

INTRODUCING DR. JAMES BOWEN

Suzanne Davies

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Townsville, Queensland, Australia
suzie@gbbrmpa.gov.au

After graduating from the University of Sydney and completing a Ph.D. at the University of Illinois, James Bowen pursued an academic career in the United States, Canada and Australia, with a short sojourn in Greece. He has published extensively in the history of ideas, education and environmental thought. His three-volume work *A History of Western Education*, has been published in four international editions, and translated into three languages. This major work has recently been republished as part of the *Rutledge's Distinguished Masterworks Series*. As visiting Professional Fellow at the Australian National University from 1984 to 1989, he became absorbed in the complex history of the Great Barrier Reef, exploring this over the next decade through intensive archival, field and underwater search in collaboration with Margarita Bowen, ecologist and distinguished historian of science. The result of that collaboration is their latest work '*The Great Barrier Reef: History, Science, Heritage.*'

Once published, the book received outstanding reviews, and in September 2003 James Bowen and Margarita Bowen were awarded the prestigious New South Wales Premier's Australian History prize. The citation for the prize describes the book as 'a truly majestic history' and 'a compelling saga.'

I first met Dr. James Bowen and Dr. Margarita Bowen nearly 20 years ago, when they came to the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) on sabbatical study leave in order to undertake research for their book. I was fairly new to the profession of librarianship at that time, and I must admit I was in awe of these two people who came to use our library's resources. I marvelled at their vast experience, both their combined and individual knowledge and their dedication to the pursuit of knowledge. My dealings with the Bowens has continued over the past two decades, and I admit I am still in awe of their overwhelming enthusiasm, energy and love of life and learning.

James and Margarita Bowen are not resting on their laurels, however. They are both research fellows at the School of Environmental Science & Management, University of the Southern Cross. Margarita is researching a new project in theoretical ecology and James has begun a new study into current problems associated with increasing human impacts on coral reefs systems.

We are very honoured to have Dr. James Bowen here with us today to deliver the Key Note Address for this conference 'Voyages of Discovery: Parting the Seas of Information Technology,' the 30TH Annual IAMSLIC Conference. Dr. Bowen's topic today is 'History of scientific exploration on the Great Barrier Reef.'

