Three significant aspects of 1969 were the improved position regarding the recruitment of both staff and students, the continued outflow of scholarly books and articles throughout the School, and the first steps towards planning for the 1973-75 triennium.

Academic Staff

The Report for 1968 referred to the recruiting drive begun in that year. The drive was continued in 1969 and was assisted by the very great increase in high quality graduates flowing from universities within the School's main catchment areas, that is the universities of Australia and New Zealand, the United Kingdom and North America. While recruitment remained difficult in some of the more specialised areas of research, as in econometric studies and statistics, in many of the more general subjects the supply position has greatly improved over the past few years, particularly with regard to younger applicants.

The year opened with sixty-one staff on pay-roll and fourteen posts on offer or accepted, adding to seventy-five in an approved academic establishment of eighty. A normal crop of five resignations during the year and the withdrawal of one or two from previous offers left the posts to be filled about fourteen below the formal establishment. A considerable number of these were refilled by December, when seventy staff were on pay-roll, with three further posts committed but not yet taken up and five held by departments for long-term visitors in 1970.

Thus the triennium 1967-69 closed with staff considerably above the 'target level' of 90% of establishment filled or committed, and with every department and unit at or near its establishment ceiling. Particularly pleasing was the greatly improved position in the Departments of Law and Economics, two Departments in which younger staff with the special research interests required could not be found in previous years. A disappointment was again the failure to have an occupant in the Chair of Sociology, but the year closed with this post at last on firm offer. Dr J.C. Caldwell was appointed to the Chair and Headship of the Department of Demography to take up duties in March 1970. A second Chair of Statistics was approved and applicants were under final consideration as the year closed.

The sources of recent recruitment are of some interest. The following pattern emerged from twenty-four new staff who accepted appointments in 1968 and 1969:
Recruited in Australia 5
Australians returning after overseas experience 10
Recruited in New Zealand 2
Recruited in United Kingdom 4
Recruited elsewhere 3
Total 24

Thus the School continues to retain its international character—a feature which is also marked amongst the student body—and to bring back a considerable number of young Australians from overseas.

Student Matters

Student recruitment also showed some improvement, particularly with regard to the standard of applicants for scholarships, an increasing proportion of whom carried first class honours or good quality higher degrees. At fifty-six, the number of students enrolled in December was four below the figure for the beginning of the year, but nevertheless reflected almost a full load in terms of both finance available, and the supervisory capacity of departments having regard to what is felt to be the right balance of staff research and student training. The slight decrease in numbers during the year was temporary and was the result of the large number completing their courses and not of any drop in recruitment.

The statistics for the year were:

Students enrolled, January 1969 60
Students appointed during 1969:
From Australia 12
From overseas 9
Terminated during year:
Degree conferred 15
Completed course and admitted by Council 9
Resigned 1
Enrolled at December 1969 56

During the year the Director met with students from each department and unit to discuss such matters as the structure of degrees, course work and supervision. A common factor in these discussions was the desire for more interdisciplinary contacts. To this end a School seminar was arranged by the Urban Research Unit to bring together the considerable number of staff and students working in various departments on some aspect of urban studies. A second matter raised was student representation on Faculty. The student body and Faculty agreed that the students should elect two members to Faculty. Elections were held in August and the students' representatives attended their first meeting in September.
Although there continued to be strong support for the view that the major thesis should remain the foundation of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, considerable attention was given during the year to the organisation of course work, particularly with relation to mathematical and statistical aspects of research. Towards the end of the year a joint enterprise was launched, involving the Departments of Economics and Economic History in the Institute and School of General Studies, with a view to providing course work for students both for the degrees of master and Doctor of Philosophy. The organisation and co-ordination of this work is the responsibility of one of the two new appointments in the Department of Economics in this School.

The Institute staff in Sociology also continued its major role in servicing the course work for the degree of master in sociology, but this responsibility, which has put a considerable burden on the small staff of this Department, is likely to be reduced in the future with the approval to establish a Department of Sociology in the School of General Studies in 1970.

An attempt was also made, through a committee representing the relevant departments, to co-ordinate the demands for statistical 'service' courses within this School, with the courses led by one of the staff of the Department of Statistics and with both staff and students participating. This has been a rather intractable problem in the past because of the difficulty of attracting a staff appointment with interests primarily in the social sciences, but the experiment of 1969 in pooling the specialist resources within the School in a common seminar series suggests that this approach should be pursued further in 1970.

Research Output

The trend of recent years towards increasing use of computers in social science research continued in 1969. The Joint School programming section was increased to four and in addition some departments backed up this expansion with Research Assistants competent in many aspects of programming. General programs in the fields of survey analysis, multivariate analysis, concordance and the analysis of variance were improved and extended. In addition many new special programs were written both by the section and within departments and units. The greatly increased use of the computer has been associated with greater turn-round time and to pressures at the data processing level, and the implications of these aspects for the future will be examined by the Joint Schools' Computer Committee early in 1970.

By no means, however, has the computer taken over in the work of the School. Most of the twenty books published in 1969 and wholly written or edited by staff of the School were in the fields of humane and liberal studies owing little, if anything, to computer technology. The technical and statistical work of the departments was mainly published in a wide array of journals both within and beyond Australia. Altogether, approximately 110 articles were published in 1959 in learned journals or as chapters contributed to books.
Looking Ahead

This output of books and articles flowed in the main from the departmental activities and projects summarised in the School Report for 1968. Some of these will be running down over the next year or two, and for this reason, as well as to meet the planning requirements of the Australian Universities Commission for the triennium 1973-75, it was necessary in 1969 to begin examining the future structure and research objectives of the School for the next five years or so. As a first step, in April, Faculty appointed a committee of ten, representative of both the various disciplines covered in the School and the grades of sub-professorial staff, to review these matters. Their report, presenting a broad outline of their views as to the future shape and functions of the School, was presented to a special Faculty meeting in December and will be valuable aid to more detailed discussions with individual departments and Heads of Departments in 1970.

Planning for the 1973-75 triennium must take into account the realities of the triennium 1970-72, and it was clear as the year closed that during the next three years much numerical expansion of staff, above the establishment of eighty to which the School worked in 1969, will not be possible. Consequently short-run planning to 1972 will be concerned essentially with securing maximum returns within the existing framework rather than with growth, and the extent of innovation in research will be largely determined by the degree to which resources for new projects can be freed by the completion of existing ones. Establishing the priorities for such new research will be one of the interesting but not easy tasks for 1970.

W D Borrie.