Chief Editor's reflections on 27 years of Journal of Materials Science: Materials in Electronics

Arthur Willoughby¹

Published online: 13 October 2017
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The first issue of *J. Mater. Sci.: Materials in Electronics* was published in 1990, and I was honoured to be appointed the first Editor. Now that I am retiring on December 31st, 2017, it seems appropriate to record a few reflections on my 27 years of editing the journal.

As a companion journal to the main *Journal of Materials Science*, the initiative to launch this journal, together with *J. Mater. Sci.: Materials in Medicine*, was very much thanks to the then Editor of *Journal of Materials Science*, Professor Bill Bonfield, and the publishing Editor of Chapman and Hall (who published these journals then), Michael Dunn. Their foresight in recognising the strength of these disciplines, and the need to cover them with specialist journals, cannot be emphasised too strongly, and the subsequent success of this journal is witness to their initiative. In the first few years, both Bill Bonfield and Michael Dunn helped to ensure a strong launch to make it successful, and both are

recognised here for their invaluable contribution to the journal. The start of a new journal is always a challenge, but we benefited from being spawned from a well-established and internationally recognised main journal, and this has been a continuing strength to us under the leadership of Barry Carter.

As a new journal in this field, to join the respected and established TMS/IEEE *Journal of Electronic Materials*, whose Editor, Professor Ted Harman, was always extremely encouraging to me personally, this journal was able to embrace a wide range of aspects of materials in electronics, which has been recognised more recently on the mast-head to cover *Optoelectronic Materials and Photonics* in addition to the more traditional areas. The first issue contained papers on solar cells, electroceramics, infrared detector materials, resistors, high- T_c superconductors, optical fibres, magnetic materials, glasses, thin films and phosphors, in only 12 papers! Likewise these first papers included authors from the UK, USA, Japan, France, Italy, Australia, India and Egypt. At the start of the journal, all articles were handled in paper form, by surface and air-mail, which was slow, and often unreliable.

The growth in the number of papers submitted to the journal has been very fast, and this has been another major challenge, particularly over recent years. We have been fortunate that Springer have introduced online publication and Editorial Management, which has been immensely helpful in our task. In the first year of the journal in 1990, 4 issues were published containing 47 papers and 229 pages; in 2009, 12 issues were published containing 188 papers and 1259 pages, and in 2016 the 12 issues contained over 1700 papers and over 13,000 pages. In parallel with this, the Editorial Board has determined to publish papers of only the highest quality, and most significant in impact, with the result that the Impact factor has risen from 0.417 in 1999 to 1.020 in

✉ Arthur Willoughby
A.F.Willoughby@soton.ac.uk

¹ University of Southampton, Southampton, UK

2009, reaching its present level of 2.019 in 2016. In short, in the 7 years from 2009 to 2016 the journal has grown approximately tenfold in size, and has doubled its Impact Factor. It is a great satisfaction to have reached the significant level of Impact Factor of over 2.0 this year.

Reviews are a regular feature of our journal, and have been edited by my distinguished colleague, Safa Kasap from the University of Saskatchewan, Canada, who is Deputy Editor of the journal, as well as our Reviews Editor. I here record my sincere appreciation of Professor Kasap's tremendous contribution to the journal, since he was appointed in 2001 as Reviews Editor, and in 2006 as Deputy Editor-in-Chief, and I am delighted that he will be Editor-in-Chief from 2018.

To handle the tremendous growth, we have appointed Editors, who are handling regular papers on behalf of the journal, and in the last years we have seen the appointment of Patrick J McNally, Peter Capper, Maurizio Martino, I M Dharmadasa, Amlan Pal, Henry Radamson, Jun Luo, C Robert Kao, and more recently Dong-Liang Peng, Stephen Sweeney, Furong Zhu, Hiroshi Nishikawa, and Karthik Shankar. These Editors have been a tremendous asset to the journal, and I thank them all. Likewise I thank Guest Editors of Special Issues, which have been a regular feature of the journal since the start.

In all of the successive developments of the past 27 years, I also pay tribute to the Editorial Board, who have been tremendously supportive, together with referees, and authors. I thank successive Publishing Editors of the journal, including Michael Dunn (Chapman and Hall and Thomson), Carl Harris (Kluwer Academic), Greg Franklin (Kluwer and Springer), Alex Greene (Springer), and, lastly, Chuck Glaser (Springer), to whom we owe special thanks for his skilled handling of the recent growth, together with the editorial and production staff of these publishers who have made this all possible. At Southampton University, my grateful thanks go to Gill Rood, my editorial assistant, for her unstinting efficiency and loyalty throughout this long period.

In the first Editorial that I wrote for the launch of the journal, I emphasised the need for a journal to extend the coverage of materials science to incorporate their role in the applications themselves. In my view, the record of this journal illustrates the continuing need for such a coverage in the rapidly growing field of materials in electronics, optoelectronics and photonics. I retire from the journal with the knowledge that it is in very good hands for the future of this vital discipline.

Arthur Willoughby

Editor-in-Chief 1990–2017