

HISTORY OF THE JOURNAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN ACOUSTICAL SOCIETY

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The *Bulletin of the Australian Acoustical Society* was established in 1972 as the regular journal of the Society, and in 1985 its title was changed to *Acoustics Australia*. Its aim has always been two-fold: to serve as a medium for the communication of Society activities to members, and to promote the development of acoustics in Australia by publishing peer-reviewed articles of relevance to the Australian situation.

Soon after the formation of the Society in 1964, it was felt that there should be some form of regular publication to reflect activities, bring acoustical news to the members and act as a vehicle for publishing articles on Australian acoustical work. Early on, Peter Knowland and John Irvine started editing a newsletter for the NSW Division. In November 1971, the Council approved the establishment of the *Bulletin of the Australian Acoustical Society* as a replacement of the NSW newsletter, the production to alternate between the NSW and Victoria Divisions. So, in 1972, the *Bulletin of the Australian Acoustical Society* was born, the New South Wales Division agreeing to organise its initial production. Over the next few years, members of the Editorial Committee included Peter Knowland, John Irvine, Ted Weston, Ferge Fricke, Richard Heggie and Marion Burgess. In 1979, the Victoria Division took over responsibility for the production: Robin Alfredson was appointed as the Chief Editor followed by Rob Law in 1980 and Don Gibson in 1981.

The *Bulletin* was successful in fulfilling its aims of publishing interesting articles based on acoustical work in Australia, news concerning the activities of branches and members, as well as maintaining good advertiser support. The editorial committee in Victoria performed a sterling self-publication effort and in particular ensured a regular schedule of three issues per year, which was all important for continued advertising revenue. The voluntary time and work applied to this task enabled the *Bulletin* to be produced with a profit margin. There was a growing feeling, however, that there was a need for changes in presentation and production to reflect the growing national and international scope of the Society. In 1982, the production moved back to New South Wales with Howard Pollard as Chief Editor and Marion Burgess as Associate Editor. The new editorial team was given the authority and additional finance by the Council to carry out this process.

For the first issue of Volume 10 in April 1982, Artsett Services were commissioned to redesign and layout a new-

look *Bulletin*. In addition to the two editors, a number of Consulting Editors were appointed, one for each major branch of acoustics, whose tasks included acting as referees and coordinators of contributions for special issues on their particular topics. To assist in the collection of news items, a liaison officer was appointed in each member state. We even had a volunteer cartoonist, Doug Cato, from RANRL, and a columnist, Graeme Harding, for a new 'People' page.

In a statement of policy in the first editorial, the editor stated: "Following the lead of previous editorial committees, it is our intention to convert the *Bulletin* into a standard technical journal. The *Bulletin* has a dual role to play. Firstly, it provides an outlet for information relating to local activities and members' peregrinations (contrary to rumour, 'Gossip' has not been pensioned off but will be included under the new heading 'People'). Secondly, the *Bulletin* is available for publishing both short and long technical articles. While original papers will be most welcome, there is room for informative review papers (especially in areas of interest in Australia), discussion and tutorial papers and short papers giving preliminary reports of investigation or research. With the active cooperation of those who feel the urge to write (or can be persuaded to do so) we hope to continue the process of producing an interesting and informative journal that will be primarily directed towards Australian acousticians and those with a general interest in acoustics, but hopefully will also present an active image to our many international subscribers."

Mainly due to one-off expenses associated with the re-design, the cost of producing Volume 10 No.1 was considerably more than had been estimated. After exploring a number of alternative printing procedures, a change was made to the Cronulla Printing Co, a family business with a reputation for quality printing and modest costs. Right from the start there was debate over our decision to use glossy cover and paper, which many members associated with expensive business publications. Advertisers were happy as they were able to plan for improved presentations. As it transpired,

because the paper was bought in bulk lots, the 'expensive' glossy paper worked out cheaper than ordinary bond paper.

Doug Cato's witty cartoons were generally applauded but the editors' attempt to enliven the reports section with occasional satirical notes received the thumbs down. It appeared that there was a limited scope for humour in acoustics. Other journals have found the same reaction, scientists and engineers in general like to keep a straight face, except for one or two English journals where satire still survives.

In August 1984 (Vol 12 No.2) the first special issue appeared on the topic of Underwater Acoustics, assembled by one of our consulting editors (Marshall Hall). While there was never a problem in persuading members to write an article, it was interesting to note the greater enthusiasm generated by a request to contribute to a special issue. On a number of occasions the ready response resulted in one or two articles having to be left over for the next regular issue. Special issues continue to the present and it has been gratifying to receive a number of overseas articles for these issues.

During 1984, the question of a name change was debated. The original name was causing uncertainty with many potential advertisers who perceived it to be a 'house journal' rather than a technical publication. The contributors, advertisers and some subscribers thought that the old name did not adequately describe the contents or style. In April 1985 the Council agreed to change the name of the journal to *Acoustics Australia*. The brief to the editors was to continue producing a quality technical journal that served both as a reflection of acoustical activities in Australia and as a medium for news and product information of interest to members. To celebrate the change, Leeway Graphics were commissioned to produce a new masthead and cover design. The general style has remained the same to the present with only relatively small changes to this design.

During 1987 financial problems became dominant especially after the dramatic stock market crash that led to a decline in advertising. There was not a lot of room for economies as customary printing procedures were very labour intensive. At this time, the final version of most editorial material was typed by a secretarial agency, followed by typesetting done on a special machine, after which printing plates were prepared. At each stage it was necessary to carry out proof reading. Improvements in the printing process were introduced from time to time but the big economy came with the introduction of computers to eliminate the traditional typesetting stage. Manuscripts submitted by an author on a disk did not require any retyping, although the printer needed to add formatting to the journal style. Further improvements in technology has led to the electronic transmission of the files which saves more time and costs.

In December 1989, Mrs Leigh Wallbank was appointed as

Business Manager and immediately made an impact on the efficiency of producing the journal. She also introduced a more systematic approach to advertising and gradually expanded the number and range of our advertisers. The continuity provided by Leigh and her dedication to the various task of the business management have been greatly appreciated by the editors.

In April 1993, Howard Pollard retired as Chief Editor and production of *Acoustics Australia* was handed over to the present team in Canberra comprising Neville Fletcher, Marion Burgess and Joseph Lai with assistance for some time from Leigh Kenna. This team has continued to improve upon the standards set by the previous editors while keeping the costs to a level acceptable to Council.

A journal such as *Acoustics Australia* could not survive without the voluntary support of many from within and outside the Society. The responsibilities and time commitments of the editors are quite significant. To date the journal has been produced without any payments to the production editors, consulting editors, authors or the referees. With the increasing pressures from so many directions this may have to change in the future as people find it more difficult to find the time for yet another activity in their busy schedule. It is sincerely hoped that such a change will not occur for some years and that those in the profession of acoustics will appreciate the benefits of the journal and provide support as necessary.



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