

MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS

September - October 2006

CONGRATULATIONS

- Congratulations to Chuong Van Tran and his wife Huynh Anh Mai on the birth of their daughter Que Anh Tran on 29th September 2006. Her vital statistics at birth were: weight 8.5 pounds and length 20 inches. We wish them all the best!
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WELCOMES

- A warm welcome to Magda Carr and Richard Scott who have started their lectureship in Applied Mathematics in September. Magda Carr and Richard Scott are joining the Vortex Dynamics Group. Magda graduated from Durham and finished a postdoc at Dundee University just before joining us. Richard graduated from Cambridge and after several post-docs (including a 6 months position in St Andrews), was most recently a researcher at North West Research Associates in Seattle.
- Welcome to all the new PhD students in all groups:
- In the Analysis Group, our new students are: Lining Liu, who graduated from Bath University, and Sara Munday and Anthony Samuel, both St Andrews graduates who have returned to us after taking taught postgraduate courses in Texas and Cambridge respectively.
- In the Algebra and Combinatorics Group, our new students are: Jonathan Bagnall (PhD), Hannah Coutts (PhD), Victor Maltcev (PhD), and Sian Inch (M.Sc.). Jonathan and Hannah are both St Andrews graduates; Victor joins us from Kiev and Sian from Sheffield.
- Joanne Potts has just started a PhD at CREEM. She will be developing new methods for estimating abundance of a particularly problematic study species: a threatened population of woodrats on Key Largo. Joanne was previously the sole statistical consultant at the Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research at Melbourne. Lindsay Scott-Hayward has joined CREEM as a research student, after graduating from the MRes in

Environmental Biology that is co-taught by Statistics. Her project will look at methods to address the problems of predicting animal distributions in regions where there are clearly defined physical limits on where a species can and cannot occur. This work will focus on data from line-transect surveys of cetaceans in enclosed areas, such as the North Sea and Baltic, but will be useful for spatial data of this type in general.

- The Solar Group welcomes three new PhD students: Graeme Cook, Nick Owen and Lynsey Thorton.
- The Fluids Group welcome (back!) Greig Henderson who starts a PhD in Applied Mathematics with David Dritschel. Greig is funded by the NERC and will work on "Potential Vorticity staircasing in planetary atmospheres". Greig graduated here in June.
- Welcome to the long term research visitors to the Algebra and Combinatorics Group: Stephen Glasby (Central Washington University, Ellensburg, Washington) and Andrew Rich (Manchester College, North Manchester, Indiana).

FAREWELL & GOOD LUCK

- We were very sorry to lose Sharon Hedley, who left RUWPA and the Statistics Division earlier this year in order to be able to spend more time with her young children. Sharon was one of the longest-serving RUWPA staff, having joined when it was established in 1993 as WPARG (Wildlife Population Assessment Research Group). She came to RUWPA with a strong interest in cetacean (whales and dolphins) conservation and research - an interest which she maintained and developed throughout her career at St Andrews. Sharon became a regular and valued member of the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission and in her last few years with RUWPA, took responsibility for RUWPA's work in this area. In addition to doing research in statistical methods relevant to cetacean surveys, Sharon became a skilled cetacean survey observer and cruiseleader, participating in surveys in the North Sea, the Southern Ocean, the Pacific and the Amazon river. She was awarded her PhD while here and recently had a paper arising from her PhD named as the best paper to the Journal of Agricultural, Biological and Environmental Statistics for 2004/5.

SEMINARS, LECTURES, RESEARCH VISITS

- James Mitchell and Nik Ruškuc ran a workshop on “Computational and Algorithmic Aspects of Semigroup Theory” from 5th to 9th September. Alan Cain and Yann Peresse gave well-received talks at the workshop. Our former member of staff Goetz Pfeiffer was one of the plenary speakers.
- Ineke De Moortel gave an invited contribution (“3D Numerical Simulations of Coronal Tectonics”) at the Workshop on Magnetic Reconnection (Florence, 28 August - 1 September) and a seminar at the QuAMP III Summerschool (Durham, 21 September).
- Brigitta von Rekowski gave a talk at the workshop on magnetic reconnection theory in Florence (28 Aug - 1 Sep).
- Between the 1-3rd September, Duncan Mackay attended the PPARC International Summer School in Palma, Mallorca where he gave an invited lecture on Solar Variations. Duncan also attended the Coimbra Solar Physics Meeting in Portugal between the 9-13th October where he gave a talk entitled “Modelling the Hemispheric Pattern of Filaments” and a poster on “Models of the Large-Scale Corona: Formation, Evolution and Ejection of Magnetic Flux Ropes”.
- Kenneth Falconer was a plenary speaker at the conference “Mathematics on Fractals” in Kyoto, Japan. As well as a very stimulating conference, he enjoyed seeing Kyoto with its mix of modern and ancient buildings, and experienced sitting on the floor in Japanese style to eat a continuously arriving stream of often unidentifiable food! Kenneth also gave one of the main lectures at the 60th Birthday meeting for Anthony Manning at the University of Warwick.
- John Howie and Nik Ruškuc attended a conference on “Semigroups, Categories and Automata” in honour of John Fountain’s 65th birthday, from 12th to 14th October in York. Nik gave an invited lecture.

NEXT ISSUE

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