The Association for Symbolic Logic was founded by a group of mathematicians and philosophers in 1936, the very year in which Church proved the undecidability of logical validity, Tarski proved the undefinability of truth, and Turing proved the unsolvability of the halting problem. Gödel’s incompleteness theorems were recent news. Though set theory had been practiced since the late 19th century, Zermelo had only recently described the iterative hierarchy for the first time, and Gödel’s constructible universe and Cohen’s forcing both remained in the future. Model theory had begun, with the gradual emergence of the full Löwenheim-Skolem theorem (starting in 1915) and with Gödel’s completeness theorem in 1930. Recursion theory was just coming into focus with the many equivalent definitions of computability, and electronic computers and computer science were the province of visionaries. In the philosophies of logic and mathematics, Carnap’s Logical Syntax of Language had just appeared and its English translation was in the works. Intuitionistic logic was being formalized, modal logics were new and still without semantics, and the wide range of philosophical and non-classical logics that we know today was as yet unimagined.

An unsigned ‘Statement of Policy’ on the first page of the first issue of the Association’s official organ, The Journal of Symbolic Logic, declares that

The development of symbolic logic in recent years has been rapid and the importance of the subject to both mathematics and philosophy is becoming increasingly evident. It is an essential part of the aim of the Journal to bring together more closely the philosophers and mathematicians working in this field, to provide for mutual criticism among its various schools, and to disseminate knowledge of the subject more widely.

Early volumes of the Journal contain seminal papers by Bernays, Church, Curry, Fitch, Fraenkel, Goodman, Hempel, Kleene, Löwenheim, McKinsey, Mostowski, Polya, Post, Quine, Rosser, Tarski, Turing and many others, on topics ranging from undecidability and the axiomatization of set theory to modal logic and constructivism as a criterion of mathematical existence.

Gradually, as mathematical logic prospered and deepened in the 1950s and 1960s, the pages of the JSL filled with a great outpouring of important mathematics. Philosophical logic was also on the upswing; by 1972, it had acquired its own, independent journal, The Journal of Philosophical Logic, for which the ASL assumed editorial responsibility in 1985. A smattering of historical and philosophical articles remained in the JSL during this period, but the growing bounty of deep and increasingly technical mathematical logic largely took precedence. By the 1990s, the JSL had become so mathematically sophisticated that the Association founded a new journal, The Bulletin of Symbolic Logic, as a home for articles, surveys and communications of more general interest, accessible to the wider community of logicians. What history and philosophy remained soon migrated largely to the BSL.
Alongside the growth of mathematical logic proper, mathematical, philosophical and non-classical logics all gradually gained important applications in other fields, beginning with computer science and extending into such areas as linguistics, game and decision theory, formal epistemology, cognitive science, and artificial intelligence. In recent years, philosophers and historians have taken a growing interest in the methods and goals of the various founders of symbolic logic, and historians of philosophy have reinvigorated the philosophies of logic and mathematics with subtle and sensitive interpretations of Kant, Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, Carnap, Quine and others. In addition, traditional work in the ontology and epistemology of mathematics has been enriched by illuminating studies of the actual methods used in mathematical practice, past and present, and the workings of mathematics in application to the world – studies that cast a new and more subtle light on questions of mathematical truth and existence. In these ways, all areas embraced by the original ASL charter have shown remarkable progress and expansion.

With the turn of the new century, the ASL undertook to draw the *JPL* more centrally into its operations, but the effort was hampered by the journal’s succession of commercial publishers. In 2007, the ASL elected to withdraw its editorial staff from the *JPL* and to collaborate with Cambridge University Press to found a new journal, one more broadly conceived than the *JPL*, as a third official organ of the Association; the result is *The Review of Symbolic Logic* you now hold in your hands. In addition to representing the full range of contemporary philosophical and non-classical logics, the charge of the *RSL* is to reassemble the various philosophical and historical elements sketched above, so that the *JSL*, the *RSL*, and the *BSL* among them will now combine to encompass the entire reach of interacting fields of study first envisioned in the Association’s original statement of purpose:

- the *JSL* covers mathematical logic and its applications
- the *RSL* covers philosophical and non-classical logics and their applications; history and philosophy of logic; philosophy and methodology of mathematics
- the *BSL* publishes widely accessible articles of general interest in all these areas (including expository and survey articles), along with research communications and reviews

In this way – more than 70 years after its founding, invigorated by its booming subfields and the emergence of computer science and other far-reaching applications – the Association for Symbolic Logic continues to draw strength from its rich, interdisciplinary heritage.

Submissions to the *RSL* are welcome (see http://www.aslonline.org/journals-review.html for information and guidelines), and university libraries are encouraged to subscribe (librarians should be directed to http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayJournal?jid=RSL).