Fleet Street Redux

One of the highest priorities in the Editorial Office of *Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery* has been the establishment of a regular and consistent publication schedule for the journal. Historically the journal has juggled responsibilities of publishing both regular issues of free submissions as well as proceedings from the meetings of both the ASSFN and the WSSFN. Given our subspecialty's size and resources, these dual responsibilities were not always mutually compatible, with the proceedings often usurping a year's worth of issues and delaying publication of a free submission for at least that long. Guided both by the leadership of the ASSFN and the WSSFN and by the journal's readership, we prioritized regular and reliable publication and, with the help of our publisher S. Karger AG, have now achieved that goal.

A second big step took place this spring: conversion of *Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery* to electronic submission and editorial review. The immediate benefits of this transition should be apparent to all, and not least to authors submitting manuscripts. At the Editorial Office, the impact will be major and very positive. There are obvious efficiencies and economies in electronic processing of manuscripts, but the real value lies in the opportunity to significantly raise the quality of the journal and substantially increase its value to the neurosurgical community. We have every intention of seizing this opportunity and are excited about an initiative that should have a major impact on the role of the journal.

The dominant factor in the processing time for a manuscript has been the review process. The traditional shuttling of hard copy manuscripts in one direction and subsequent reviews in the other has exacted a costly and frustrating toll, not aided by half the Editorial Board residing outside the United States; that aspect of the editorial pro-

cess will not be missed. Today a manuscript can be reviewed on any continent within hours of its submission, and the potential to shorten the time to decision dramatically is realizable. Coupled with our scale, which in this instance is advantageous, these changes enable the journal to assume a unique and vital role in the neurosurgical community.

The Editorial Office is committed to utilizing electronic review to achieve a rapid time to decision for all of our authors. In combination with our journal's electronic publication – papers accepted for publication first appear electronically shortly after acceptance and prior to the print journal – all of our articles can in effect be rapid communications. This is most fitting for *Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery*, which has long been the site of the earliest communication of new findings and procedures. Assurance of rapid dissemination and focus on our subspecialty make the journal an ideal repository for first observations, early development and preliminary data.

Lastly, to help achieve these ends, the Editorial Board is being refreshed and expanded. Domains of expertise within a field evolve, and infusion of the requisite talent, expertise and energy to parallel that evolution has been essential. A long-standing commitment to the scientific underpinnings of our clinical activity is reaffirmed. As fresh players step up to the plate to help all of this happen, it is most appropriate that those who have gone before be recognized and honored. Our retiring Editorial Board members have given generously of their time and wisdom for many years, and we are forever indebted to them for their service.

David W. Roberts, MD
Editor-in-Chief