EDITORIAL

Each issue of Australian Educational Computing has endeavoured to convey important messages about some aspects of the educational use of computers. The cover photograph for this issue was taken in a school for children with severe physical handicaps and illustrates well one of the many possible uses of a microcomputer coupled with a peripheral device used for alternative input and/or output. Two articles in this issue are based on a theme adopted at the world Micros Plus Conference held in Wollongong, N.S.W. in late 1986 and reflected in the cover photograph. The "micros plus peripheral devices" theme takes us beyond what have become the "normal" ways of using computers in schools into exciting, and as yet little explored, areas of computer usage. Computers, used in such ways, promise to expand the educational potential of microcomputers for beyond what most educationalists envisaged only a few short years ago.

The Micros Plus conference was attended by national and international experts on the use of computers in widely diverse fields. However, in keeping with editorial policy, papers by Australian authors have received preference for publication.

Educators in N.S.W. were fortunate recently to have Anita Straker as a keynote speaker at their state conference. A transcript of Anita's paper is included in this issue. While it doesn't do justice to Anita's multimedia presentation it does capture the spirit of what she had to say, and raises a host of questions about computers and education and reminds us of Ellis' dictum that "Thinking about the computer's role in education does not mean thinking about computers, it means thinking about education" (Ellis, 1974).

That Australian educators have moved from a parochial, technology-based view of computers and education towards a national perspective on the educational role of computers is evident in the reports by Joan Wilcox of a recent national software conference, by Sandra Wills on progress with an Australian Domesday Project, and a proposal by Dr. Rob McLachlan to create a National Biographical Dictionary.

These, and other articles, reflect an emerging, national perspective on the role of the computer in education.