

Publications have figured prominently on the EPS agenda from the time of the earliest discussions on forming a European society for physics.

# The Publications of the EPS

Although concerned with the status and quality of the physics literature in Europe, the European Physical Society's founders also sought to establish a link between European physicists that would focus attention on the new Society and build up its identity. A working group for publications with a broad European representation was set up, under the chairmanship of Jan de Boer from Amsterdam, at the Steering Committee's first meeting (at CERN in September 1967). The first priority was the Society's own information medium, the final outcome, after much negotiation, being *Europhysics News*, the bulletin of EPS. Later committees were to wrestle with the problem of journal rationalisation without making a great deal of progress, while the EPS showed itself ready to consider new titles if there was a hope that the Society's finances would be helped thereby. So other publications followed: *Europhysics Conference Abstracts* (1975), *European Journal of Physics* (1980), and *Europhysics Letters* (1986).

## ● Europhysics News

The working group went to work right away by considering a letter from Laurens Jansen setting out the aims for an information medium for the new Society. With certain changes, this was sent to a number of publishers who had expressed an interest. A key number was an expected society membership of 15000 to 25000. A modest bulletin of say 16 or 32 pages initially was envisaged, although the way was left open for other proposals for rapid dissemination of information. Alternative procedures, although considered, were ruled out by the widely different publishing practices amongst the national societies (many having no journals of their own) if they even existed, the need to promote the nascent Society, and the lack of investment capital.

Proposals by North-Holland and The Institute of Physics and The Physical Society (IPPS) seemed the most advantageous, their estimates showing a cost per 384-page volume of 10-12 Swiss francs per reader (say SFR 35.- at today's prices). They foresaw an advertisement income that could account for perhaps half the total after a few years. Moreover, IPPS intimated it might cease publication of its own bulletin if it took charge of the European magazine, and North-Holland went so far as to propose setting up a joint publishing house.

But where could even SFR 10.- per volume come from, bearing in mind that members of national societies would be asked to pay already an annual membership fee of SFR 18.-, and how would physicists from eastern Europe pay? Even more pertinent, how long would it take to obtain 15000 members? Realism won the day and it was decided that whilst discussions should be pursued with North-Holland, even a modest monthly magazine was only for the future when the Society was well established. For the first two years, something small but distinctive, which the national societies could finance and distribute to their members, would

E.N. Shaw  
Geneva

give maximum exposure of the Society and offer little risk.

## Getting Started

This still left open all the details and the launch of the Society was coming perilously close. To solve the problem, B.P. Gregory instructed the CERN Public Information Office under Edwin Shaw (formerly founding editor of *Nuclear Engineering*) to prepare a project. Brian Southworth, editor of the *CERN Courier*, was called in and they put together a proposal for an 8-page newsletter to be published in English bi-monthly. Georges Boixader, their illustrator, designed a masthead round the title *Europhysics News* and the package was submitted to the Steering Committee. Approval was given and with Brian Southworth as editor, the first issue appeared dated November 1968. Edgar Ascher of Battelle acted as coordinator for incoming information and an Editorial Advisory Panel was formed which included Georges Béné of Geneva University, Jansen and Shaw.

Publication settled into a routine with the contents mainly devoted to the activities of the Society, although notice of physics meetings compiled by Simon Newman, also of CERN, assumed an increasing importance. So much so that the first of the famous "yellow issues" listing meetings was produced in 1970.

## A Permanent Publication

In the meantime, much effort had been devoted to considering the form of a permanent publication. A Bulletin Committee had been set up at the first Council meeting with Robert Nilsson from Uppsala in the chair. *Physics Today* published by the American Institute of Physics (AIP) was an alluring model, especially as reports suggested that its publication brought in an annual profit of nearly \$US 100000.-, the sort of income that would solve any financial problems that EPS might encounter. And so the Society was urged from all sides to launch a European version as soon as possible. Cautious voices, however, pointed out that Europe was not the USA. National structures differed greatly, there were language barriers, distribution costs were much higher, markets were fragmen-



The first issue of *Europhysics News* was published as a special issue in November 1968. The first regular issue (Issue No. 1) appeared the following January.



