

# Foreword

## Special Section on the 47th IEEE Holm Conference on Electrical Contacts

**I**T is my privilege to write this forward as your Guest Editor for the special section on electrical contacts in this issue of the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON COMPONENTS AND PACKAGING TECHNOLOGIES. The ten papers presented here are taken from the 47th IEEE Holm Conference on Electrical Contacts, Montreal, QC, Canada, during the traumatic week of September 11, 2001. Sitting in my office over a year later, the World seems a very different place from the day before the conference started.

The ten papers selected here demonstrate the vibrant nature of this field of research with contributions ranging from micro-contacts in MEMS devices to High current switching devices.

There are two papers where 3-D modeling of switching systems has been used to enlighten the design process. Three papers focus on arcing in high current devices, and a single paper on the topical issue of 42 V systems in the automotive sector. This latter issue is likely to draw more research in the near future as designers realise the impact of a change in voltage on both switching system reliability, safety issues, and connector issues.

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From 1985 to 1987, he lectured in the Mechanical Engineering Department, Plymouth University, and since 1987, has been a Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, and a Reader in instrumentation and measurement in the School of Engineering Science and the Electrical Engineering Department, University of Southampton. Since 2001, he has been Professor of electromechanical engineering in the School of Engineering Science. He is Chair of the Electromechanical Research Group, and Deputy Head of the School. His main research interests include electrical contacts, metrology, and instrumentation.

Dr. McBride is an Associate Editor of the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON COMPONENTS AND PACKAGING TECHNOLOGIES, a Chartered Engineer, and Chair of the Electro-Mechanical Research Group, and Vice Chair of IEE professional group S3 Electron Physics, Plasmas, and applications. He is a member of the Organizing Committee, IEEE Holm Conference on Electrical Contacts.