30th Anniversary Issue

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Dear Readers,

I was asked by the Editor in Chief to write an editorial for the 30th Anniversary Issue of the Journal. It is unbelievable how fast time passes by.

What was life like in 1988, the year the journal was founded? Well, in world politics, for example, Mikhail Gorbachev became Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, effectively Head of State of the Soviet Union, while Benazir Bhutto was elected first female Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Unimaginable as it may seem to us now, with WIFI access almost everywhere and at all times, 1988 was also a crucial year in the early history of the Internet. The first permanent intercontinental Internet link was made between the United States (NSFNET) and Europe (Nordunet) as well as the first Internet-based chat protocol, Internet Relay Chat. The concept of the World Wide Web was first discussed at CERN in 1988. And it was the year of the first well-known computer virus, the 1988 Internet worm.

And for cult film and television buffs: 1988 saw the launch of Mystery Science Theater 3000, starring Joel Hodgson and four robots, a show that ran for many years, satirizing (bad) science-fiction movies.

You will probably cringe when you remember the clothes you wore or the music you listened to, but then again, maybe you represent our next generation of readers and contributors, and you weren't even around in 1988...

Anyway, another important event that happened in 1988 which concerns us here and now was when Spyros Tzafestas had the idea to start the *Journal of Intelligent & Robotic*

Systems. Back then, I was not in the picture yet, I only started to work for the journal in 2000, but I had the pleasure to work with Spyros on the journal for several years. In 2006 Kimon Valavanis took over the role of Editor in Chief for the journal – and we are still working together today. We meet at least once a year and we host a yearly board meeting at an international conference where we discuss the ups and downs of the journal. This year, we will organise the board meeting at IROS, to be held in Madrid, Spain, in October. We will of course celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Journal in style!

I would like to thank Spyros for his visionary concept when starting the journal with us. In a rapidly changing and expanding academic field not every journal continues to be active for so long, we owe this to the way the journal was set up and run during its first years. I would also like to thank Kimon for taking over from Spyros the way he has, keeping up the good work, and moving with the current developments in the field, seeking out new and valid subjects as well as young scientists to publish and help run the journal to keep it at the forefront of its discipline for a new generation.

As a special feature, for this Anniversary Issue, we have invited some key people to write an article about the progress of the Robotics field since 1988.

Enjoy the issue and Happy 30th Anniversary to the *Journal of Intelligent & Robotic Systems*!

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