

# A touch of serendipity

Among the satisfactions of editing *ET* are watching ideas mature into articles and articles come together in issues, often with a touch of serendipity. For example:

○ Louis Alexander's panoramic review of syllabus in this issue was first mooted in a chat at Milan Airport, as we came back from the 1988 British Council Conference in Italy.

○ During 1989, the texts of three major addresses on the state of the language became available to us: Randolph Quirk's JALT lecture, Brian Cox's Collins Strathclyde lecture, and Laurence Urdang's Noah Webster bicentenary lecture.

Normally, length would have precluded using the complete text for even one of these in one issue, but the decision in early 1989 to have a special extended issue in January 1990 made possible what we have never managed before (and at no extra charge to readers): provide every word of all four features, as well as every illustration that Louis Alexander wanted.

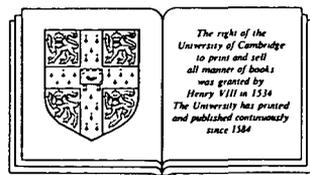
It may not have passed unnoticed that David Crystal has been absent from recent issues. His excuse has been solid. He has been editing a new single-volume general encyclopedia. He will be back in April, however, with a report on the language problems that emerged during this work.

1989 was a good year for *ET*, but not an easy one for its editors. From May to September, Feri McArthur, Managing Editor and my wife of 26 years, received treatment at New Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge for acute leukaemia. Fortunately, this affliction is treatable, she is making a splendid comeback, and at the time of writing (October) is at her desk once more. If during that period a letter did not receive the usual quick response, this may have been the reason. Normal service has now been resumed.

*Tom McArthur*

**A call for papers:** In *ET*'s files we have cuttings/clippings from a wide range of British and North American newspapers, and a scattering of material from many other sources. If readers would care to add to our files by sending in occasional (titled and dated) materials from their local newspapers, etc., or even the odd complete sample of a specially interesting periodical, this would be a great help in widening the range of usage which we can quote in *From Our Files*.

The editorial policy of *English Today* is to provide a focus or forum for all sorts of news and opinion from around the world. The points of view of individual writers are as a consequence their own, and do not reflect the opinion of the editorial board. In addition, wherever feasible, *ET* leaves unchanged the orthography (normally British or American) and the usage of individual contributors, although the editorial style of the magazine itself is that of Cambridge University Press.



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*English Today* (ISSN 0266-0784) is a quarterly. ISBN 0 521 39907 6

#### UNITED KINGDOM:

**Publisher:** Cambridge University Press, Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 2RU. Telephone (0223) 312393

**Subscriptions:** the current annual subscription price for four issues for libraries and institutions is £34 in UK, £37 elsewhere; £17 for individuals; £13 for students and the retired; airmail £8 per year extra. Apply to Paul Driver.

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**Publisher:** Cambridge University Press, 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011. Telephone (212) 924 3900.

**Subscriptions:** the current annual subscription price in USA and Canada for libraries and institutions is \$59; \$27 for individuals; \$20 for students and the retired; Copies are air-freighted to New York to arrive with a minimum delay. Apply to Janet DeSandre.

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Application to mail at second class postage rates pending at New York, NY and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: send address changes in USA and Canada to *English Today*, Cambridge University Press, 110 Midland Avenue, Port Chester, New York, NY 10573.

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Typeset by Goodfellow & Egan. Printed in Great Britain at the University Press, Cambridge