PREFACE

This special issue contains a selection of papers presented at the renowned International Conference on Boundary Elements and other Mesh Reduction Methods (BEM) which is now in its 39th edition, having started in 1978. The meeting was organised by the University of Mississippi in the USA and the Wessex Institute, UK.

It was at Southampton University where the technique started in the mid-1970s, with the first successful development of boundary integral equations into what is now known as the Boundary Element Method. The success of the meeting has been possible by its continuous evolution. In the early 1990s it was decided to cover all types of Mesh Reduction, opening up a wide new field of technical and applied research.

The success of that policy is reflected in the continuous growth of the ranking of the Journal associated with the Conference, i.e. the one of Engineering Analysis with Boundary Elements. The Journal is now in the top third of all its categories.

A major development took place last year when WIT Press decided to make available in Open Access form all the conference papers published since 1993. This move has dramatically increased the number of citations that the papers achieve. It is part of the Wessex Institute policy of disseminating scientific and technical outputs as widely as possible.

The international researcher will find in this issue a selection of the most recent developments in the method which in the last few years has attracted the attention of a variety of industrial users.

The next 40th Conference will take place in the New Forest National Park in the UK, home of the Wessex Institute, giving the occasion to the participants to become more aware of the activities on Campus, where research is focused on the development and applications of boundary elements.

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The Editors
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