

Editorial



An obituary in the June issue of *What's Brewing, the newspaper of the Campaign for Real Ale*, described John Merriman as 'a true enabler'. That was in the context of his work as campaigner for the North Oxfordshire branch of CAMRA. In this issue of *Serials*, we are publishing tributes to John Merriman, who died earlier this year, and in reading them we are sure that you will agree that he was indeed a true enabler in many aspects of his life, and in our case as the founding father of UKSG. We feel honoured to be following in his footsteps in editing this journal, and raise a toast (not in beer but in wine) to his memory.

John Merriman was not only the founder of this journal, but also of the UKSG Annual Conference. Ill health meant that he did not attend this year's very successful conference in Harrogate, but we are sure that he would have been delighted to see the tradition continue. The venue was wonderful, the staff were helpful and an excellent programme provided much inspiration and food for thought. In this issue of *Serials*, we hope to bring you a flavour of the event. Our 'students' view' provides a lively overview of not only the stimulating plenary sessions and informative breakout sessions, but also some snapshots of the social events. There are no prizes for guessing which one of your co-editors was snapped wearing flashing bunny ears!

Philip E Bourne has provided a summary of his plenary presentation that took us 'beyond the PDF' and considered how publication could become an integrated part of the process of conducting scientific research. Another plenary session focused on the recent studies into how access to scholarly communications might be improved. The three speakers have provided us with summaries of their presentations. Ian Rowlands focused on gaps in access and Mark Ware on the models to improve

access, and finally but not least, Laura Cox looked at the barriers to e-only provision and how they might be overcome.

Other articles in this issue include Bernie Folan from SAGE discussing the provision of information services for researchers in the social sciences and Karen Coyle explaining the evolution of library metadata from the card to the internet and ultimately how this will enable libraries to provide information in the spaces preferred by their users. Angela Conyers and Jo Lambert tell us about the work they have been doing in creating the Journal Usage Statistics Portal, a one-stop shop to provide UK academic libraries with COUNTER-compliant data.

In the digital environment the word 'open' has a number of connotations. Sal Cooke from JISC Techdis discusses how assistive technology can really open access for all. Lorraine was fortunate enough to hear Sal talk about this subject last year, and was made aware of the problems that we as information professionals can so easily cause for those with disabilities.

Sarah Bartlett and Bill Hughes describe how Linked Data offers the opportunity to categorize the relationships between works as diverse as Homer's *Odyssey* and James Joyce's *Ulysses* and then make them openly available and easily discoverable. An issue that was new to us is how current libel law in England and Wales can restrict the freedom of scientists and academics in reporting scientific research, and we recommend Síle Lane's fascinating article on this subject.

We have two articles in this issue which feature the work of subscription agents and intermediaries, and Sarah Durrant discusses how they help support librarians in a complex digital environment. David Main of Swets considers the role of

subscription agents in the third-generation business model. Melinda Kenneway also addresses the question of business models in a changing world and asks if publishers and libraries are on the same page when it comes to pricing. She argues that publishers need to innovate and match the price charged for content to the needs of an individual institution.

Our Profile section is always popular, and in this issue we feature Alicia Wise, Director of Universal Access at Elsevier, who talks about an unusual and fascinating career and much else – including her views on the dynamics between libraries and publishers and life with two cats and four chickens. We also have pleasure in introducing two new members of our editorial board: Gültekin Gürdal from the Izmir High Institute of Technology

in Turkey and Lori Carlin from the American Institute of Physics.

Finally, you may recall that in the last issue we announced a competition to find a new name for this journal and were delighted by the enthusiastic response. Some of your suggestions were very amusing – but we had to draw the line at *Serial Killers*. The winning suggestion came from Jane Harvell from University of Sussex Library. So it is with some sadness that we will be saying a fond farewell to *Serials* at the end of this year and volume, but will be looking forward to starting 2012 under our new name, *Insights: connecting the knowledge community*.

Steve & Lorraine