Forty years! In July 1966, the Library and Information Technology Association (LITA) was officially born at the American Library Association (ALA) Annual Conference in New York as the Information Science and Automation Division (ISAD). It was Bastille Day, and I’m sure for those who had worked so hard to create this new organization that it probably seemed like a revolution, a new day. The organizational meeting held that day attracted “several hundred people.” Imagine!

I’ve mentioned it before, I know, but the history of the first twenty-five years of LITA is intriguing reading and well worth an investment of your time. Stephen R. Salmon’s article “LITA’s First Twenty-Five Years: A Brief History” (www.lita.org/ala/lita/aboutlita/org/1st25years.htm) offers an interesting look back in time. Any technology organization that has been in existence for forty or more years has seen a lot of changes and adapted over time to a new environment and new technologies. There is no other choice.

Someone (who, I don’t remember; I’d gladly attribute the quote if I did) once told me that library automation began with the electric eraser. I’m sure that many of you have neither seen an electric eraser, nor can you probably imagine its purpose. Ask around. I’m sure there are staff in your organization who do remember using it. There may even be one hidden somewhere in your library. A quick search of the Web even finds cordless, rechargeable electric erasers today in drafting and art supply stores.

The 1960s, as LITA was born, was still the era of the big mainframe systems and not-so-common programming languages. Machine Readable Cataloging (MARC) was born and OCLC conceived. The 1970s saw the introduction of minicomputer systems. Digital Equipment Corporation introduced the VAX, a 32-bit platform, in 1976. The roots of many of our current integrated library systems reach back to this decade. The 1980s saw the introduction of the IBM personal computer and the Apple Macintosh. The graphical interface became the norm or at least the one to imitate. The 1990s saw a shift away from hardware to communication and access as the Web was unveiled and began to give life to the Internet bubble. The new millennium began with Y2K. The Web predomi-