



association for literary
& linguistic computing

Founded 1973 UK registered charity number 2790

Association for Literary and Linguistic Computing

Chair's Report 2001-2002

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) 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.

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.

Association Activities & Initiatives

The **TEI Consortium** has conducted its first elections, and now has fully constituted Board and Council. The Consortium is now well established, and has been reasonably successful in recruiting members. It is, however, behind the target number required for financial security.

Formal announcements of the **Student Prize, Workshops Programme and Project Support** initiatives have been delayed, but will be made on Humanist and elsewhere, immediately following the Tübingen meetings.

Recent discussions on Humanist and elsewhere have highlighted again a number of issues which the Committee has discussed from time to time, and which may warrant further discussion and action. One is the issue of **multi-linguality**, and the need for the strong Europe-wide traditions of the Association to be strengthened and redeveloped, and for the Association to show greater interest and involvement in work outside Europe and N America. Another is the increasing range of relevant activity in the '**cultural heritage**' sector, in wider standards-making activities and in the partly related initiatives in electronic publishing and in the **digital library** arena more generally. Not only are humanistic scholars increasingly involved in these initiatives, but they in turn are already affecting the practice of scholarship and will clearly be of even greater importance in the future.

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