 1999 Platt was awarded the AM for his services to music.

Eric Sharpe was appointed as foundation professor of Religious Studies in 1977 and held the chair until his retirement three years ago. In 1980 he also held a professorship in the History of Religions in Uppsala. Sharpe had particular interests in European interpretations of the Hindu tradition and in Sufism. Of his many publications, his chief work, *Comparative Religion: a History*, was translated into Korean, Chinese and Hebrew. He was elected to membership of the Australian Academy of the Humanities. Sharpe's enthusiasms reached widely. He was, for example, a supportive member of the Sydney Society for Literature and Aesthetics and a member of the Editorial Board of its journal, in which he published a study of the nineteenth-century mythologist and writer Andrew Lang. For some years he presented a cultural programme on early morning radio. An

obituary in the *Sydney Morning Herald* described Sharpe as ‘... the foremost authority on how we should best go about understanding the religions of the world’.

Philip Sutcliffe held a chair in Psychology from 1966, having begun to teach in the Department in 1949. He held undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in both Psychology and Anthropology. His PhD, conferred in 1959, was the first awarded in the Faculty of Arts. The degree of DSc, for a thesis on classification movements in psychology in the last half century, an area which occupied Sutcliffe’s research for many years, has been conferred posthumously. Sutcliffe is remembered also for his critical exploration of the nature of hypnotic states, work which is claimed to have set a new theoretical course in the area. He was elected a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia in 1970.

*G.L.L.*