

Bulletin No. 26

January 1986

Southampton University, UK, was once again the venue for the Variational Methods in Engineering Conference, held in July last year. As with the first Conference, the meeting brought together a number of engineers interested in the application of the calculus of variational functional analysis and numerical methods. The second Conference was also concerned with the formulation of variational or related principles and the solution of the corresponding stationary problem. In the latter context both the development of the techniques and their application to actual engineering problems were discussed. Special emphasis was given to engineering methods of analysis such as finite elements, boundary elements and other variational methods.

A series of keynote papers by well-known researchers added to the prestige of the Conference. They were: Dr J. F. Besseling, Delft University of Technology, Netherlands; Professor T. A. Cruse, South West Research Institute, Texas, USA; Professor W. P. De Wilde, Free University of Brussels, Belgium; Dr S. Krenk, Riso National Laboratory, Denmark; Professor H. H. E. Leipholz, University of Waterloo, Canada; and Professor M. Tanaka, Shinshu University, Japan, who is also a joint editor of *Engineering Analysis*, one of our group of journals.

The Proceedings, which are published by Springer-Verlag and Computational Mechanics, cost £55.70, \$83.50. ISBN 0-905451-35-X.



During the week of the Conference, a party was held by Dr C. A. Brebbia, Conference Organiser, to celebrate the opening of the new premises of the Institute of Computational Mechanics at 52 Henstead Road, Southampton. The Institute will act as a training centre for CAD/CAM courses run by CM. Seen above at the party, toasting the Institute's success, are Professor Cruse, left, and Dr Brebbia.

Right: Delegates at the 2nd JASCOME sponsored symposium on BEM which took place in Tokyo this year. Contact Professor M. Tanaka (President of the Society) for details of the Proceedings, Dept. of Mechanical Engineering, Shinshu University, 500 Wakasato, Nagano 380, Japan

BOUNDARY ELEMENT

A NEW BOUNDARY ELEMENT USER'S GROUP

News from Belgium of a recently created group, known as The Belgian Contact Group on BEM. Its aim is to favour meetings between Belgian BE users and researchers. It is intended to hold regular meetings where both scientific and organisational topics will be discussed. 'Among other things, we would like to establish a common data-file structure in order to be able to easily exchange the available programs. We intend to organise two meetings every year, one would be concerned with theoretical topics while the other would mainly concentrate on software.'

The group consists of about 30 people, mostly engineers, from both research institutes and the private industry. Research is carried out by members on the following topics:

- dynamic soil-structure interaction problems
- simulation of electronic components
- off-shore engineering
- hydrodynamics
- coupling of BEM with FEM
- nonlinear potential problems in electrochemistry
- potential field (electrostatic and thermic)
- magnetostatic, eddy currents
- composite materials
- stress analysis in plates
- numerical properties of the BEM

Performant computer programs have been written in these fields.

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