UK SERIALS GROUP SERIALS ROADSHOW

Margaret E. Graham

In the July 1990 issue of Serials, Margaret Graham reported on an innovative programme of activity by the Group in some UK library schools - the Travelling Workshop. This article aims to bring members up to date on the current status of the programme.

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To recap on the first report, the idea of a UKSG Travelling Workshop was first suggested within the Committee some years ago, as a means of promoting knowledge and information about serials to a wider audience. In fact, the 'workshop' was the idea of John Merriman, who will be familiar to many readers. In the first instance, it was decided that the target of the Workshops should be library school students, since few library and information studies courses dealt with serials to any great extent. Following discussions with two Heads of Library School late in 1989, the format initially set up was that a team of three speakers - representing the publisher, the serials agent and the library - and, optionally, a speaker from the British Library Document Supply Centre, would go to a library school to make a presentation to a group of students. Loughborough University, Newcastle upon Tyne Polytechnic (now University of Northumbria at Newcastle) and Manchester Polytechnic (now Manchester Metropolitan University) provided venues in the pilot 1989/90 academic year. Feedback from students and staff at the three schools was sufficiently positive that the Group decided to continue supporting the programme into the next academic year. Wider publicity was carried out resulting in two more schools running the Workshop that year. By 1992/93 nine library schools (out of the total of sixteen) provided venues. The Travelling Workshop - now renamed Serials Roadshow - has become an established programme of activity for the Education Working Group of the UKSG as well as a routine feature of some academic courses.

The format involving the three core speakers has proved to be very successful. Apart from in the first two years, no school has opted to take the BLDSC presentation, perhaps because the DSC is covered elsewhere in the syllabus. In the 1991/92 academic year, the binder was added to the programme, as a second optional presentation, and three schools regularly include it in their Roadshows.

The Roadshow is designed to be flexible, fitting in to particular timetables as considered appropriate by the course leaders concerned. The normal pattern that has been established is three (or four) half-hour presentations followed by a panel discussion (or question and answer session) which may last up to 30 minutes. An outline of the syllabus and a typical programme are provided. Continual monitoring of the Roadshows, through student evaluation forms, is undertaken and modifications have been made as a result.

For example, the name change to 'Serials Roadshow' came about through student feedback. It seems that the term 'Workshop' led many students to believe that the session would be more interactive, involving greater participation by them, than proved to be the case. Serials Roadshow was eventually chosen as the new name and we feel it reflects better the nature of the event, viz. 'Have-seminar-will-travel'.

A member of the UKSG Education Working Group chairs each Roadshow and, in some instances, doubles up as one of the speakers. The EWG representative acts as another check on the outcome of the Roadshow and their views are also acted upon. Such feedback led us to introduce a morning Roadshow in 1992/93. It has not been possible to do this in all venues due to timetable and other constraints, but where it has been done, response has been very favourable. Other spin-offs have included better attendance and improvements in the attention-span and responsiveness of the students.

Another problem that emerged was a combination of the time restriction on each presentation and the variability in the backgrounds of the speakers. As a consequence, the EWG decided to draw up a set of handouts which would support each of the three core speakers. These were named *The work of the publisher, The work of the subscription agent,* and *The work of the librarian.* Individual speakers are then able to put their own stamp on their presentation, talking about serials from their own work experience, without feeling compelled to cover *all* aspects of serials which fall within their remit.

The Roadshows are provided 'free' to library schools. All speakers give up their time freely to the Roadshow and the UKSG reimburses them for travelling and subsistence expenses. All speakers are encouraged to provide handouts for the students, supplementing or supporting their presentations. Handouts should normally incorporate the UKSG logo, which may be obtained from the Group's Administrator (address below). A typing service is also available. Handouts, OHTs, slides, etc, should be of the highest quality. The UKSG can provide guidelines, as well as assistance in their production. Speakers may distribute appropriate promotional material concerning their

organisations. All students receive a pack of information about the Roadshow, including short biographical notes on the speakers; standard handouts for the three core speakers (which have been drawn up, by the Education Working Group, to complement individual presentations); information about the UKSG, the Association of Subscription Agents and other relevant bodies; and information about student sponsorships.

Regular delegates at the UKSG annual conferences may be aware of the extent of student sponsorships provided by the Group. Normally about six places are offered to students. Reasonable travelling expenses are also reimbursed. Strong interest in attending the conference is often aroused as a result of the Roadshows and over the past few years there has been no difficulty in filling these sponsored places. In return for the sponsorship, the students are asked to write a report on the conference and to offer suggestions for any improvements to content, social activities, and so on. It is gratifying that some students actively seek jobs in the serials field after leaving library school and return as ordinary delegates to the conference.

The work involved in the organisation and execution of eight or nine Roadshows a year is time-consuming, yet very worthwhile and rewarding. Every effort is made to maintain the high standards that many have come to expect of UKSG activities. Many people take part in the Roadshow programme - the EWG members, the UKSG Administration, the library school personnel, and the speakers. Without the support of the membership, the Roadshow would be a failure. I have seldom had a refusal from any member of the Group when approached as a speaker, and there have also been some volunteers! Never has anyone refused to do subsequent Roadshows (although work commitments may intervene). This response from speakers reflects well the professional, caring attitude of many members of the Group and their support of its educational role. My thanks to everyone for making the Serials Roadshow a success. Offers of further assistance will be gratefully received...

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Margaret Croucher, British Library Research & Development Department
Margaret Graham, University of Northumbria at Newcastle
Richard Hodson, Blackwell's Periodicals Division
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Richard Steele, Taylor & Francis Ltd

UK Serials Group Serials Roadshow

Outline Syllabus

The following syllabus is provided as a guideline; it is illustrative rather than prescriptive. The content of the presentation will depend on the experience and background of the individual.

1. **Publisher**   Aspects of the publishing of serials from the initial idea through the editorial process, to production, sales and marketing. Topics covered might include: the process of publishing a new serial; differences between book and serial publishing; the economics of publishing; the impact of IT; and, the future of publishing.
2. **Serials Agent**   The role of the serials agent in the information chain, covering the range of services which may be offered; the benefits of using an agent to both publisher and librarian; the impact of IT; and the growth of value-added services such as EDI, consolidation and electronic current contents/document delivery services.
3. **Librarian**   Collection development and management of the serials collection in the library, including the selection/deselection process; acquisition methods; budgeting & financial control; impact of IT and other technological developments such as networking; and, the future of the serial as an information resource.
4. **Binder** (Optional)   The preservation and conservation of serials; and the economics of binding.
5. **BL Document Supply Centre** (Optional)   The role of BLDSC in document supply and managing serials in the local context.

The Roadshow Programme

A typical pattern which has been adopted (for a morning session) is as follows:

10.00 - 10.05	Introduction
10.05 - 10.40	The Publisher
10.40 - 11.15	The Serials Agent
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.05	The Librarian
12.05 - 12.45	Panel Discussion (question-and-answer session)

(N.B. If the fourth, optional, speaker is requested then the programme would be amended to insert the Binder or BLDSC speaker after the Librarian. The Panel Discussion would be reduced, finishing by 13.00. An afternoon session would follow a similar pattern, commencing at 14.00 hrs and finishing by 17.00 hrs.)