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**President:**

P. E. T. Spencer, FIQS

**Secretary**

P. G. South, BA, ACI Arb, FBIM

**Publicity and Information Officer**

Mrs. M. B. Copple, BA

**Editor**

E. J. Hall, FRICS, FIQS

**Advertising Agents**

T. G. Scott & Son Limited,  
30-32 Southampton Street,  
London WC2E 7HR  
Telephone: 01-240 2032

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Telephone: 01-935 5577



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## Future editions

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*Front cover:*  
The Melbourne skyline—courtesy of J. H. Brodie.

## Important dates

18th June 1982—Annual General Meeting

## Comment

Spring is well in the air and with a new engagement in the family, I was musing, a day or two ago, on the marriage service. Apart from identifying the couple, it calls, at one point, "If any man knows just impediment why these two persons should not be joined in Holy Wedlock, let him speak, or forever hold his peace" There then follows that pregnant pause which must be the dread of every mother of the bride, which, when silence implies assent, draws out that sigh of relief than can be heard clear across the nave. This most mind focussing event in the ceremony comes too late, for any 'just cause' must be so dramatic as to deter any victim from ever braving the act of marriage ever again.

In a way, the analogy could be applied to the merger talks going on with the RICS, when they were embarrassingly brought to a halt last time. It was on the 24th February that the two Presidents sat together, with their advisers, in the Stirling Room at Great George Street, amid coffee and biscuits, to deliver a free and frank discussion with the ladies and gentlemen of the Press. The report of that Conference was delivered with commendable speed to the Members of Council and Branch Chairman and appears elsewhere in this issue for the benefit of the membership as a whole.

Although there is still much to be done the ground covered already is considerable and on timetable. The next stage is under way when Branches can invite the various members of our negotiating team to speak and ply them with questions, no matter how embarrassing. Now is the time for the acid comment, the deep questioning, the parry and thrust, for the fact versus the opinion. The membership must be sure it knows the price of amalgamation for once it is done we cannot withdraw.

A good start has been made to build upon the experience of the last merger attempt. The membership is not being presented with a blue book and a take it or leave it choice. This time the membership is being kept aware of the offer. There is little that our negotiations can change so that take it or leave it is very much still there but the RICS has changed considerably and presumably it could be influenced to change even more from the inside. Let us therefore be sure we know what it is we are going into. There are different rules to follow; such things as producing copies of clients' accounts for scrutiny, impending compulsory indemnity insurance, different representational rules, mid-career training and continued professional training. There is also the obverse of the coin too for there is much more extra curricula opportunities with the sports and societies, services to members and all the other facilities due largely to their sheer size. The boxing syndrome of a good big 'un versus a good little 'un is as much a law with the professional societies.

There is much to talk about, fellow members, and indeed it may be interesting to hear from those holding dual membership. The Presidents avowed that the number was unknown, and whilst that may be so, the very fact that they are there at all must indicate that we were offering something they could not have with the RICS.

It is not yet 'make up your mind' time even if the Spring in the air engendered the thoughts around the suggested change. If there is 'just cause or impediment' let it be known now, for as we know with a marriage, once tied, is 'until death do us part'.