

## INTRODUCTION

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this special issue of the EALRGA Newsletter which is devoted to Japanese topics. The special issue stems from two important and related events which occurred during 1997. First, as Michelle Hall has outlined in her contribution the Japanese Library Resources Group of Australia (JALRGA) was established within EALRGA. Secondly, a highly successful Forum on Library Resources for Japanese Studies was held at the Japanese Studies Association of Australia (JSAA) Conference in Melbourne on 10 July. The Forum is described and commented upon in the pieces by Michelle Hall and Masako Takagaki.

The remaining papers in this special issue apart from that by David Wells, were presented at the Forum in Melbourne. They are complementary in their coverage. Ho Chooi Hon has provided a thoughtful piece on the issues faced by the library manager in meeting the needs of researchers for English and Japanese (or other Asian) language sources of information. Eiko Sakaguchi's "Accessing information from Japan" gives a useful and practical insight into the work of a Japanese studies librarian in Australia. Toshio Takagi's lively "Japanese Internet developments since 1995" contains much valuable information and comment on a number of Japanese web sites. Reading these papers again I believe EALRGA has acted wisely in publishing them for a wider audience.

As one of the fifty or so people who attended the Forum I can attest to its success both in terms of attracting scholars and providing them with useful information. It was a credit to the organisers and speakers. Mention should also be made of the JSAA Conference committee who strongly supported a library component for JSAA.

This special issue emphasises the importance of Japanese library issues within the broader field of Australia's East Asian librarianship. In future it is planned to have a regular section within the EALRGA Newsletter devoted to Japanese topics. I strongly urge members to provide input through Eiko Sakaguchi who is the JALRGA representative on the EALRGA Committee.

Andrew Gosling  
President  
EALRGA  
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