

Editorial

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I am pleased to welcome you to the December issue of *Geotechnical Engineering* and my final editorial as chairman of the editorial advisory panel. I advised 3 years ago that the fundamental success for the journal was dependant upon a high flow of high-quality papers and it has been most rewarding to see the number of papers submitted go from strength to strength. During that time we have taken steps to ensure the quality of the published papers is maintained whilst significantly reducing response times to prospective authors. Amongst these and other changes, a particular highlight came earlier this year as the first symposium associated with a *Geotechnical Engineering* themed issue was hosted at Queens University Belfast.

It is particularly pleasing to note that the deputy chairman for 2011 has accepted the role of panel chairman and honorary editor for the next 3 years; Mike Brown has made a significant contribution to the panel over the past 3 years and is looking forward to continuing that in the future.

At the close of the year it is usual to acknowledge the contribution of panel members who are standing down after 3–4 years of valued input to the journal. I would like to express thanks to five members who are leaving the editorial panel at the end of 2011. We are grateful for the time and hard work provided by Pam Rigby, Philip Smith, Adam Pellew, Peter Ingram and Shon Williams. We also very much appreciate the service provided by three international panel members, Hans Brinkman, Limin Zhang and Vinayagamoothy Sivakumar who are retiring from the panel this year.

I enjoyed attending the annual ICE awards ceremony in October. This was an occasion that recognised papers published last year; once again the panel had been pleased to submit a number of *Geotechnical Engineering* papers for consideration. It is pleasing to recall that two *Geotechnical Engineering* papers were selected to receive awards. The John Mitchell Medal, awarded for the best paper in geotechnical practice, site-based innovation or geotechnical safety, was awarded to Hendry *et al.* (2010) for their paper entitled 'Track displacement and energy loss in a railway embankment'. The Crampton Prize, awarded annually for the best paper on practical geotechnical engineering, this year went to Roscoe and Twine (2010) for their paper 'Design and performance of retaining walls'. It was very rewarding to help celebrate the authors' success; a brief report of the awards will be included in the February issue.

We have three papers included in this issue. In the first paper

Steedman and Sharp (2011) investigate levee breaches in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. Using centrifuge modelling, two breach mechanisms were observed related to water-filled cracks that formed in front of the flood wall. They report that the centrifuge model tests indicate that levee geometry and flood wall depth of penetration, along with the underlying soil profile, are critical to the performance of the system under flood loading.

Law (2011) presents an assessment of settlement and bearing capacity of a chalk fill platform for a housing development in a former chalk quarry in Kent, UK. Roped-access inspection along with intrusive site investigation provided information regarding the improved quality of the chalk with depth and there being sufficient structured chalk for the platform construction. The author reports that end-product specification, trial compactions and plate bearing tests confirmed that the compacted chalk could provide the bearing capacity required. Post-construction settlement monitoring was used to confirm the time required for creep settlement to complete and the appropriate time for housing construction to commence.

In the third paper Jesmani *et al.* (2011) consider vibratory waves generated by dynamic loads on a foundation. They consider the propagation of waves through the underlying soil potentially having detrimental effects on sensitive structures. They examine the use of annular open trenches in screening the vibration energy induced through shallow foundations. Published field test data and numerical research are considered and a link suggested between the depth of the trench and the effectiveness of the solution. The authors note that there is greater complexity and that trench width, location and soil density are other influencing factors. They propose a new criterion, the trench efficiency index, and set out the optimum geometric trench parameters.

Rigby and Jones provide a review of *Geotechnical Slope Analysis*, 2nd edition by Robin Chowdhury, Phil Flentje and Gautam Bhattacharya; this is an extended and revised edition of the popular textbook *Slope Analysis* originally published in 1978.

Michael John Tomlinson died on 8th February 2011 aged 95 and his obituary by Professor John Burland is included in this issue. He remarks that Michael Tomlinson was one of the most eminent and respected practitioners in ground engineering throughout the world. He details his lasting literary legacy that ensures his name is known and respected to most civil and geotechnical engineers. John Burland provides an informed and insightful review of Tomlinson's impressive career.

I trust you enjoy the content of this issue and encourage readers to continue to enter into paper discussion. In closing I would like to say that I have enjoyed the past 3 years as chairman of the panel and would like to thank the many panel members and editorial team for their support over that time; I also offer my sincere appreciation to our readership and paper authors for their continued support of the journal.

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