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Research paper

The first fifty years of the Mechanism and Machine Theory: Standing back and looking forward[☆]Paulo Flores^a, António P. Souto^b, Filipe Marques^{a,*}^a MIT-Portugal Program, CMEMS-UMinho, Department of Mechanical Engineering, University of Minho, Campus de Azurém 4804-533, Guimarães, Portugal^b MIT-Portugal Program, 2C2T, Department of Textile Engineering, University of Minho, Campus de Azurém 4804-533, Guimarães, Portugal

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this work is to present an overview of the first five decades of the Mechanism and Machine Theory. First, the genesis of the journal is revisited, where the impressive way to the creation of Mechanism and Machine Theory is highlighted. In this regard, the remarkable work done by Professor Erskine Crossley has been emphasized. Furthermore, some of the major mentors and responsible for the tremendous success of the journal, since its first issue, are underlined here. Subsequently, a brief history of the journal in terms of the published papers, the regions of origin of the publications, as well as the number of authors and citations of the papers is presented and analyzed. Finally, the past, present and future of the mechanism and machine science are discussed in terms of research trends.

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1. Introduction

Mechanism and Machine Theory has reached half a century of age in 2016 [1]. In fact, the first issue was published in the spring of 1966, under the brilliant editorship of Professor Francis Rendel Erskine Crossley, the founder and first Editor-in-Chief of the then created *Journal of Mechanisms* [2,3]. Professor F.R. Erskine Crossley, a true leader and a giant in the field of Mechanism and Machine Science, died on Saturday, February 4, 2017 [4]. Prof. F.R. Erskine Crossley was 101 years old. In December of 2016, Elsevier and Editor-in-Chief established the Crossley Award with the aim of recognizing the scientific excellence of the most successful papers published in the journal. The Crossley award is given annually to recognize the most successful paper published in the Mechanism and Machine Theory over the prior two years as judged by the journal's senior editors. The fundamental selection criteria include citations, downloads, scientific excellence, originality, impact and relevance. All papers published in the journal across the selected review period are automatically candidates for the award.

It should be remembered that before the existence of Mechanism and Machine Theory, there was not a vehicle to publish research papers on mechanisms. During 1960s it was quite common and frequent to find investigators and scholars demanding a specialized journal [5]. In the fall of 1964, Prof. Johnson invited Prof. Crossley to visit the Manchester Institute of Science and Technology in England and to give a graduate course on Mechanisms. At that time, Prof. Johnson was editor of the well-established *International Journal of Mechanical Sciences* and fully recommended and supported the birth of our journal [1,5]. The former denomination *Journal of Mechanisms* was changed to Mechanism and Machine Theory in 1972,

[☆] This work is dedicated to Professor Bernard Roth to celebrate his 85th birthday!

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Fig. 1. Graphical evolution of the journal cover from its first publication as *Journal of Mechanisms* to today.



Fig. 2. Past Editors-in-Chief of the Mechanism and Machine Theory (from left to right) Prof. F.R.E. Crossley (1966–1973), Prof. J.J. Uicker (1973–1977), Prof. T. Shoup (1977–2003), Prof. A. Kecskeméthy (2003–2015).

when the link to International Federation for the Promotion of Mechanism and Machine Science (IFToMM) was initiated [6]. In fact, Mechanism and Machine Theory became the official voice of this scientific association since 1972, when the first IFToMM newssheet was printed. Fig. 1 depicts the graphical evolution of the journal cover from its first edition in 1966, as *Journal of Mechanisms*, to today designation.

Since the beginning of the journal it was clear to Prof. Crossley how important and crucial was the selection and invitation of the “Honorary Editorial Advisory Board” [5]. It must be highlighted that everyone invited by Prof. Crossley accepted the challenge and agreed to be an active member of journal team. The first Editorial Board of the journal included 19 distinguished members from eight different countries, namely:

I.I. Artobolevskii (USSR)
 O. Bottema (The Netherlands)
 W. Meyer zur Capellen (Germany)
 F. Freudenstein (USA)
 K. Hain (Germany)
 A.S. Hall (USA)
 R.S. Hartenberg (USA)
 J. Hirschhorn (Australia)
 K.H. Hunt (Australia)
 W. Johnson (England)
 A.E. Richard de Jonge (USA)
 D. Mangeron (Romania)
 H.E. Merritt (England)
 G.W. Michalec (USA)
 B. Roth (USA)
 H.A. Rothbart (USA)
 G.N. Sandor (USA)
 J.E. Shigley (USA)
 W. Wunderlich (Austria).

Fortunately, today we still have in our Editorial Board some of the above names, together with a new generation of researchers who were not yet born in 1966. Over the first fifty years, Mechanism and Machine Theory has been served by four distinguished and outstanding Editors-in-Chief Professor Erskine Crossley (1966–1973), Professor John Uicker (1973–1977), Professor Terry Shoup (1977–2003) and Professor Andr s Kecskem thy (2003–2015) [1,7–9]. Fig. 2 shows the past

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