

# MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS

January/February 2007

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## WELCOMES AND GOODBYES

- Welcome to James McLaughlin, who has joined the Solar Theory Group as a Research Fellow. James completed his PhD here 2002-2005 and has rejoined the school after a one year postdoc at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center in the USA.
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## CONGRATULATIONS

- Congratulations to Carl and Monique on the unexpectedly early arrival of baby Cormac - in just as much hurry to get on with life as Mum! After a few eventful weeks for both, they are now doing fine - and father is coming out of shock nicely.
  - Congratulations to Duncan Mackay on being awarded the Fowler Award of the Royal Astronomical Society. This is given to the most distinguished young researcher in the UK in astronomy, solar physics, geophysics or solar system science, with “young” being defined for this purpose as someone within a decade or so of having finished a PhD. A previous winner of this award was our own Clare Parnell.
  - Congratulations to David Borchers, who has been offered the Readership in Statistics.
  - Congratulations to Alison Ramage, our former student (1983 - 87) and now our current External Examiner for Honours Applied Mathematics. Alison has been promoted to Reader at the University of Strathclyde.
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## SEMINARS, LECTURES, RESEARCH VISITS

- On 8th December, Alex Craik attended the Christmas meeting of the British Society for the History of Mathematics, held at King Edward's School, Birmingham. A highlight was the 300th anniversary lecture on

Euler, by Robin Wilson. In full period costume, he delivered the lecture in the first person, as Euler himself, and afterwards the chairman Raymond Flood announced the “news” of his death. Alex’s talk, his first using PowerPoint, was (unsurprisingly) affected by technical hitches, but he nevertheless managed to show “The portraits of William Hopkins’ Cambridge wranglers, 1829-52”. On 15th-16th December, Alex attended the conference “Theoretical fluid dynamics in the 21st century” at Imperial College, London, where he chaired a session. This meeting was in honour of J. Trevor Stuart, to mark his 40 year association with the Mathematics Department. Despite the forward-looking title, many participants were now-retired friends and associates of Prof. Stuart. But enough interesting papers were presented to convince those attending that this century will be as fruitful for fluid mechanics as the last has been.

- Magda Carr attended the 6th international symposium on stably stratified flows at UWA, Perth, Western Australia. The meeting took place from 11th-14th December 2006, and Magda presented a paper entitled “Convectively induced shear instability in large amplitude internal solitary waves”.
- Len Thomas attended a conference on statistical ecology (EURING 2007) in Dunedin, New Zealand, where he chaired a session on estimating animal abundance, gave a talk on mark-recapture distance sampling, presented a poster on fitting population dynamics models using grey seals as an example, and tried to answer questions about a poster sent along by PhD student Jon Bishop on fitting population dynamics models using mark-recapture data. Despite these work commitments, there was plenty of time to climb mountains, view wildlife and sample the local ales.
- Clare Parnell has recently visited Lockheed Martin in the US where she attended a workshop on fragment tracking and gave a seminar. She also attended a meeting in Bonn on the “Coronae of Stars and Accretion Disks” and gave an invited talk. Finally, she has just returned from Denmark where she collaborated with Klaus Galsgaard (whom some of you may remember as a postdoc here in the nineties).
- Eric Priest, Alan Hood and Ineke De Moortel attended the kick-off meeting of the new SOLAIRE network in Paris (11th - 12th January). Eric Priest is the leader of one of the collaborative packages within the network, Alan Hood is the theory coordinator and Ineke De Moortel is one of the two transfer of knowledge coordinators.

- Michelle Murray and Ineke De Moortel attended the RAS discussion meeting “Linkages between the Solar Interior and Atmosphere” on 12th January. Michelle gave a talk entitled “Simple Emergence Structures from Complex Magnetic Fields” while Ineke’s talk was on “A comparison of the energy budget of p-modes and observed coronal oscillations”.
- Ken McClements (UKAEA/Culham) visited Ineke De Moortel and Andrew Moon on 24th January and gave a seminar to the Solar Group.
- George Phillips was a contributor to the Radio 4 programme “In Our Time”, broadcast on 25th January 2007, hosted by Melvyn Bragg. The subject of the programme was Archimedes.
- Peter Jupp visited the University of Limerick, where he gave a talk on “Fisher information and the design of quantum experiments” at the Seminar in Biostatistics.
- Jean Reinaud went to UCL to act as the external examiner for Alan Hinds’ PhD “Surf zone vortices over step topography” on 13th February 2007. Alan Hinds was supervised by two very good colleagues of the Vortex Dynamics group, Dr Robb McDonald and Prof Ted Johnson, who both visited us to give seminars.
- On 22nd February, Magda Carr will be off to Paris to sit on a PhD committee at the Universite Pierre & Marie Curie, Paris VI. She will be examining the thesis “Stabilite de la convection thermique et/ou solutale en couches fluide et poreuse superposees” by Silvia da Costa Hirata.

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## **NEXT ISSUE**

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