Episodes is moving to China

This issue of *Episodes* is the last to be produced in the British Geological Survey since the responsibility for the journal moved from the USGS in 1993. Before that it was with the Geological Survey of Canada. *Episodes* is now on the brink of making the biggest move of its 26-year life as it is prepared for residence in its fourth home in China; the first time in a non-English-speaking country.

The Chinese Ministry of Geology and Mineral Resources has named Professor Zhang Hongren as the new Editor and Professor Hou Hongfei as the Managing Editor. Work has already commenced on the first issue under the new team and plans are well in hand for the complex task of transferring the operation from the BGS. The Chinese hosts have already pledged to increase the frequency of publication from three to four issues per year and the size of each issue will be almost doubled from 48 to 80 pages. They are expecting to significantly enhance the scientific breadth and depth of the journal making it an even more effective organ of the international geoscience community and mouthpiece of IUGS.

This is the very last time that I will sit before the computer screen as Editor of *Episodes* putting together this page — always the last item. It has been an eventful four years since the day, in the autumn 1992, when I first learned that I was to take over from John Aaron of the USGS. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone at BGS involved in the production of *Episodes* for their support but especially Tim Dhonau who, before his retirement from the BGS in 1994, recast the design of the journal to conform to European printing conventions and to suit the BGS typesetting pro-

grammes. This was done without changing significantly the appearance of the journal set by the USGS team. Special thanks are also due to Molly Simmons who has been co-Editor since my own retirement from BGS early in 1996. In spite of an already heavy BGS work load, Molly has coped admirably with the myriad of problems that a journal like this throws up; everything from subscription queries to liaising with scientific contributors, printers and mailing contractors.

Not everything has gone as smoothly as we would have liked. We have never been able to catch up with the production schedule and the three-month delay of our very first issue has remained to our last. There have also been serious problems with the running of the subscription database caused by collapsing contractors and takeovers. We can only apologise for this and undertake to do our utmost to ensure that subscribers receive any back issues to which they are entitled.

I personally have gained a great deal from being involved with *Episodes* and am sorry to be giving up the Editorship. I have derived much pleasure from renewing old contacts and making new ones in all parts of the world. In retrospect, the disappointments of missed deadlines, misspelt names, missed-out lines, pictures and even whole pages, dim into insignificance compared with the pleasures of being part of such a wide-ranging international geoscience community.

It remains for me, on behalf of all in the BGS team, to wish our Chinese successors in Beijing every success in keeping *Episodes* alive and well.

Rodney Walshaw

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