

Editorial

Your Eds being kept in line by UKSG Committee members (L to R, back row: Ross MacIntyre, Lesley Crawshaw, Bev Acreman and Chair, Tony Kidd; front row: editors Helen Henderson and Hazel Woodward with (centre) new Education Officer, Kate Price)



The current economic crisis is impacting upon all members of the information community and there is real pain being felt by publishers, vendors and libraries across the world. Most *Serials* readers will be familiar with the statements issued by ICOLC (International Coalition of Library Consortia) and the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) in the US on the topic, and the subsequent announcements by a number of publishers, including UKSG, that they are holding next year's subscription at the current rate. To further inform thinking and debate on how our industry can cope with these economic problems, UKSG asked Jill Taylor-Roe from Newcastle University to speak at the 2009 Conference on the topic of big deals and their sustainability. Jill decided to conduct a survey of UK academic libraries to inform her conference presentation and the paper based on that is published in this issue. It addresses such questions as: how have libraries managed the problems of currency exchange; how much of the acquisitions budget is spent on big deals; and, whether libraries are seriously considering cancelling big deals due to budget pressures. It makes very interesting reading. Kathy Perry of VIVA (the Virtual Library of Virginia) also presents survey data in her paper. Kathy surveyed ICOLC members, asking them about current and future priorities for their consortia. Unsurprisingly, budget management featured as a top concern.

Another excellent presentation was given at the Conference by Lorraine Estelle, CEO of JISC Collections (and subject of a recent *Serials* Profile). Lorraine spoke about the findings of the JISC national e-book observatory project which has

distilled over 48,000 survey responses and analysed raw server logs from over 100 university libraries to see how users discover, navigate and use e-books. One of the more spectacular findings of the project was that making electronic copies of books freely available to staff and students via the library had no impact on either hard-copy sales or library circulation of the printed copy. Food for thought for all of us.

Claire Duddy from London Metropolitan University was the winner of an open competition to present at the Conference the student's view of information discovery in the Google generation. Her enlightening presentation, featured in this issue, also earned her a laptop presented by Elsevier (the picture of the presentation features in the 'Students' view' in this issue). Breakout sessions on e-books and library systems, which dealt with practical problems, are written up here for those who couldn't fight their way into those sessions. Those well-known practitioners Steve Sharp, Sarah Thompson, Graham Stone and Helle Lauridsen share their thoughts and experience. Check out the view of the students who won the opportunity to attend the conference from around the world, and some of the pictures from Torquay. For those who did not make it to this year's Conference we are repeating a couple of rounds of the quiz, brought to you by quizmaster Cliff Morgan.

Jan Velterop and Ahmed Hindawi gave very different views of the open access publishing world and Jay Katzen explained the whys and hows of research assessment. These are all written up in this issue.

Our new Chair, Tony Kidd of Glasgow University, was elected during the Conference and is profiled by our roving reporters at NASIG, Dan Tonkery and Bev Acreman.

Our recent reviews of next-generation catalogues continue with Rachel Ellis sharing her experience of E-LIB Bremen. These have been so popular that we are starting a 'Reviews' section and hope to feature online hosting platforms in the next issue.

The Conference moves back to Edinburgh next year, in the new International Conference Centre from 12–14 April 2010. It will be difficult to keep up the standards of this year's conference, but we are sure UKSG will excel again.

Hazel & Helen



Dr Hazel Woodward MBE
Your Editors celebrating in appropriate style