MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS
NEWSLETTER

February 2002

HALE PRIZE

- Congratulations to Eric Priest who has been nominated to receive the prestigious Hale Prize from the American Astronomical Society for his seminal contributions to investigations of the role of the magnetic field in solar activity, and for his tireless advocacy of solar physics in all corners of the world. Eric's Hale Prize lecture will be given at the joint meeting of the Solar Physics Division and the American Astronomical Society this June in Albuquerque.

  The Hale Prize is an Honorary Prize in memory of George Ellery Hale, awarded approximately every two years to a scientist who has made outstanding contributions to the field of solar astronomy.

CONGRATULATIONS

- to Niki Stalker who had a baby girl, Keri, on 20th December, 2001.

- to Juergen Dreher for being awarded an European Commission Marie-Curie-Fellowship for two years. Juergen will stay in St Andrews to research the theory of dynamical coupling processes between the solar chromosphere and corona.

- to Clare Parnell who has been awarded a PPARC Advanced Fellowship for five years. She will start her Fellowship here in St Andrews in October 2002.

- to Istvan Ballai on successfully gaining a postdoc position in Sheffield, working with Robert Von fay Siebenburgen and Michael Ruderman. Istvan left St Andrews at the end of January.

WELCOME

- (back) to Pia Veldt Larsen who has come up from the OU to work with Peter Jupp and go mountaineering with Ineke De Moortel!

NEWS

- Bernard Roberts recently attended a one day meeting of the Royal Astronomical Society, in London, and heard an excellent talk by Professor Sami Solanki, Director of the Max Planck Institut fur Aeronomie (Lindau). Professor Solanki gave the Harold Jeffreys lecture on "Solar variations and climate change: is there a link?". Some members of the School will remember Sami was here in the latter part of the 80's as a postdoc in the Solar Group working with Bernard.

- Alex Craik attended the Christmas meeting of the British Society for the History of Mathematics held at University College, London on 20th December 2001. The meeting was dedicated to the memory of the late John Fauvel. Alex gave one of the invited lectures, on "Edward Sang (1805-1890): calculator extraordinary."

  At the Society's AGM, Alex was elected to the Council. He is keen to encourage the Society to hold more meetings in Scotland; but he is aware that many based in Scotland who are interested in history of mathematics are not members of the Society. If anyone would like to join, or wishes more information, please contact him.

  A lecture by Florence Fasanelli on connections between mathematics and art, had a surprising spin-off for Alex's fluid-dynamical researches. Some curious three-dimensional surfaces traced out by his solutions of a certain dynamical system closely resemble some sculptures by the Russian-born artist Naum Gabo, the first of which he made in 1939! Alex confirmed this by a visit to the Tate Modern, and inserted a 'Postscript' in a forthcoming Physica D paper by Craik and Okamoto.

- John Howie leaves on 15th February to visit his family in New Zealand. On the way home he will give lectures, first to Mathematical Olympiad students in Hong Kong, then to an algebra conference in Bangkok. He expects to be back at his desk on Monday 25th March.

- Several members of the Solar Theory Group (Istvan Ballai, Francois-Xavier Bocquet, Juergen Dreher, Ineke de Moortel, Thomas Neukirch, Bernie Roberts) attended the 'PLATON Annual Meeting/2nd PLATON Workshop on Heating and Winds' at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium) on the 14th and 15th of January 2002. PLATON is a European Research Training Network which is coordinated by the Solar Theory Group, and focuses on solar and astrophysical plasma theory. The workshop was organized by Thomas Neukirch (PLATON Coordinator) together with Marcel Goossens, Stefaan Poedts and Bart van der Holst (all Leuven), and attracted about 35 participants from across Europe, among them former St. Andrean Gordon Petrie, who escaped the heavy snowfall in Athens to attend the meeting.

  Talks were given by I. Ballai on "Solitary waves in the solar wind", Juergen Dreher on "Adaptive mesh refinement in MHD simulations" and Thomas Neukirch on "PLATON status" and "Development of a 3D numerical continuation code: a status report".

- Peter Jupp travelled to Aberdeen and gave a talk on "Some Applications of Directional Statistics in Astronomy" to the Highland Group of the Royal Statistical Society. At the end of January he attended the *QRANDOM II* Workshop on Quantum Information and Quantum Probability at the Max Planck Institute in Dresden.

- Clare Parnell gave an invited talk on "Multi-spacecraft Observations of Transient Dynamic Phenomena on the Quiet Sun" at the Yohkoh 10th Anniversary Meeting in Kona, Hawaii.

SEMINARS

- Solar Group Seminars (Math. Rm 3B - 1.30pm)

  – Wednesday 13 February: David Tsiklauri (Warwick University)
  – Wednesday 20 February: Steve Brooks
  – Wednesday 27 February: Laura Carcedo
  – Wednesday 6 March: Ineke De Moortel

NEXT ISSUE

- Please send any material for the next newsletter to mcsnews@mcs by 12pm Thursday 7th March.