Brian Southworth from CERN at the Inaugural Conference in 1969. Southworth edited *Europhysics News* until November 1970.



The Chairmen of the Advisory Committees of EPS at the 1970 Council Meeting in Paris. From left to right: G.H. Stafford (Conferences), N.R. Nilsson (EPS Bulletin), J. de Boer (Publications), O.G. Folberth (Applied Physics & Physics in Industry), and M. Kersten (Physics & Society).



From the left, L.A. Arstimovich from Moscow and a Member of the EPS Steering Committee, G. Szigeti, and Alex Crawford, the Editor of *Europhysics News* from March 1972 until December 1973, at the March 1972 meeting of Council in Oslo.



Simon Newman, who edited the "meetings" issues of *Europhysics News* until 1975, at the Inaugural Conference in April 1969.

ted, and advertisers were becoming more selective, preferring specialized outlets. Nevertheless, it was decided to invite commercial publishers to submit tenders for a 48-page journal to be sent to some 30 000 physicists in Europe whilst, in parallel, a sub-committee studied the costs should EPS go it alone. To provide capital, members of the Society were asked to indicate whether and to what extent they would take out shares in an EPS publishing company, and member societies were asked to state how many copies they would be prepared to buy. Estimates indicated that in the asymptotic state even with 30 000 copies, an annual subscription price of more than SFR 10.- would be needed (one estimate was SFR 30.-), increasing as the circulation was reduced. Moreover, the national societies had indicated that they were already finding the distribution costs of *Europhysics News* a burden and could certainly not afford to pay SFR 10.- per member for a journal: most of the Eastern countries could not even pay their membership fee in hard currency. The conclusion was that launching such a journal was out of the question, financially. Despite this and despite the worsening commercial opportunities everywhere, the cry for a "*Europhysics Today*" has been repeated at regular intervals and the same arguments have been rehearsed, over and over again during the past 25 years.

The IPPS opened a window by offering to replace its own bulletin by one of the EPS to be published by a joint company in which IPPS held 51% of the shares for the first five years. It was foreseen that once the magazine became profitable and the accumulated deficits had been paid off, ownership would be handed over to EPS. Further profits would be used to lower the cost of subscriptions handled by the national societies. Individual members would receive it from the outset free of charge. Although the offer solved the problem of initial capital, many feared that as the UK society had as many members as the rest of Europe's physics societies put together, the result would be an IPPS bulletin under another name. Moreover, it had become clear that the number of societies willing to fund distribution in their own regions was limited, and the estimates by IPPS of advertising revenue were decidedly optimistic.

### Rumbling On

So the offer was rejected and *Europhysics News* rumbled quietly on. The *CERN Courier* was being transformed into an international journal and Southworth could no longer spare the time. Newman took over from January 1971, but more stable arrangements were needed. Council therefore approved the appointment of a new, full-time member of the EPS staff, and Alex Crawford was made editor from March 1972. *Europhysics News* became monthly, with some issues containing 12 pages.

Such a major addition to the expenditure of EPS was more than the Society could bear. A financial crisis (the first of many) ensued and a task force assembled to effect a cure recommended drastic cuts in *Europhysics News*. The Advisory Panel

defended the retention of at least a printed publication with a coloured masthead, and their views were accepted. However, a full-time editor could not be supported and in the restructuring of the Society, Crawford had to leave. At the end of 1973, Lorette Etienne-Amberg, the Executive-Secretary since the beginning, took over the editorship part-time. Subsequent criticisms that *Europhysics News* was run by an isolated coterie in Geneva were answered by forming a full Advisory Committee in April 1975 with Shaw in the chair; day-to-day affairs were overseen by an Editorial Board. At this time, Mme. Etienne left the Society and CERN again came to the rescue. Luka Sekolec, a Visiting Fellow, agreed to act as spare-time editor of the green issues, while Newman again took over the yellow issues which he continued to compile until his retirement in 1975.

