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## Editorial

I write this while doing some field work along the San Andreas fault, near Parkfield, California. Some drilling delays give me a bit of time to finally write an editorial for the journal, which, as it happens, is my announcement that after 10 years with the journal, I am stepping down as chief editor. I began in 1992 when, as a complete surprise, Sue Treagus asked me to be an Associate Editor; I followed in her footsteps and became chief editor in 1998. The position has been highly rewarding, and I have enjoyed the opportunity to learn much and see papers from submission to completion.

From 1998 to the present, the journal has seen an increased number of submissions, to approximately 200 per year, and an increase in the diversity of the source of our papers. While the EU and North America are still important sources of the papers, we continue to get more papers from various countries, such as Brazil, China, India, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Norway, and other nations with strengthening efforts in structural geology. The journal has seen a shift in emphasis in the contributions it receives. Two notable trends include developments in brittle structures and mechanics, and the integration of geochronology and geobarometry in the analysis of ductile structures. We have had nine special issues, honoring a variety of outstanding workers in our field and covering a diversity of topics, and we have witnessed the transition to the electronic age of publishing. I have tried to manage the journal in the spirit set out by the late Paul Hancock and Sue Treagus, and I thank the Associate Editors who have worked with me: Tom Blenkinsop, Don Fisher, Joao Hippertt, Richard Lisle, Richard Norris, Cees Passchier, and Joe White. They have performed their duties with great care and ability.

I must also thank and acknowledge the efforts of Amy Hochberg, without whom the journal would not have functioned. Amy managed the day-to-day operations of the journal, and managed the various piles of manuscripts that I edited. The time of our service was punctuated by a variety of 'life things', including the birth of Amy's daughter, the birth of one of my daughters, the grief and distractions of the death of two graduate students working with me who died 7 months apart in 1998 and 1999, and the death of my father in 2002. All of these events cast a much needed healthy, and at times, melancholy, perspective on life, and through them all Amy managed the affairs of the journal so that we always got the issues out on time. Thank you Amy.

The most important part of a journal are its authors and reviewers, and to them we owe many thanks. While some

may find it hard to believe, editors do appreciate the time and effort it takes to create a paper. Many of our reviewers give dedicated and careful work to the papers they read, and without them the journal quality could not be sustained. I take great happiness in watching papers that start out a bit rough get published with the suggestions of professional and thorough reviews.

I also thank my family: my wife and colleague Susanne Janecke has been a clear-minded sounding board for many aspects of our professional lives, including the journal, and our daughters Erica and Karen never once disturbed a pile of JSG manuscripts in our house.

Sue Treagus was always willing to advise me on a variety of matters, and whose 12 years of being Chief Editor now astound me, and the Editorial Advisory Board and other dedicated contributors have provided excellent input at a variety of times.

I take as my proudest achievement one that, in the US at least, may have created the most controversy. The 20th anniversary issue of the journal, "Questions in Structural Geology", allowed authors to present ideas and concepts without some of the usual constraints of a scientific paper. This has led to healthy and vigorous discussions of some topics, and I hope more importantly, helped people learn. All too often we are not really forced to defend our thinking, but it is through that thinking that we often arrive at a better understanding of our work.

I have several concerns regarding the future of scientific journals and scientific information, and I will briefly discuss two. Changes in the delivery of information have been dramatic during my time with the journal, as have costs incurred to the consumers. As much of the world's economy slows at present, and university budgets are reduced, I hope (perhaps vainly) that our sources of information will be able to meet our demands at reasonable costs.

My second concern revolves around the institutional perspective of journal editing and reviewing. We increasingly see people decline to serve as editors, due to the lack of institutional support, and in some cases, institutional animosity for such work. This is due in large measure to the continued and increasing pressure to generate more grant dollars at our research and teaching institutions. Somewhat related to this is the disturbing concept that journal impact factors are in some cases used as a numerical metric for decisions surrounding tenure, promotion, and pay advancement. While publishing in an international journal is a wonderful goal, much excellent science is presented

elsewhere, and administrators who rely on such factors substitute precision for accuracy. We need to make it clear to our administrators that peer-reviewed science cannot be out-sourced.

In her final editorial, Sue Treagus ended with the advice that “The editor is always right”. To this, my parting words to authors, reviewers, and editors, when we begin to feel that

our papers and research are of the utmost importance, is to remember: “They are just rocks”.

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