



Editorial

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We hope you approve of the new up-to-date cover. Much thought during 1998 was given to the design of *Serials*: page layout, etc. Eventually, it was concluded that change for the sake of change was not sensible and that which is working well should be left alone. However, to prove we are not completely averse to change, we have redesigned the cover only, so will not be entering for the 'Worst serial title change of the year' award.

The March issue is an appropriate time to look back at the UKSG's activities during the previous year. It has always been our policy to make the UKSG an affordable association even though all our members are organisations. The membership fee for 1998 was £59; the full residential conference fee £299.63, including VAT – very reasonable in today's terms. The seminars are seen as an important training ground and again we have a standard fee of between £75 and £100 (depending on venue) for a one-day course. A new facility which we now offer to members is payment by credit card, and this has already proved to be very popular. Roadshows that we take to the schools of librarianship are free and we have to admit to being disappointed at the lack of interest recently (with a few notable exceptions), and in two cases an embarrassingly poor attendance. However, this is one hard furrow we intend to continue to plough in the belief that the UKSG has a great deal to offer students.

After a busy year, the Group has an end of year surplus of just over £26,000, so we are financially in very good shape.

Working with other organisations has been high on the agenda. On behalf of JISC and in co-

operation with ALPSP, we helped to organise the highly topical 'NESLI publishers' forum' in April. This was followed later in the month by involvement with UKOLUG in the seminar: 'Making the most of e-journals'.

It has been suggested that the UKSG is biased towards academic libraries. We were therefore pleased to organise a joint seminar with TFPL in November covering 'Electronic journals in the corporate environment', aimed specifically at corporate librarians, subscription agents, publishers and other intermediaries. It was extremely well supported. Other seminars covered 'Serials administration and management' and 'A day in the life of a librarian'.

Another joint venture initiated in 1998 is with the Library Association and will see publication during 1999 of the *Serials Management Handbook: a practical guide to print and electronic serials management*.

There has been activity on the administration front. A more sophisticated conference management software system has been selected, installed and tailored to the Group's needs. This will assist with the volume of work involved in organising a large conference, and is also being used to manage the increasing membership.

We have also created a database of speakers with specialised knowledge, which should prove very useful when organising future events. Anyone who would like to be considered for inclusion in the list should contact Jill Tolson.

The UKSG Web site continues to expand, providing up to date information about UKSG activities. Usage statistics are quite impressive. We also had a stand at the Online exhibition, where we were probably unique in that we did

not have a screen – but the brochures and human contacts were appreciated!

Our 'People' column continues to track career paths and changes in the serials world where volatility seems to be the name of the game. While on the subject of people, I must mention Arlene Moore Sievers of Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio, who for ten years was our eyes and ears in the USA, reporting on the scene in her regular column 'News from North America'. Unfortunately, Arlene has decided other pressures do not allow her to continue her column. We are looking for a

worthy successor and thank her for all her efforts and support over the years.

We are also sorry to lose another great stalwart of the UKSG who would probably not like to remember how many years she has been associated with the Group. I refer to Margaret Graham, University of Northumbria at Newcastle. Margaret contributed in many ways, but most notably to our education programme and in particular the Roadshows. Her new job takes her away from the serials world. We congratulate her on her new appointment, but we will sadly miss her.