However, such an arrangement could not last and on leaving CERN, Shaw was made part-time editor from April 1976 while Jean Muller of Geneva University became chairman of the Advisory Committee and of the Board. Jan Went as a member of the Advisory Panel had been a strong advocate of *Europhysics News* presenting physics rather than administrative information, and although there were series on the organization of physics in different regions, for example, and specific society news was always given priority, the main content went over to physics articles by the specialists for the non-specialists. The Muller/Shaw partnership pursued this policy and *EN* became appreciated in the physics community as a source of reliable review information on the leading front of physics. Members of the Editorial Board took their responsibilities seriously, meeting 8-10 times a year, and the Advisory Committee soon had the confidence to let them get on with the job even though the members had to be from the local region. It should be noted nevertheless that over 11 years, first Dieter Pohl and then Alexis Baratoff, both of IBM, travelled from Zurich and since October 1983 there has always been a member from Grenoble. Longest serving member, from the first Working Group in 1968 through to the Summer of 1983, was Béné. In 1987, the Advisory Committee concluded that it was a redundant body and it was disbanded.

Circulation of *Europhysics News* had stabilized at around 10 000 copies. The largest societies and some smaller felt unable to afford its distribution — in a number of cases not so much because of the cost of the copies, which were charged at run-on prices, but because of the problem and cost of mailing. The UK's Institute of Physics and the German Physical Society had ceased in 1973 and attempts to incorporate *EN* in the national journals were unsuccessful. The Netherlands followed and then later France, first the green, afterwards the yellow, and so on. The Italian and the Swiss have remained faithful, however, and a number of national societies take a modest number. The drop in circulation implied an excessive space charge for advertisements, but it was decided to keep the figure constant and let inflation catch up. Annual revenues, mainly from situations vacant advertising although publishers advertised from time-to-time, stabilized at around SFR 15 000.-/20 000.-.

Council regularly expressed surprise that the income from product advertising was so low and would call for a new investment to attract the market. On the whole, however, the boundary conditions were recognized and ambitions were

The 20th anniversary of EPS in Pisa in June 1988. Seated in the front row, from left to right, are E.N. Shaw, W. Buckel and G. Szigeti. J. Muller is seated in the second row on the right.



limited to encouraging the Executive Secretary to make a few more pages available without risk to the budget. Correspondents were tried over and over, but in the end, initiatives always came from Geneva.

### A Fresh Look

So it went on until the Spring of 1988 when the new Secretary of EPS, Maurice Jacob, urged another look and a new approach to the publishers. Not without misgivings, it must be admitted, the Secretariat and Editorial Board took up the cudgels once more. They found no change in the essential parameters and the maximum they could recommend was a modest increase in the number of pages, a bigger accent on European news and the appointment of a full-time editor who could spend more effort on promotion, using special features as a vehicle for attracting advertising.

EPS was fortunate in finding Peter Boswell, a materials physicist from Battelle who had worked in both industry and academia and was looking for a shift in his career. He was already in the saddle when Shaw retired to the golf course in January 1990. Under the new editor colour has become a regular feature, we have a new masthead in line with that of *Europhysics Letters*, an illustrated cover page, more pages, sponsored issues, more news of science and of European administrations, and more income!

### • Europhysics Conference Abstracts

Whereas conference organizers were fond of looking to the EPS for subsidies or financial guarantees, Council members looked to them as a potential source of income. Marcel Guenin from Geneva, at that time the EPS Secretary having chaired the task force that tackled the financial crisis within the Society in the early 1970's, was much of that mind. He was the motor behind the launch of *Europhysics Conference Abstracts (ECA)* in 1975.

Each volume was to contain the collected abstracts (ideally extended) of a given conference and was, on the one hand, a working document for the participants, and on the other a record in brief of a conference that could be sold as such. (The plasma physicists had already gone down this road, by insisting on the provision of extended abstracts, which had made the publication of proceedings unnecessary.)

