

the biology community of the differing motives of societies and commercial publishers.

#### **SPARC EUROPE LAUNCH**

With the energetic support of various regional organizations, SPARC launched SPARC Europe in July 2001. By unanimous vote at its annual meeting, LIBER (the Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche) agreed to serve as SPARC's European umbrella organization. SPARC has been working with LIBER to create a SPARC Europe working group, develop a detailed activity plan, and support in other ways the new organization. We believe that SPARC Europe will be a powerful force to create change on a broader scale than ever before.

#### **SUPPORT FOR OUTSIDE INITIATIVES**

Stakeholder recognition of the desirability of change in scholarly communication has expanded dramatically in the past three years; this can easily be seen by viewing the more than 25,000 signatures on the Public Library of Science petition. SPARC is in contact with the Public Library of Science founders and will be able to support them as their needs develop.

SPARC was one of the early supporters of the Open Archives Initiative (OAI), which develops and promotes interoperability standards aiming to facilitate the efficient dissemination of content. SPARC believes that institutional infrastructures should be applied to development of a new model of scholarly repositories and services, and OAI fills this need. SPARC efforts will continue to encourage and facilitate this via support of discipline and institutional servers. Future areas in which SPARC might act include organizing, supporting, and/or publicizing discipline server projects and promoting deployment of institutional intellectual property rights policies.

#### **SPARC'S INTERNATIONAL MEMBERSHIP**

SPARC's members stay up-to-date on SPARC activities through SPARC's bimonthly *e-News* (<http://www.arl.org/sparc/core/index.asp?page=g0>) which includes information on partnerships, developments at SPARC, and industry developments. Now that SPARC Europe tailors its activities to the UK, Ireland and mainland Europe, there is an even greater incentive for European journal editors, researchers, libraries and scientific societies to play a leading role in the future of scientific communication.

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## John Matthews

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(With thanks to all who contributed, but particularly Liz Murphy and Anne Matthews for the bulk of the text)

John Matthews died suddenly after a brief illness on 20 June 2001, leaving behind his widow, Anne and two young children. This collection of memories of his life has been drawn from the many people who knew him as a colleague, who were only too willing to share them with us all. Many of the details, written by Liz Murphy from Trinity and All Saints College with the assistance of Anne Matthews, have already appeared in the *Library Association Record*.

John attended St Theodore's Roman Catholic High School in Burnley from 1971 to 1978 and went on to Manchester University to complete the honours degree of BA in history in 1981. He started his career in librarianship as a graduate trainee at Manchester Polytechnic (now Manchester Metropolitan University) where he met Anne, also a trainee librarian. John studied for a postgraduate qualification at Loughborough University of Technology and gained his MSc in information and library studies in September 1983.

In his first professional appointment at Oxford Polytechnic (now Oxford Brookes University) John held the post of Assistant Cataloguer. It was during his time at Oxford that John and Anne were married and started a family. In October 1987, with a baby son only a couple of months old, John moved to Aston University to the post of Chief Cataloguer. John remained at Aston for ten years during which time his post changed to that of Systems Librarian. A daughter was born to John and Anne in 1991.

While at Aston, Sue Hodgett, one of John's colleagues said: 'I remember John as always being happy and positive about everything - I can't ever remember him being miserable! He was a joy to work with, always being very approachable and helpful and he also had a great sense of humour. Our lunchtimes in the staffroom were

always entertaining when John was there and he always made a joke about reading the problem pages in the womens' magazines there.' John's boss at the time, Nick Smith, also commented that 'John was truly one of the nicest people I have ever met (inside and outside of libraries) and he will be sorely missed by all of us.'

During 1996, John attended the SCONUL Strategic Management course at Aston University with Adam Edwards (Central School of Speech and Drama), amongst others. Adam remembers John's lack of fear at trying out rock climbing for the first time; his role playing of the University of Poppleton's Head of Finance, and his role as director of the 15 minute *Hamlet* which they had to improvise in a very short time. 'Sword fights were ditched in favour of a shoot out using hair dryers as guns and one scene rewritten as a rap. John delivered the whole thing on time and the recording was shown on schedule, demonstrating not only his abilities as a good leader and motivator, but also as an excellent manager.'

John was appointed to the new post of Director of Information Support Services at Trinity and All Saints in December 1997 to lead a converged service of Library, Computing and Media. Before long he was involved in the College's bid for a HEFCE grant towards a new library and computer building which was successful in January 2001. John was very much looking forward to the prospect of bringing library, computing and web services under one roof. In the months before his illness he was often to be seen poring over architect's plans and casing the library, tape measure and notebook in hand. As a colleague John was immensely practical, supportive and encouraging; his calm, friendly personality put people at their ease and made them feel valued. As a memorial to his work on the new building (inaugurated on 19 November 2001) a small stone cairn is to be built near the front entrance.

My connection with John was as a fellow member of the HCLRG Committee, which he joined in 1999. Within a matter of months he became Treasurer and Membership Secretary, adding the role of Conference Organiser to his portfolio in swift succession. Together with Julie Parry (Bath Spa) he organised the final two HCLRG conferences in 1999 and 2000, in Chester and Lincoln. Another committee member, Angela Conyers (Canterbury Christ Church) remembers how helpful John was in collating the annual statistics from HCLRG members, and her final meeting with him. 'I particularly remember talking to him at the SCONUL

conference in Glasgow and his enthusiasm for the new library for which he had succeeded in getting funding approved. It is very sad to think he will not see it finished'. He was one of those rare people who would willingly volunteer for any task if it needed doing, and would carry it out with obvious enjoyment.

John retained a keen interest in history and archaeology, applying his extensive knowledge of military history and uniforms to war gaming and games of strategy.

He was also a season ticket holder for York Wasps Rugby Club and a keen sports spectator. The fortunes of the Premier League teams, cricket test matches and the highlights of the weekend Rugby League and Union fixtures focused the conversation at many Monday morning coffee breaks at TASC.

John's greatest interest, however, was his family and he often spoke with endearing affection, pride and delight of his son and daughter and the happy home that he and Anne had made together. In Anne's words 'John's illness was incredibly short but he faced the terrible situation with an amazing degree of calmness and acceptance. His only concern was for those he would leave behind. The manner of his death was inspiring but only goes to show the vastness of the abyss he leaves in our lives.'