



## Editorial

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To organise a successful conference is a daunting task but when it is international it is doubly daunting. I think that all concerned with the Third European Serials Conference and Exhibition should feel very pleased with the results of their labours.

The venue was perfect. Held in the elegant and peaceful surroundings of Trinity College, delegates wishing to enjoy the many attractions of Dublin had only to step outside the gates to find themselves in the heart of this delightful, friendly city. The city fathers in their wisdom decided (with one exception) that glass skyscrapers were not appropriate, so the architectural monstrosities that bedevil modern cities have been avoided.

When the UKSG was founded nearly twenty years ago, we had no idea that eventually other groupss would spring up in all parts of the world. The trend was started by the North American Serials Interest Group; others followed, and in Europe, in particular, we have at present seven very active groups.

At an informal discussion group at ESC3, we pondered the role of the groups and wondered why some countries like Germany had failed to form one. In the UK and the USA we are fortunate to have a strong involvement from the trade - publishers, subscription agents, binders, etc. It is important that no particular section of the membership becomes dominant because the fundamental tenet has always been that a serials group should represent all those in the serials information chain. It is recognised that some countries do not have a strong publishing fraternity, nor are there many subscription agents, so there will be a preponderance of librarians and information specialists in the group.

It is quite easy to say, "we would like to form a serials group", but to make it succeed is another matter. It is essential to have a hard core of dedicated people who have the time, imagination and motivation to make it work. Without this driving force it is unlikely to succeed. More and more the groups are becoming involved in information transfer which obviates the traditional paper journal. Much conference time is now being taken up addressing these rapid changes. Indeed, bound into this issue of Serials is David Brown's summary of his survey 'The Future of Electronic Information Intermediaries', a report which has been eagerly awaited, not least by the subscription agents. The full version is available at £35 for members and £120 for non-members.

As our next issue is not until March, it is appropriate to once again mention the Annual General Meeting to be held at the 20th Anniversary Conference in Edinburgh. As we pass another milestone in the history of the Group, it is hoped that in 1997 more members will come forward to stand for election to the Committee. New blood is needed, and working on the main Committee and various subcommittees is interesting and rewarding (not financially, of course). So do please stand for election if you think you would enjoy being involved in the running of a growing and very successful organisation, heading, like everything else, for the millennium.

The 20th Anniversary Conference will be special, and we will celebrate in appropriate style. Hope to see you there.