The first volume concerned the *Conference on the Electronic Properties of Solids* that was held in September 1975. Guenin was Series Editor, Joseph Depireux from Liège and Pierre Radvanyi from Orsay, chairman of the Conference Committee, Co-editors, and the new Executive Secretary, Gero Thomas was the Managing Editor. Further volumes were published when conference organizers could be persuaded to cooperate, but finally Council grasped the nettle in 1980 and insisted in the future that Europhysics conferences, if producing abstracts, would do so according to standard ground rules and would provide the Secretariat with an agreed number of copies free of charge. A series covered a given year and subscribers were required to subscribe for the full year's 8-10 volumes, the interest being an overview each year of all the fields of physics as seen through the extended abstracts of Division conferences. Later, a more flexible policy was operated and the Secretariat would sell single volumes on request, thus allowing EPS to provide what is increasingly turning out to be a very cost-effective service to organizers.

EPS has published 16 series so far and *ECA* provides a modest surplus into the EPS funds. Its circulation is still less than 100, but marketing the publication is difficult despite its immediacy, the wealth of information it contains and the modest price that is charged — one more symptom of the specialization in physics today. Some organizers today resist having a standard A5 format, and even a standard cover, so maintaining the features that facilitate binding by libraries and marketing as a series are difficult.

### • European Journal of Physics

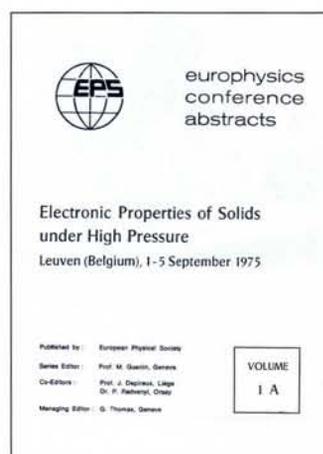
During the 3rd EPS General Conference in Bucharest in September 1975, an Advisory Committee on Physics Education was formed to make comparative studies of the teaching of physics from primary schools to university across Europe and the problems posed by the new curricula. The Chairman, Aloysio Janner of Nijmegen, proposed to disseminate information through an informal newsletter that would appear as and when the need arose. Modest in presentation despite the generous title of *Europhysics Education News*, typed and reproduced on A5 format, with no cover price, its distribution was considered by UNESCO to be sufficiently valuable to merit support and they agreed to pay for the production costs and took 200 copies. Janner continued to edit the publication after Lennert Samuelsson of Linköping took over the chair, but as time went by found no one willing to put in the same effort. The frequency dropped and revived again for a short time until the 13th issue dated June 1984 proved to be the last.

### A New Journal

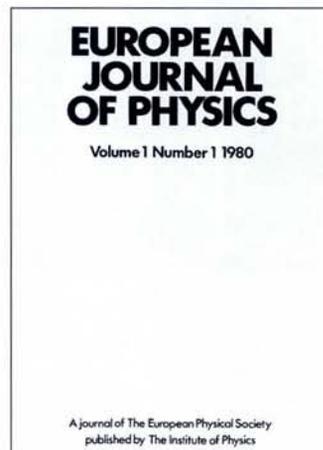
The committees responsible for publications and education had meanwhile become engaged in a project stimulated by The Institute of Physics in the UK. The IoP had proposed to EPS that they publish jointly a new journal on physics education at the university level. A quarterly publication of about 64 pages, B5 format was envisaged. The IOP agreed to put up the initial capital and handle all the mechanics while sharing editorial responsibility and dividing equally the initial operating losses and subsequent profits. The first draft of the project was prepared for the Council meeting in Bruges in March 1977 on the basis of which the Executive Committee was authorized to negotiate an agreement.

Whilst the usefulness of such a publication was confirmed, there being no equivalent in Europe, not everyone reacted favourably. French delegates on the Publications Committee, notably Jacques Des Cloizeaux, attacked the draft as being a sell-out to the IoP and attributed motives that were the reverse of altruistic. Through long discussions, the reasonableness of the offer was argued and eventually the majority became convinced. The composition of the Editorial Board was modified (10 EPS, 6 IoP and 4 co-opted) and the initial EPS representatives were chosen with great care. As Editor-in-Chief, the IoP's recommendation of George Series from Reading, the driver behind the movement, was also agreed.

