

## EDITORIAL

### *Editors' news*

I am pleased to welcome two new Associate Editors to the *Journal of Structural Geology* for 1993. James Evans (Utah State University, U.S.A.) began duties on 1 December 1992, and fills the place vacated when David Pollard steps down in June. Richard Norris (University of Otago, New Zealand) began on 1 February 1993. He is our first southern hemisphere editor, and marks the increase from six to seven Journal editors.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank David Pollard for his 3½ years as an Associate Editor of *JSG*. It is the Journal's loss that David has had to relinquish his editorial activities, because of increased administrative commitments at Stanford. I shall miss his keen editing and personal support, but look forward to his continued involvement in the Journal, as a member of the Editorial Advisory Board.

Cees Passchier is currently in the process of moving from Utrecht to Mainz University in Germany, and will continue as an Associate Editor from there. His new address will appear on the Journal's cover pages, when appropriate.

The following page of photographs will allow readers to put faces to names for the Journal's current editorial team. The last page of editors' photographs appeared in Vol. 11, No. 1/2 (1989), which celebrated the Journal's 10th anniversary. It will be clear that there have been many changes and new faces since then, with only two of the 1989 faces the same.

### *Journal expansion and publication times*

Most readers of *JSG* will be aware of the recent expansions in numbers of pages and issues. This year we have increased to 12 issues p.a.; i.e. monthly. The decision was not taken lightly, as we are aware of concern in the academic community over proliferation and increasing sizes of scientific journals. However, we have quite simply received more and more high quality papers in regular and special issues. Expansion, and concomitant increases in number of editors, are inevitable unless the Journal were to change its policy regarding reviewing and acceptance of papers.

One consequence of my cautious approach to expansion is that the number of papers and pages ready for publication this year has measurably overtaken the pages estimated for the 1993 volume, more than a year ago. For journals in 'steady state', yearly estimates can be based on previous years. In *JSG*'s case, although it was already clear in February 1992 that we would have a large 'John Ramsay' special issue in 1993 (*The Geometry of Naturally Deformed Rocks*, Vol. 15, Nos 3–5), it

turned out larger than expected. What proved additionally unexpected was the continued increase in *regular* submissions throughout 1992 following the significant increase in 1991. These factors, plus the realization of a second special issue for autumn 1993, in honour of John Christie's 60th birthday, bring us to the current situation of more papers than available pages. It has been necessary to 'take stock' and find the best way to clear what could become a serious backlog.

One area for taking pride in recent years has been the Journal's ability to maintain consistently short production times of about 5 months or less, with only longer times following special issues. The inevitable consequence of increasing material awaiting publication is an increase in publication time for all papers; even longer for papers following special issues. I regret that this has been the case for the authors in this present *JSG* issue, and will be the case for several forthcoming issues. In order to reduce the queue for publication, the publisher has agreed to a modest increase above the scheduled number of pages for this year, and a significant increase of pages for 1994. By these means, we hope to prevent the perpetuation of a backlog, and to return to more acceptable production times. It is emphasized that this year has been particularly unusual, with its combination of the expansion in regular papers and two exceptional special issues. 1994 is anticipated to be a more normal year regarding special issues, although the increases in regular papers are expected to continue.

I wished to explain this situation frankly to readers and subscribers, for two reasons: lest this expansion be misunderstood as an expansion led by the publishers; and to forewarn of possible increases in subscription costs resulting from the increases in pages. Of constant concern to me, personally, is the fine balance between journal popularity and affordability. With so many personal as well as institutional subscribers, and the pressures of funding facing many institutions and their libraries, growth in size and cost may seem bad news. Yet it must surely be good news that this Journal is attracting increasing numbers of quality articles from around the world.

### *Reviewing of papers*

One of the greatest challenges to the editors of this Journal is to obtain consistently high-quality peer reviews of papers. We frequently find ourselves frustrated by walls of silence from potential reviewers, from difficulties of communication between continents, from field seasons, and so on. The creation of the "International Association of Structural/Tectonic Geologists", and particularly the International Directory produced in

1992, has provided some help in finding suitable reviewers, and in establishing reliable forms of communication. However, it seems that most of us editing for *JSG* find ourselves relying on a relatively small number of reliable reviewers, a significant proportion being personal friends and colleagues. Although we can be fortunate with reviewers unknown to us and chosen 'blind' from a reference list, we often have to go to extraordinary lengths chasing reviewers—and not just among referees outside our personal acquaintance, or on the other side of the globe!

Problems associated with reviewing manuscripts have been discussed at recent meetings of the Journal's Editorial Advisory Board. I hope to find some new ways to improve our review procedures and reduce reviewing time. After all, readers, authors and reviewers are the same people, so it should be in everyone's interests to have fast and effective reviewing of papers! Is it, perhaps, a sign of the pressures on time, and constant attention to personal productivity in many countries,

that the altruistic activity of reviewing manuscripts for others is increasingly pushed aside? With this in mind, I am interested in any ideas readers may have, which would help the editors with this important task. I would welcome hearing from anyone prepared to volunteer as a reliable reviewer for a list of topics, preferably with a telephone or fax number for fast communication. This may enable us to broaden our net and dilute the workload for our existing reliable but overworked reviewers.

I am sure that I speak for editors, authors and readers alike, in thanking all of you who have taken time and care to review and help improve papers for the *Journal of Structural Geology*. I know that it may seem a thankless task, but without consistent high-quality peer reviewing of papers, this Journal would be unable to maintain its present standards.

*Susan H. Treagus*

*Journal of Structural Geology* Editors, 1993



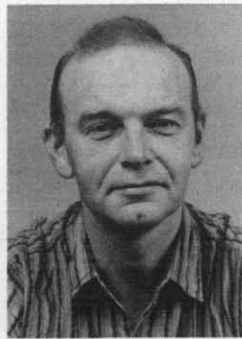
SUSAN TREAGUS



PETER HUDLESTON



DAVID POLLARD



RICHARD LISLE



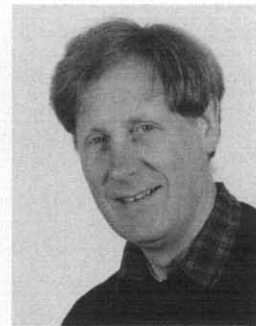
STEVEN WOJTAL



CEES PASSCHIER



JAMES EVANS



RICHARD NORRIS