

School of Mathematics and Statistics Newsletter

January 2024

Congratulations to ...

- Yoaf Len and his wife on the birth of Fiona Avery Len on Friday 22nd December, weighing 7lbs 10oz (3.45kg). Mum and Fiona are doing well and Elliot is slowly adapting to being an older brother
- Colva Roney-Dougal and Kenneth Falconer who were recognised in the *King's New Year Honours List*. Colva was awarded an OBE (Officer of the Order of the British Empire) and Kenneth a CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire).
- Alex Stewart on his promotion to *Professor in Mathematical Biology* from January 2024.
- Raad Al Kohli on the successful defence of his PhD thesis 'Groups defined by language theoretic classes' on 19th December.
- Luke Derry on winning the *Gray Prize* for the best MSc student in the Faculty of Science and Medicine at St Andrews for 2022-23 (apologies for the delay in reporting this). Luke is now a PhD student in our Analysis group.



Elliot, Fiona and Yoav

Welcome to ...

- Irene Kyza who joined the School at the start of January as a Lecturer in Computational Mathematics. Before that, Irene was a Lecturer at the University of Dundee. She was an undergraduate at the University of Cyprus, obtained her PhD from the University of Crete and was a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Maryland, College Park, USA. Her main research interests are related to the numerical solution of Partial Differential Equations. She has been funded by an LMS Noether Fellowship, a Carnegie Trust Incentive Grant and a European Social Fund (ESF) grant. She is currently a member of the LMS Research Grant Committee, and has been a member of an EPSRC Fellowship Interview Panel and of EPSRC Prioritisation Panels. She was originally from Cyprus, is married to a mathematician, and is mother of four little boys.
- Evlyn Brown who joined us as School Coordinator in our Professional Services Team on 18th December.
- Dmytro Karvatsky from Ukraine who is visiting Natalia Jurga and the Analysis group for a year.
- Kasper Lok who has joined the History of Mathematics group as an Honorary Research Assistant.

Conferences, Talks and Visits

- Jack Southgate gave a talk titled ‘Studying the volume rigidity of simplicial complexes’ at the 17th Meeting of the *Applied Algebra and Geometry Network* at the University of York on 12th December.
- During the *Workshop on Probabilistic Methods in Dynamics* in Porto, 11-15th December, Mike Todd gave a talk on ‘Continuity of measures in nonuniformly hyperbolic settings’ and Boyuan Zhao spoke on ‘Maximal length of subsequence matching and Renyi entropy’.
- The Magdeburg *GoTh (Groups of Thompson) Workshop* in September led to an invitation to Magdeburg for Collin Bleak’s collaboration group (Jim Belk, Bradley Forrest, Francesco Mattucci and Collin) with the goal (as Kai-Uwe Bux put it) of ‘turning money into theorems’. We went from 12-19th December and had an excellent trip, where we managed to do just that with some of Kai-Uwe's grant money.
- Nik Ruskuc is visiting James East at the Western Sydney University from 15th January-23rd February. They are continuing their long-standing collaboration on congruences in partition monoids and, more recently, free idempotent generated regular $*$ -semigroups.
- Kenneth Falconer gave an (online) colloquium at Shenzhen University organised by Clarence Chen on 9th January (some may remember Clarence from when he visited us from September 2019-January 2020, a visit that was sadly curtailed by Covid).
- On 4th January Ben Swallow gave a public talk to the *Scottish Ornithologists Club Fife and Tayside* branches on ‘Coincidental crossbills and garden birds: studies in ecological data’.
- Fiona Macfarlane presented a poster at the *Retreat for Women in Applied Mathematics 2024 (RWAM2024)* <https://www.icms.org.uk/RWAM2024> at the ICMS Edinburgh from 8-12th January. The strategic workshop comprised research presentations, roundtable discussions and networking opportunities. The aim was to create a sense of community amongst female applied mathematicians at all career stages and develop a UK-based network for mentoring and sharing career opportunities. The event will be held again in 2025.
- Ben Baer presented a talk ‘A coarsened data perspective of causal survival analysis’ at the *16th International Conference of the ERCIM WG on Computational and Methodological Statistics (CMStatistics 2023)* on 17th December at HTW Berlin (Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft).
- On 14th December Isobel Falconer and Laura Johnson organised and hosted an online meeting of the *History for Diversity in Mathematics Network*. Laura presented to network members the findings of the four focus groups we held around the UK in the autumn, and Isobel led a discussion of how members would like to see the network develop. This is a new, and growing network, funded by the Isaac Newton Institute and led by St Andrews, whose aim is to explore effective ways of using history of mathematics to address EDI issues in the HE maths curriculum.
- Deborah Kent organised a special session at the *Joint Mathematics Meeting* in San Francisco, from 3rd-6th January. A lively audience of 100, including David Waszek, a Visiting Scholar in the St Andrews History of Mathematics Group, enjoyed a rich two-day programme of History of Mathematics. On the second day, Deborah presented some joint work with former St Andrews maths and computer science undergraduate Yansong Li titled ‘The Responsibility for this falls only on us: Chinese observations of the 1941 total solar eclipse’. She also ran a Professional Enhancement Programme on using historical case studies. Deborah Kent and David Waszek were also invited speakers for the UNESCO *World Logic Day Workshop* on 12th January hosted by the Orange County Inland Empire Seminar series in History and Philosophy of Mathematics.

Other News

- Sophie Huczynska has taken up the position of Vice Chair of the *Ethics Committee* of the *European Mathematical Society* from January 2024.

Future Events

- This is advanced notice that Colva Roney-Dougal will be giving her Inaugural Professorial Lecture at 5.15pm on 21st February; the lecture will be followed by a reception.

Caption Competition

- Our former Head of School, Mark Chaplain, wishes to embarrass a couple of staff by inviting captions for the two photos below which recently appeared on the University news page <https://news.st-andrews.ac.uk/archive/st-andrews-academics-recognised-in-new-year-honours/>

Send your suggestions for captions for either or both photos to Mark at <mailto:majc@st-andrews.ac.uk> - the best may be included in the February School Newsletter.



Next Issue

- The next edition of the School Newsletter will be circulated in February. Items may be sent to maths-news@st-andrews.ac.uk at any time but a reminder will be sent out a week before the deadline.