A disquieting feature that emerged was the scope of the contents, as education seemed to take second place to more general articles. Whereas the journal had been seen in the aftermath of the restored financial position of the EPS as the first of a series of EPS publications, and thus had been given the provisional title of



The first volume of the *Europhysics Conference Abstracts*.



The first issue of the *European Journal of Physics*.

The second issue of *Europhysics Education News*.



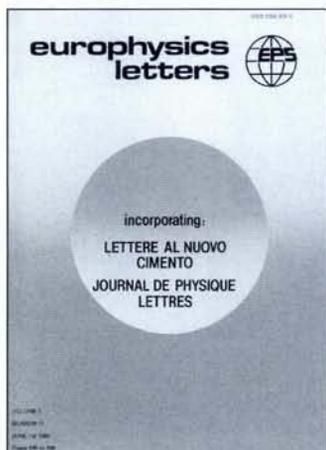


The Council meeting in Bruges in 1977: from the left, A. Corciovet from Bucharest, A. Dorobantu, also from Bucharest, A. Zichichi, J.J. Went (EPS Secretary, 1973-75; Treasurer, 1975-77).



Joseph Depireux (on the left) who succeeded Jan de Boer as the second Chairman of the Publications Committee in 1972, and Pierre Radvanyi who likewise took over the same year from Godfrey Stafford as the second Chairman of the Conference Committee.

The first issue of *Europhysics Letters*.



*European Journal of Physics Education*, the first Board decided to drop the word "education". The justification was that it would be a precise counterpart to the *American Journal of Physics*, the offending word could be added later if necessary should other journals materialise, but education was a "dirty word" in publication terms. For the supporters of an EPS series, the proposed title would preempt any follow up, and the summaries of contents began to sound like the prescription for a general physics journal in competition with *Europhysics News*, though on a grander scale. So far indeed from the original objectives had the journal seemed to drift, under the influence it must be noted of a Board with its full complement of EPS nominees, that the EPS President, Antonino Zichichi was loth to sign the final agreement, and this despite a sub-title that was a little more relevant to higher education and a description of the scope which at least started with the educational topics. However, sign it he did and in June 1980 the first issue appeared.

Five years had been envisaged as the time that might be necessary for the journal to reach the break-even point and the loss limit was set at SFR 100000.- for each partner. Circulation rose only slowly despite the vigorous publicity campaign pursued by the IoP and *Europhysics News*, and annual losses of SFR 40000.- were registered in the early years. Initially, the commitment of the EPS was largely covered by guarantees from the Novo Foundation in Denmark and the Belgian Ministry of Education, but by the third year the EPS was once more in financial difficulties and could pay only half its dues. At this point the IoP stepped in and agreed to pay the losses itself until the corner was turned and the surplus could be used to amortise the accumulated deficit. This proved to be a much longer process than had been foreseen, but finally in 1991 the EPS could enjoy a real income from the publication and the journal could be said to be firmly established. Series had continued to act as Editor-in-Chief, urging support in his own enthusiastic style until 1985 when Jan Pisut from Bratislava took over. He introduced new features, but the essential character of the journal remained true to the original aims, namely a journal that teachers of physics at university level would read in search of new teaching ideas and new enlightenments on physics problems. Sir Brian Pippard of Cambridge replaced Pisut in 1990 and over the years the Editorial Board has quietly mutated although the EPS has not always been as assiduous as it should have been in presenting new names as members.

#### ● *Europhysics Letters*

If the launch of the *European Journal of Physics* had cost long hours of argument and discussion it was as nothing compared to the next publishing project of the EPS. For years, envious eyes had been cast at the AIP's *Physical Review Letters* and inside, physicists in Europe felt they would prefer a communication of their own to be published there. However, mixed with the envy there was the criticism that refereeing and speed of publishing were uneven, and it was therefore highly desirable that Europe should have a comparable publication, particularly for condensed matter.

