



GEMS 2013

This issue of *Ars Mathematica Contemporanea* offers a collection of papers presented at the Sixth Workshop ‘Graph Embeddings and Maps on Surfaces’ (GEMS), which took place in Smolenice, Slovakia, the week 14–19 July 2013.

The GEMS workshop series began with the idea of a small conference in Slovakia that would bring together researchers interested in various aspects of graphs embedded in surfaces. The first GEMS workshop was held in Donovaly the week 21–26 August 1994, and was attended by 33 participants from 14 countries. The topics covered by the workshop included combinatorial and topological properties of embedded graphs, construction of graph embeddings in surfaces, symmetries of embedded graphs, regular maps and hypermaps, group actions on graphs and surfaces, and convex polytopes.

The Donovaly workshop was followed by similar workshops in Banská Bystrica (1997), Bratislava (2001), Stará Lesná (2005), Tále (2009) and Smolenice (2013). The GEMS workshop is now held regularly every four years, organised by the leaders of the Slovak topological graph theory school: Roman Nedela, Jozef Širáň, and Martin Škoviera. These workshops have become very well known for their informal atmosphere, allowing time for discussion of research problems and exchange of information between both individual researchers and international research teams.

The venue for the most recent GEMS workshop was Smolenice Castle, the very same place where an event considered the world’s first truly international graph theory meeting was held fifty years earlier. Together with the the Seventh Czech-Slovak International Symposium on Graph Theory, Combinatorics, Algorithms and Applications (held in Košice a week before the GEMS 2013 workshop), it constituted one of the highlights of celebrations to commemorate the 50th anniversary of this unique scientific event.

We believe that readers will find the selected papers from GEMS 2013 both interesting and inspirational for further research. We also hope that after a similar special issue devoted to GEMS 2009, this issue will be followed by subsequent collections of papers, based on lectures delivered at GEMS workshops in 2017 and beyond.

Jozef Širáň and Martin Škoviera

Guest Editors