

MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS

NEWSLETTER

April-May 2004

CONGRATULATIONS

- Congratulations to James McLaughlin and Paul Wood whom, alongside 4 postgrads from Sheffield University, have won the UKSP/MIST cup jointly for our two universities! Well done guys!!
 - Congratulations to Lorna & Francois on their recent engagement.
-

WELCOME

- Welcome back to Gunnar Hornig from Bochum who arrived on 1 April for an extended visit to the Solar Group.
 - Welcome also to Professor Jim McKenzie who is visiting the Solar Group for most of June. Jim is a native of Scotland but he has spent much of his career abroad, most recently in South Africa (University of Natal) and in the Max Planck Institute, Katlenburg-Lindau, in Germany, following his graduation from Cambridge in the 60's. He has worked on a wide range of magnetospheric and solar problems, including writing a seminal paper (1970) on waves in the magnetosphere. His more recent work has been on coronal heating and solar wind acceleration, in joint work with Prof Ian Axford, and on fully nonlinear waves in space plasmas. He is visiting Bernard Roberts.
-

OTHER

- The School has recently obtained accreditation from the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) for its degree courses in statistics. This constitutes recognition by the RSS of the "breadth, depth, quality and foundation" of these

courses as well as their statistical content. Graduates of the new MMath degree in Statistics, who attain at least Second Class Honours, will be entitled to apply to the Society for the professional status of Graduate Statistician (GradStat) without the need for further examination. Graduates of other degree courses in statistics and/or mathematics, or of joint degree courses in statistics, may be similarly entitled, provided they have achieved passes in a specified range of statistics courses. The RSS also offers an annual prize for the best graduate on any one of its accredited undergraduate courses. Accreditation of degree courses is granted on an annual basis, with a full re-accreditation exercise every five years.

- Colin Campbell represented the School at a Community Meeting at University College London on 4 May which was held to launch the Report of the International Review of UK Research in Mathematics, The meeting was addressed by Professor Jean-Pierre Bourguignon, the Chair of the International Review Panel.

SEMINARS, LECTURES, RESEARCH VISITS

- Most members of the Solar Group attended the UK Solar Physics meeting which was held in Edinburgh (29 March - 1 April). Talks were given by Alan Hood, Ineke De Moortel, David Pontin, Laura Carcedo, Alexandra Cran and Peter Damiano. Catherine Gerrard presented a poster. Eric Priest and Bernard Roberts chaired a session.
- Mark Linton (Naval Research Lab) and Jonathan Cirtain (Montana State University) visited the Solar Group for 3 weeks during May.
- Andy Wright was in New Zealand from the 22nd March to the 14th of April and visited Waikato University (Hamilton) and the National Institute of Water and Atmosphere (Wellington). In Hamilton he visited Prof. Ian Craig and Dr. Sean Oughton. Some may remember Sean as a former postdoc here from the mid-90's. In Wellington he visited a long time collaborator Dr. Bill Allan, and Dr. Graham Rickard. (Graham was a former senior programmer in our department, also in the mid 90's, and has now settled in Wellington. Small world.) Andy gave a talk at both institutes on electron acceleration in global scale Alfvén waves. The Wellington rendition was peppered by personal anecdotes as some of the audience were

involved in pioneering work when this topic was in its infancy in the 70's and early 80's.

- Gavin Donnelly, Robert Kevis, James McLaughlin, Michael McEwan, Keith Bennett, Eric Priest, Alan Hood and Bernard Roberts recently attended the annual UK MHD meeting, held (for the first time ever) outside the UK, in Nice. The venue, a former seminary right on the coast and very near the port of Nice, proved excellent. Talks were given by James ("MHD wave propagation in the neighbourhood of corona null points") and Alan ("Coronal heating by coronal tectonics interactions"). Eric and Bernie both served as session Chairmen.

The arrival in Nice, on Easyjet from Luton, proved eventful for a number of us! The initial attempt at a landing was aborted, and at one stage the door of the cockpit was opened to reveal the captain lying prostrate on the cabin floor! It transpired he was trying to check whether the front wheel was in position for landing. Unfortunately, it was not possible to determine this so us lucky travellers on Easyjet were told to prepare for a crash landing, tightening our seatbelts and taking the brace position.

In the end, all was well and we landed safely, surrounded by five fire engines. Once safely at the conference centre, a group of us made a hasty dash for a suitable bar to restore our well-being! We were then ready for the conference.

- Ineke De Moortel visited Bart DePontieu at LMSAL (Palo Alto) from 19-24 April and then travelled on to visit Craig DeForest at SwRI (Boulder), where she gave a talk on "Theory & Observations of Slow Waves in Solar Coronal Loops". At the end of this visit, she also gave a talk at the SPD meeting in Denver (31 May - 03 June).

NEXT ISSUE

Please send material for the next Newsletter to: mcsnews@mcs.st-andrews.ac.uk