In the early 1980's, four mainstream physics letters journals were published in Europe apart from the "short communications" published in the IoP's *Journal of Physics*. North-Holland's *Phy-*

*sics Letters A* contained mostly letters on atomic physics of variable standard, whilst *Physics Letters B* was a leader in nuclear physics. Les Editions de Physique produced a general letters journal supported mainly by French physicists, and *Il Nuovo Cimento* a letters journal attracting international authors whose works were not well known. A citation analysis prepared by Jan Vlachý, head of a physics bibliometry department in Prague, gave the comparative rates as 7.5:12:5:3 set against 34 for *Phys. Rev. Lett.* Taylor and Francis had started a letters journal mainly for condensed matter physics that was called *Communications in Physics*, and in May 1978 had asked the EPS to intervene in the light of diminishing contributions. Circulation was not a problem, the Editorial Board was international and of high level yet the journal was dying for want of author support. Unfortunately, the EPS is not a body that can take decisions rapidly and the journal was allowed to fold.

#### Reopening the Question

Discouraging though this was, in March 1980 the Publications Committee reopened the question of a European general physics letters journal when examining its "label" policy for recognized journals. This, plus the reaction to the launch of *Eur. J. Phys.* stimulated the French Physical Society (SFP) to announce to the President of the EPS that it would be proposing a joint operation for a European letters journal to replace *J. de Phys. Lett.* on the lines of the agreement with the IoP. There were also stirrings in Italy and in January 1981, Zichichi offered to launch from Italy an EPS letters journal, fully financed, and to suppress *Nuovo Cim. Lett.* The IoP let it be known the following month that it would be pleased to be involved in any European letters journal and would offer SFR 100000.- over three years towards its eventual realization.

The SFP produced a draft agreement which was not even discussed by the Executive Committee and by Council as a number of propositions were on the table. Instead Council rallied to the Publications Committee's recommendation that a broadly based joint operation be considered, including the replacement of both the French and Italian letters journals. It was reasonably unanimous in concluding that there was now room for a high-quality general letters journal, but a minority view, vigorously expressed by Jozef Devreese from Antwerp, Chairman of the Condensed Matter Division, held that a new start should be made or the venture would be compromised. Gert Eilenberger from Jülich, the new Chairman of the Publications Committee was charged with trying to sort it all out.

The first step was to form a sub-committee under Eilenberger with Shaw (Secretary of the Publications Committee from March 1980 to 1991) and representatives of the directly interested parties together with Devreese, Henrik de Waard of Groningen and Ferenc Mezei of Budapest, who had intimated that the Eötvös Lorand Physical Society could offer low publication costs.

The problems facing the sub-committee were far from trivial. Neither the SFP nor the Italian Physical Society (IPS) had any intention of sharing the production side: their proposals had been for a partnership with the EPS only; the IoP had strong views on the way referees were chosen to avoid the accusations of favouritism that were rife; nobody wanted to be too open

about circulation figures; North-Holland supported by the Dutch was hovering on the sidelines and making murmurs about *Phys. Lett. A*, and there was, of course, the independent wing. But Council's wishes were clear that a bilateral venture was unacceptable and it was rapidly concluded that the existing circulations of the two letters journal were an essential base, for any new publication.

### A Concrete Proposal

Nevertheless, little progress was made towards arriving at a structure. Louis Michel the chief editor of *J. de Phys.* had understood the need for multiple participation, but he was fighting a rearguard action at home and the group still clinging to the idea of a bilateral operation. Discussions were close to stalemate until in the summer of 1982 Roy Pike, Chairman of the IoP Publications Committee produced a draft agreement formulated around a three-way partnership between the EPS, IPS/SFP and IoP with editorial control by the EPS. Practically every phrase was contested, but it gave a start and was accompanied by market and cost estimates that looked real. Discussions followed, and by the Council meeting in Copenhagen in 1983, a fourth draft — with modifications — seemed to go a long way towards a solution. In particular, the IoP had agreed to provide capital equivalent to the national investment of the other societies and was less adamant in its opposition to the Editorial Board choosing referees. The SFP and IPS were close to agreeing on the need for a division of work, both requiring time to convince the people at home. The IoP had accepted this, although was insisting on international tendering for comparison.

