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Editorial

I begin with a tribute to Keith Barnett, who died in October 2006 after a short illness. Keith had been a stalwart supporter of the *Gazette* for many years, contributing articles which included *The centre of gravity of a filling vessel* and *Simson lines and deltoids*. He was also a keen and perceptive referee who would offer wise and perceptive advice on submissions. However, his main contribution over the past sixteen years had been as a proof-reader of the Notes section of the journal.

Most proof readers would see their job as being to check that what appears in print is free of spelling or grammatical mistakes, represents faithfully what the author originally wrote, and conforms to the general house style of the journal. Keith's approach satisfied all of these criteria but much, much more. He preferred to work directly from the proof copy and to check every one of the mathematical steps from first principles. On numerous occasions he spotted errors which he then painstakingly corrected; sometimes these were of a minor nature – perhaps a special case which had escaped the author's and referee's eyes – but, every so often, they were substantial. Keith would offer his own suggestions for improvement which occasionally represented salvation for an article which might otherwise have been doomed. He was meticulous about scholarship, checking citations, biographical details, historical facts and literary allusions. In the notes which he wrote to me, he displayed a lively sense of humour and, sometimes, a cutting wit, particularly when he was debunking pomposity. His own background was as a computer programmer, both for Marconi and IBM – it was clear that he was not a school teacher when he once asked me whether SOHCAHTOA was an island near Java. He will be sorely missed.

I am very grateful to Andrew Jobbings and Adam McBride, who have stepped into the breach at very short notice. The work of a proof-reader is essential, even if it is not very glamorous, and it is certainly hard work.

Readers will, I hope, be pleased to learn that the entire back issue of the *Gazette* (1894–2001) is now available on the archive website JSTOR. Details of how to access this facility will be found on page 38 of this issue. This has been due to the efforts of Bill Richardson in ensuring that paper copies of the journals were transported to the United States, thus enabling JSTOR to scan their pages to the database. This archive will be regularly updated.