

## **FROM YOUR EDITOR**

**Elaine Thompson**

This edition of your journal comprises mainly papers from the Conference of Australian Members of Parliament, 'Meeting the Challenges of the Future, Today'; I trust you enjoy these and understand that the papers were designed for live presentation rather than an academic journal, so I ask for your indulgence in terms of the style of writing of some of these contributions.

As well as the Conference papers the journal includes a selection of ANZACATT papers from the 2006 course. These ANZACATT papers have all been refereed and are regarded as the best of their year. I continue to find them fascinating and among the best researched material on parliament that we have. Certainly it is through the existence of the ASPG (and its journal), and of ANZACATT that we have a vigorous continuing study of parliament. It has not been an area that seems to inspire many university students. PhDs in the area or even MA theses are few and far between, as is the extensive exploration of the role of parliament within courses at universities in Australia. It continues to be of concern that the understanding of parliament is largely confined to the practitioners and researchers within the parliament. I exhort the ASPG to continue to reach out to the next generation and beyond the walls of parliament to attempt to attract people to what we know to be a vital component of our democracy. If you have any doubts I refer you to Harry Phillips lively report on 'Executive Control of the Legislature: Is the Legislative Assembly on a Government Leash?', a report on the ASPG Western Australian Chapter dinner seminar.

There is also an insightful speech by Professor Geoff Gallop on the role of the MP, and an extensive exploration of the power of the NSW Legislative Council ten years on from the Egan decision. This paper's main author is Lynn Lovelock, the Clerk of the Parliament.

I hope you enjoy this edition.