



association for literary  
& linguistic computing

Founded 1973 UK registered charity number 2799

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## Association for Literary and Linguistic Computing

### Chair's Report 2000-2001

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#### Communications

The **journal** continues to flourish, and the association's finances to benefit accordingly. The Committee needs to give further attention, however, to the continuing slow decline in membership levels. The new publicity brochure may help with this, although there has so far been no systematic exploitation of its potential. A number of ideas are under discussion, however. A database of conference attendees is now under development, and discussions are in progress with OUP with a view to obtaining a regular electronic feed of membership data, so that action can be taken to prompt late or absent subscribers from previous years. The introduction of direct debit or standing order payment of subscriptions remains a key objective.

The redevelopment of the **Association web site** (at [www.allc.org](http://www.allc.org)) was completed in Spring 2002, and the new materials added. This includes details of the Association's more recent initiatives: student prize; workshop programme; project support programme. The possible change of domain-name provider remains under review, so as to avoid the irritation of being 'stuck' with the 'allc.org' url wherever one moves in the site.

There has been some delay in work on the **Association archives**, owing to institutional reorganisation at King's College London. Work is due to resume in early autumn 2002.

The Chair and Secretary are planning a **mailing to members** soon after the Tübingen meetings. The opportunity will be taken to enclose a copy of the new brochure, to invite members to visit the Association web site and to bring the current Association initiatives to their attention.

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#### Conferences

As part of the planning and preparations for the **2002 Conference**, the Chair of the Programme Committee, David Robey, and the Association Chair, Harold Short, visited Pisa and Tübingen in September 2001 for meetings respectively with the ALLC President, Antonio Zampolli, and the 2002 Local Organiser, Wilhelm Ott. These discussions were a follow-up to the extensive discussions of the 2002 Conference in the Committee meetings of Dec 2000 in Finland and June 2001 in New York, and included detailed planning of a 'Road Map' meeting which was held in Pisa alongside the April 2002 meeting of the Committee.

The Road Map meeting involved the Committee members and a small number of

additional participants, including ACH members of the Programme Committee for the 2002 Conference, the local organiser of the Conference, Wilhelm Ott, and the previous Chair of ALLC, Susan Hockey. Information about the Road Map meeting has been published on the ALLC web site, in the Publications and Reports section.

The main purpose of the Road Map meeting was to assist in developing the theme of the 2002 Conference - 'New Directions in Humanities Computing'. Participants in the meeting will be assessing the 'new directions' agenda of papers presented in the Conference, and will form the panel for the Conference's closing plenary Round Table on New Directions. The Committee will also consider whether the work arising from the Road Map meeting and the 'new directions' themes that emerge in the Conference will form the basis for a publication, which might take the form of a 'survey of the state of the art' in humanities computing.

Discussions are continuing with the new ACH President, John Unsworth, on the **conference protocols**. The Chair of the 2001 Programme Committee, John Lavagnino, submitted a report from that Committee on procedural matters. This has been followed up in face-to-face discussions. Proposals will be put to the Tübingen Committee meeting for a small joint working party to be established to review the work done so far, and to make concrete proposals to the ALLC Committee and the ACH Council.

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### **Busa Award**

Our congratulations go to Professor John Burrows, Emeritus Professor at the University of Newcastle, New South Wales, on his selection as the second recipient of the Roberto Busa Award. Professor Burrows will give his Busa Award paper at the New York conference. At this conference the selection panel for the 2004 Busa Award will be appointed.

### **Bursary scheme**

The bursary scheme continues to be very successful, with the maximum number of 5 awards being made in 2001, for the third year in succession. The encouragement and opportunities this gives to the young scholars who win the awards should be seen as a valuable contribution to the future development of humanities computing scholarship; at the same time the vitality and new ideas which these young scholars bring is of great benefit to the conferences and to the Association more generally.

### **Workshop programme**

The Association has now initiated this programme, whose goal is to promote awareness and enhance skills in the application of computing techniques and digital resources in humanistic research and teaching. Following the initial workshop at the University of Macedonia, in Thessaloniki, Greece in May 2000, further events are now in planning for 2001-2002 at Charles University, Prague and the University of Joensuu, Finland. This falls within the scheme, under which the Committee has agreed to support make up to two workshops per year, to a maximum of 2,500 GBP per workshop.

### **Postgraduate competition**

The Committee is now ready to institute an annual 'postgraduate prize'

competition. The deadline for submission for the first competition will be 30 September 2001, and the first prize-winner will be announced formally at the 2002 conference.

### **Special Projects fund**

The Committee has also drawn up procedures for an annual Project Support Programme under which Association members will be able to apply for financial support for small projects.

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(Details of all the Association initiatives and programmes are available on its web site.)

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### **Computing in humanities education**

The ALLC was a formal partner in the EU-funded 'thematic network project' ACO\*HUM (Advanced Computing in the Humanities), and several members of the ALLC Committee were members of the project's Textual Scholarship and Humanities Computing work group. The project came to an end in October 2000, but as part of its legacy the ALLC has an initial set of information about courses in European universities in which computing plays an important part, as well as useful information for prospective teachers of such courses and links to relevant resources. There are links to this information on the ALLC web site, and at its December meeting the Committee agreed to fund and otherwise support continuing activity in this area.

### **Association communications**

*Association web site:* efforts have been made to bring the web site up to date and to make it more complete. However, there is a good deal of planned work still outstanding, and new ideas and suggestions are put forward with some regularity; these are always welcome.

*Email addresses:* it is still not possible to communicate with ALLC members by email. A written request sent to all members fell on largely deaf ears. However, OUP has agreed to include a space for email address on the journal renewal forms, so it may be possible in the future to use this medium.

### **Text Encoding Initiative**

The TEI Consortium is now established, and is beginning to attract members. This means that the work of the Transition Team is coming to an end. At its December 2000 meeting, the Committee recorded its appreciation for the work of the Transition Team, and in particular to Prof Antonio Zampolli, who has been the ALLC representative on the Team. Prof Zampolli is the first Vice-President of the newly established consortium. The TEI continues to have an important role in humanities computing developments, and the Association will continue to take a close interest in the work and growth of the Consortium.

### **Officers and Committee**

An 'inter-conference' meeting of the Committee was held at Jyv"skyl", Finland, in

December 2000. Once again, this was felt to be very productive, particularly in carrying out some early planning and discussion of the 2002 conference in Tübingen. The Committee is keen that this conference should have an emphasis on future directions. The Committee now plans a further inter-conference meeting for December 2001.

I would like to record my thanks to the Officers of the ALLC and to all the Committee members for their support and for their commitment to the work of the Association.

Harold  
June 2001

Short



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