

Editorial



'Who's that lady?'

We are delighted that this issue of *Serials* contains the majority of the presentations from the UKSG's highly successful e-book seminar held at the British Library in November 2005 and entitled 'E-book: the new serial?'. The seminar attracted large numbers of both librarians and publishers and sought to address such issues as: "When is the e-books market going to take off?", "What are the barriers for libraries acquiring and marketing e-monographs and e-textbooks?", "What are the best purchasing models for libraries?", and "What are library consortia doing in this area?" Andrew Wheatcroft from the University of Stirling starts the proceedings with a fascinating look at what the future might hold for e-book publishers. Warren Holder gives the Canadian librarians' view. It is impressive to discover that the University of Toronto already has some 54,000 e-book titles from around 250 publishers! The knowledgeable Linda Bennett from Gold Leaf looks at how we might manage and market the e-book phenomenon and Peter Shepherd takes us through the all-important COUNTER Code of Practice for books and reference works. On a related topic, the Key Issue is SUSHI (Standardized Usage Statistics Harvesting Initiative). To complete the dominance

of the e-book theme in this issue we have a separate general article from David Ball on innovative models for procuring e-books, and Jill Russell updates us on the EThOS project which is developing a UK service for electronic theses.

Serials is a microcosm of the journal publishing industry, and even with only one title we still have to deal with the same issues and problems that face the biggest publishers. In addition, being the journal of the journals industry, we always have to follow 'best practice'. So, having taken the primary publication medium to electronic-only, we have to make sure that there is a secure archive. We have done this by signing a contract with Portico to archive *Serials*. Portico, which is supported by The Andrew W Mellon Foundation, Ithaca, The Library of Congress and JSTOR, will be the subject of an article in a future issue. They have an interesting business model which includes annual payments from both publishers and libraries. Still on the topic of archiving, a recent UK LOCKSS pilot is the subject of a paper in this issue by Helen Hockx-Yu, and the latest news is that 24 UK libraries are taking part in the UK pilot, which started in February 2006.

Another problem that faces both publishers and libraries is the journal supply chain, and another pilot has just started – based in the UK, involving Swets, the British Library, HighWire publishers and Ringgold – to look in detail at the issues in this supply chain (www.journalsupplychain.org) which cause such problems at the end of each year, as well documented by UKSG's listserv, *lis-e-journals*, and also when titles change hands. Readers will also be interested to learn that UKSG has just formed a working group chaired by Nancy Buckley to see how the transition of a title from one

publisher to another can be made easier for libraries, agents and publishers.

We hope you enjoy the fascinating profile of Katina Strauch, the founder of the Charleston conference, in this issue. Your Editors' picture above was taken in glorious Savannah on their way to the last Charleston meeting. We look forward to meeting many of our readers at the next UKSG conference at the University of Warwick in April and catching up with all the latest developments and news from the serials industry.