There were however still qualms about the penetration likely to be achieved and it was felt highly desirable to bring in the German Physical Society (DPG) at least. The fifth draft was circulated to national societies with an invitation to contribute. This elicited an unhelpful response from Germany to the effect that Physik Verlag, a publishing arm of the German society, would take the whole thing over. Come November and despite all Michel's valedictory efforts, once again matters were nevertheless effectively at a stand-still.

### Breaking the Deadlock

Nevertheless, the undercurrent of determination to succeed prevailed with Philippe Nozières of Grenoble now contributing a keen analytical approach and Andrea Taroni of Bologna a long publishing experience. Over the next few months, working groups on scientific aspects and structure formulated a gentleman's agreement providing for four initial partners: the three societies on equal terms with, as input, their two journals and a contribution from the IoP of SFR 170000.-, and the EPS acquiring 10% of the equity in exchange for its scientific value. The EPS Secretariat in Geneva would be the centre of operations and the address for communications. A Board of 12 Co-editors would sit under the Editor-in-Chief and would be aided by 30 Advisory Editors. The IPS and SFP would be given preference in the production and the overall operations would be supervised by a Management Board representing the partners, with Thomas as Business Manager.

The framework was there and over the next year the details were worked out. The appointment of the leading figures proceeded carefully,



Nicholas Kurti speaking from the floor at a session held in the Palazzo Medici-Riccardi during the EPS Inaugural Conference in Florence in April 1969. Kurti was the Editor-in-Chief of *Europhysics Letters* until 1989.

but harmoniously, and Nicholas Kurti of Oxford received universal approval as Editor-in-Chief. He threw himself into the task with his characteristic gusto and by the middle of 1985 one could announce most details, including January 1986 as the launch date.

### Handling the Flood

Encouraged by the Co-editors and physicists throughout the EPS, contributions began to stream in and within a very short time the problem was not a lack of high-quality letters, but the veritable flood. Budgets had been prepared on the basis of a relatively slow build-up and a more optimistic circulation. The decision was, however, to increase the volume size, but honour the price, and this in turn led to a higher initial deficit than foreseen. In the partnership agreement that had finally been concluded provision had been made for Associate Partners who deposited sums in case further capital was needed. This allowed the journal to be launched under the auspices of not just three national societies (plus the EPS) but of 11, counting the Scandinavian societies as a single unit. Eventually it became necessary to call in this capital, at which point a new management agreement became necessary. Instead of being a simple enlargement this turned out to be polemical as the IoP delegate introduced the concept of marking up the share value of the original partners. Such a procedure was hotly contested, not least by J.M. Araújo, Chairman of the Publications Committee, and in time the move was seen to be unfair and a new agreement was signed which gave a balanced consideration to all the contributing parties.

Werner Buckel from Karlsruhe undertook as his first priority the promotion of *Europhysics Letters* on becoming the EPS President in 1986. Not only did he honour this as President by encouraging contributions from all over Europe and by smoothing the path when difficulties arose, but he also returned to take over as Editor-in-Chief when Kurti retired in March 1989. When he in turn handed over to Roger Balian from Saclay in April 1992, *Europhysics Letters* had become a journal of world repute with a solid circulation that provided the Partners with a healthy surplus at the end of the year.

But the publishing world is never static and although keeping its present publications vigorous is not easy, the EPS, on past experience, should perhaps now be considering whether new publications are on the agenda.

Werner Buckel, the second Editor-in-Chief of *Europhysics Letters*, is seen here as the President of the German Physical Society handing over a prize at the opening of the second EPS General Conference in Wiesbaden in 1972.

