

Editorial



Hazel Woodward and Helen Henderson

It is a privilege for us to be asked to edit *Serials* – the journal of the serials community. To follow in John Merriman's footsteps is a great honour, and probably why it needs two of us to do this.

To introduce ourselves: Hazel is well known to the international academic library community having been involved in serials and electronic publishing initiatives and research at Loughborough University for many years, and currently University Librarian at Cranfield and Director of the University Press. She is also a former Chair of UKSG, for those of you with long memories.

Helen is originally a geologist who comes from the special library and publishing part of the community, having had numerous jobs ranging from Dewey classification at BNB in the 70s, through founding of the IME library software company in the 80s, to electronic publishing consultancy in the 90s. Like Hazel she has been very involved in many professional organisations, including having been Executive Secretary of EUSIDIC for many years. Interestingly, Helen and Hazel are both alumni of Leeds Polytechnic Department of Library & Information Studies, but never crossed paths at that time.

We take over the journal in exciting and unstable times. The recent series of acquisitions in

the publishing business may pose a threat to libraries by putting the significant journals in the hands of very few publishers. The merger of ingenta and CatchWord creates one infomediary, which handles the majority of the journal and article business in Europe. However, as always happens when the big become bigger, smaller competitors start to spring up, and provide more targeted and specialised services. The SPARC initiative is one example of these, and we will be including articles for and against in our next issues.

One of our biggest challenges will be to keep *Serials* up to date in terms of its creation and distribution technology. It is now available on CatchWord, and we are enhancing the links to this from the UKSG website. The readership is also becoming increasingly international, so we also expect to be providing the journal separately from the UKSG subscription, especially for non-UK organisations (it will still be bundled for members). In addition we would like to provide an electronic supplement to *Serials*, which will provide some of the more time critical information currently published, and to be able to add more breaking news and analysis.

Our readership is diverse, covering the whole of the serials community, and we hope to remain

a medium that brings together all these disparate organisations and provides a forum for discussion and consensus. We are, therefore, looking to expand the editorial board, adding more international figures and increasing the scope. *Serials* has always been lucky to have an active and involved board and we are fortunate to have Dennis Pilling as Deputy Editor to provide support and continuity. We would like to take this opportunity to thank those who are leaving the Editorial Board, especially Fiona Tipple for her dedication to the News and Diary pages over many years, and Mike Markwith for his views from North America. With this issue we welcome David Fritsch, Cindy

Hepfer, Becky Lenzini and Judy Luther from the USA, Gertraud Griepke from Germany, Zuzana Helinsky from Sweden and Asuncion Treor from Spain.

We hope you find the papers in this issue, our first as editors, both informative and stimulating. Many of the papers are based on presentations from UKSG conferences and seminars over the past few months and represent a wide cross-section of the interests of our members. *Serials* has a large readership and we are always interested in your ideas or offers of papers. Please let us know what you think. We are always on email, and you will also see one or both of us at the main meetings during the year.
