

MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS

NEWSLETTER

July 2003

WELCOME

- I am delighted to welcome Ineke as our new Newsletter Editor. I hope that all members of the School will continue to support the Newsletter by sending her news of their activities, such as research visits, conferences attended, visitors, seminars, newcomers to the School, personal items, etc.
KJF
 - Dr Richard Scott has just arrived from Columbia University in New York to work on a NERC-funded project for 6 months with David Dritschel. Dr Scott is from Edinburgh, and completed his PhD in Cambridge (at DAMTP). He will be investigating interactions between vortices in the stratosphere, in an attempt to better understand the break-up of the 'polar vortex' that heralds the end of winter.
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CONGRATULATIONS

- Congratulations to Alison Ramage, one of our 1987 graduates, on her promotion to Senior Lecturer in Mathematics at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.
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EVENTS

- Members of the School will know that Tom Blyth and Alex Craik are retiring this summer. Both were undergraduates at St Andrews and both joined the lecturing staff in 1963 and have been with us ever since.

There will be a party to mark Tom's retirement at 5.15 on Wednesday 17th September, and one to mark Alex's retirement at 5.15 on Tuesday 30th September. Further details will be circulated nearer the time.

SEMINARS, LECTURES, RESEARCH VISITS

- David Dritschel visited the National Centre for Atmospheric Research from 1-4 July and gave two seminars there on turbulence and new algorithms for computing fluid flow. He then went to Sydney to speak at the ICIAM conference and to work at the University of Sydney with Prof Charlie Macaskill, from 7-16 July.
- Erzsi Dombi, Bob Gray, Catarina Carvalho and Colin Campbell attended an International Meeting on Semigroup Theory and Related Topics held at the Universidade do Minho, Braga, Portugal from June 25-28. Erzsi gave a talk 'Almost factorisable straight locally inverse semigroups'. James Mitchell, a former St Andrews student gave a talk on 'Notions of independence and endomorphisms of algebras'. Gracinda Gomes, yet another former St Andean, gave a main talk 'Weakly left ample semigroups'.
- The 17th St Andrews Colloquium, this time on the theme 'Analysis and Probability on Fractals', was held in the Mathematical Institute in early July. About 50 mathematicians attended the Colloquium, with Kenneth Falconer, Lars Olsen, and Bernd Stratmann giving talks, and Jacob Bjornborg, Peter Jupp and Ivan Werner also taking a major part in the meeting.
- Paolo Giuliani attended the RHESSI Topical Workshop on 'Distribution Functions of Energetic Flare Particles' which was held in Glasgow, June 4-6, 2003.
- In July, Peter Damiano went to the IUGG (International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics) conference in Sapporo Japan. During an active and informative two day session on particle acceleration mechanisms associated with the aurora, Peter presented a poster entitled "Effects of Converging Magnetic Field Topology on Electron Dynamics along Dipolar Magnetic Field Lines". This highlighted work being done in conjunction with Andy Wright using the hybrid MHD-kinetic model to study electron acceleration associated with standing shear Alfvén waves in the magnetosphere. As an interesting side note, this was the first time for a geophysical conference of this size in Asia and the Japanese Emperor and Empress graced the opening ceremony of the two week long meeting. The emperor gave an interesting (and enlightened) speech on the historical and continuing importance of geophysical study to Japan and the world...needless to say, the conference made the evening news nationwide!

- Alan Cairns attended an International Workshop on Laser-Beam Interactions held in Oxford on 7th-11th July, giving a talk on "Envelope equations and energy relations in wakefield and related problems". The following week he returned to the same area for discussions with collaborators at Culham and Rutherford Appleton Laboratories and to lecture at the Culham Summer School on Plasma Physics.
 - In May and June B.O. Stratmann has been invited speaker at the the conference "Conformal Dynamical Systems" (UNT, Denton, Texas, US), and an invited speaker at the Nevanlinna Colloquium in Jyvaskyla (Jyvaskyla, Finland). In July/August he is following an invitation to the University of Goettingen (Germany).
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CREEM

- CREEM Opening - Dr Brian Lang will host the Opening of CREEM by Professor John Lawton CBE, FRS, Chief Executive of Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) on 2nd September.
- A five-day workshop, Estimating Animal Abundance, will be held at CREEM from 2nd to 6th September. It will introduce participants to the most important methods of estimating animal abundance, including recently-developed methods. The workshop has been developed with funding from UK research councils (EPSRC and NERC). The instructors are David Borchers, Steve Buckland and Len Thomas from St Andrews together with Professor Walter Zucchini from the University of Göttingen and Professor Byron Morgan from the University of Canterbury.
- This year's Distance Workshops will be held in September. Workshop 1: Introduction to Distance Sampling, from 10-12 September and Workshop 2: Advanced Techniques and Recent Developments in Distance Sampling, from 15-17 September. To date we have registrations from 15 countries.
- We are sorry to say that Catherine Brown has left to take up a full time post with the Admissions Access Centre. We'll all miss her unique contribution to life at the Observatory but wish her all the best for the future.
- Visiting Associate Professor Eric Rexstad, Institute of Arctic Biology, who has been with us for six months, left in June to return to Alaska.

- Welcome to Kenneth Newman, who takes up his Senior Lectureship in Statistics on 1st Sept. Ken is well-known to many of us already, following the sabbatical he spent in St Andrews during 2001/02. Ken joins us from the University of Idaho.
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NEXT ISSUE

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