

# MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS



# NEWSLETTER



December 2006

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**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

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## CONGRATULATIONS

- Congratulations to Alan Hood, who has just been awarded the Harold Jeffreys Lectureship by the Royal Astronomical Society. This is a major international award, which has only once before given to a solar physicist: well done Alan!
  - Congratulations to Steve Waton on the successful defence of his PhD thesis, “On permutation classes defined by token passing networks, gridding matrices and pictures: three flavours of involvement”, on 11th December. His external examiner was Mike Atkinson and his internal examiner was Steve Linton.
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## SEMINARS, LECTURES, RESEARCH VISITS

- Sophie Huczynska gave the Pure Mathematics Colloquium at Queen’s University, Belfast, on 10th November.
- Stephane Regnier gave a review talk on non-linear force-free modelling of coronal magnetic features at the THEMIS user meeting held in Paris (15th-17th November), and visited the IAC (Tenerife, Spain) for collaborative work (28th-30th November).
- Colva Roney-Dougal visited New Zealand and Australia on a research visit. In Auckland she gave a talk entitled “Classifications and Constructions of Finite Permutation and Matrix Groups” at the Algebra Seminar, and at Sydney she gave a talk entitled “Maximal subgroups of low-dimensional classical groups”.

- Sophie Huczynska attended the Workshop on “Polynomials over Finite Fields and Applications”, held at the Banff International Research Station, Alberta, Canada, from 18th to 23rd November. She gave a talk entitled “The Strong Primitive Normal Basis Theorem”.
- Kenneth Falconer visited Universite Blaise-Pascal at Clermont-Ferrand in the Auvergne, as a member of a PhD jury. At the thesis defence he managed to ask several questions in broken French and even understood most of the answers! He also gave a talk (in English) as part of the Journees Fractales which had been arranged for the same days, and took time off to climb a couple of (extinct) volcanoes.
- Alan Cairns is a co-investigator on a 3.34M EPSRC grant which has been awarded to Professor Dino Jaroszynski of the University of Strathclyde. The award, for a project entitled “Harnessing laser-driven plasma waves as particle and radiation sources” will continue the work of a group of collaborators who have been supported by a Basic Technology grant over the last four years. The main objective is to produce compact sources of very short coherent X-ray and gamma ray pulses. Alan is part of a group which will provide theoretical support for the project.
- Kenneth Falconer has been elected Publications Secretary of the London Mathematical Society. This carries the daunting responsibility for six journals, four translation journals and four book series!
- Colva Roney-Dougal appeared on the BBC Radio 4 programme “In Our Time”, presented by Melvyn Bragg, on 14th December. The topic under discussion was “Indian Mathematics”.

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## **NEXT ISSUE**

Please send material for the next Newsletter to: [mcsupdate@mcs.st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:mcsupdate@mcs.st-andrews.ac.uk)