



Chair's Report 2009/10

Reflecting upon this past year, our last meeting in London seems on the one hand to have barely passed and, on the other, a relatively distant memory. Perhaps this is just an aging effect but more likely, I hope, it reflects that the last twelve months have been a whirl of activity. Not just for myself but for many of my fellow trustees. And, I suspect, for a good many of our members as we beaver away, trying in our own contributions to 'make a difference' in adult mathematics education – both in our respective domains, in the day-to-day of our working lives, and internationally through our various individual and collective activities. Even our presence through the ready accessibility of the ALM web-site and the progressive development of on-line resources, allows others in the community to have the opportunity to see some of the tangible evidence of our endeavours. Surely this is a good thing and an aspect that the Trustees are constantly looking to build upon.

Currently, we are in the process of arranging to have our annual Conference Proceedings included in the ERIC and ZDM electronic repositories, either as abstracts or in full. In fact, in this we are trying to catch up on some lost ground, as back in 1997 and 1998, the quality and value of ALM's contribution to the field was recognized by requests from both those bodies to abstract our proceedings. Somewhere along the way, we failed to develop or continue that practice and Joanne Kantner, our Membership Secretary, has taken on the responsibility of seeking to reinstate this vitally important relationship. The quality of material contained within our proceedings is unparalleled and we have a duty to make it as broadly known as is possible – also, of course, raising the profile of ALM to educational professionals, no matter their field of expertise and interest.

The past year has been a challenging one for the ALM International Journal (ALM-IJ), too. Kathy Safford-Ramus kindly agreed to step up as interim Chief Editor for one year only (actually, I have to admit, I did rather 'press gang' her into taking on the role!), following the retirement of Janet Taylor from the position. Coping with the transition has been a challenge, which is why we were unable to produce a second issue for 2009. However, a new issue is about to be published (hopefully, as I write, in time for Oslo). Kathy's year is now about to come to a close. This, then, is a most appropriate time to acknowledge, yet again, Kathy's contribution to ALM and, on behalf of the Trustees (and all members, I'm sure), to thank her most sincerely for a sterling effort. Once again, she has shown herself to be a tireless and staunch supporter of ALM – one of our 'rocks', so to speak.

I am delighted to announce the appointment of Javier Diez-Palomar as the new CE for ALM-IJ. I'm sure you will recall the excellent job done by Javi as guest editor in producing the November 2008 special edition on parents' involvement in mathematics education. The Board is excited by Javier's appointment and I'm sure we can look forward to some great things to come for ALM-IJ. Unfortunately, we won't now see Javi in Oslo, due to the imminent arrival of a new baby! We wish Javi and his wife well in this very exciting time.



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Further news for ALM-IJ, is that Kees Hoogland will relinquish his place on the editorial team, due to pressure of other commitments. Again, Kees' contribution has been absolutely invaluable and we owe the production of the last three editions, and the imminent most recent edition, to Kees' technical expertise in formatting papers to ensure compliance with style conventions, and assembling the various components that together comprise the final published journal. Similarly, I ask that you join me in offering our heartfelt thanks to Kees for his significant contribution.

We have some excellent news regarding future conferences. The Trustees have received a formal proposal from Terry Maguire to host ALM-18 at ITT Tallaght, Dublin, in 2011. Also, Barbara Miller-Reilly has just alerted us to the exciting news that the National Centre for Literacy and Numeracy for Adults at the University of Waikato, Hamilton NZ, is very interested in hosting the ALM conference in New Zealand in 2012. While the Board of Trustees has, as yet, to discuss the proposals, we will do so in our Oslo meetings and I feel that a formal announcement is certain to follow shortly.

The Board is about to implement changes to the membership year. In essence, this will move the membership year to a calendar year basis, rather than being from conference to conference, with those who join at a conference enjoying a bonus 6 months or so. The rationale in the Board's thinking was to make membership management simpler, with less confusion about whether members' subscriptions are current or not, and to reduce or eliminate the need to handle membership transactions during the hustle and bustle of conference activities. Of course, this rationalisation has really been made possible by the introduction of the PayPal facility for the payment of membership subscriptions via our web-site. More specific details will be provided by the Membership Secretary.

For those of you who were in London for the 2009 AGM, you will recall some considerable discussion concerning a proposal to establish an Organizing Committee, which would take on responsibility for conducting the actual business of running ALM. For reasons of legal accountability, a Board of Trustees, properly constituted to comply with the requirements of being incorporated under the laws of England and Wales, will continue to exist and will fulfil its responsibilities to satisfy those legal obligations. However, membership of the Organizing Committee will have no restrictions on nationality or residency status. This is an initiative that we intend to introduce as a pilot for 2010/2011, for review at the next AGM. The Board Secretary, Graham Griffiths, is preparing draft terms of reference for the Organizing Committee and the Trustees will review this at our pre-conference meeting, with the aim of being able to seek nominations for the Organizing Committee in time for election of members at the AGM.

It has been some time since the last ALM Newsletter (August 2009). The intention had always been that several editions would be produced each year but, in fact, members simply have not been forthcoming with contributions. Communication between members, to keep ourselves informed about the activities, ideas, initiatives etc of our colleagues, is something that I regard as essential if ALM is to be a vibrant, growing



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community. While our annual conferences are highly valued, of course, I feel we need to be more dynamic as an organisation. The Trustees (and the soon to be established Organizing Committee) can do only so much but *this* is an area where all members can participate actively. I ask that you all consider this and ask what *you* can do to help grow ALM, to help it to become all that it can be. Perhaps a newsletter is not the way to achieve these between-conference ‘conversations’. If you have an idea of a better way, please don’t hesitate to send me your ideas (email me direct; you’ll always get a response).

As I write this, I’m close to beginning my long journey from Australia to Europe. First to another conference in Sweden and later on to join you in Oslo for ALM-17, hosted by Vox, Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning. I know full well that Vox have worked very hard and very efficiently to put together what promises to be a top-notch conference – and they’ve had to do so in record time! I wish to take this opportunity to thank our Vox hosts and the Conference Organizing committee for this extraordinary effort. I must also especially thank Trustee Kees Hoogland, who took on the role of liaising with Vox and I know he has worked tirelessly on making this conference a success.

I wish also to give personal thanks to my friends and colleagues on the Board of Trustees for their support and also to the Honorary Trustees. And of course, on behalf of the Board, I would like to thank all of those individuals and institutions whose invaluable support of ALM in many various ways, whether in academic, professional, or material terms, is greatly appreciated.

Chris Klinger
Chair, 2009/10