

MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS

NEWSLETTER

September 2002

FAREWELL

- to Carmen Fernandez who leaves to take up a post in Statistics at the University of Lancaster. She will be continuing with collaborations with St Andrews so we look forward to her visiting from time to time.
 - to Jean Claude Thelen who has left to take up a position with the Met Office in Bracknell. Jean-Claude has been a Postdoc in the Solar Theory Group for 18 months.
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WELCOME

- to Professor Mike Evans from Washington and Lee College, Virginia, and Professor Paul Humke from St Olaf College, Minnesota, who will be working with the Analysis Group until Christmas.
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CONGRATULATIONS(?)

- to John McCabe who has been re-elected as Chair of the Examining Board in the International Baccalaureate Organisation for a further three year term!
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NEWS

- Paul Wood and Lorna James attended a PPARC Exploring Entrepreneurship course in Derby from 15th-19th July

- Between 28th July - 20th August Paul Wood was at the Montana State University in Bozeman working with Prof. Piet Martens on filament formation.
- Allan Gordon gave a talk at the 8th Conference of the International Federation of Classification Societies, held in Cracow from 16-19 July.
- Maximillian Murphy has been to the Postgraduate Combinatorial Conference PCC13 in Essex, 24-27 July. He enjoyed his evenings sitting on the river quay talking (mathematics of course!) and looking at all sorts of gaff rigged boats, with the accompaniment of a thumping piano from an uproarious tavern! He also went to Cambridge for the Randomized Algorithms conference which ran from 5-16 August where he gathered fresh grapevine information about topical research and a certain announcement about the complexity of primality testing... Also, look out for the Italians who appear to be in line to break the punting speed record for Cambridge to Granchester!
- Longer-term members of our community may remember the bushy-haired and bushy-bearded, larger than life, postgraduate student Ian Diamond who played rugby for the Scottish Universities and worked until 1980 with Richard Cormack on “A Comparison of GCE and SCE school qualifications as predictors of University performance”. Then, as Professor of Demography at the University of Southampton, Ian returned to give us a talk a couple of years ago on the 2001 UK population census, for which he devised much new analytical methodology. Since then he became Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Southampton, and has now been appointed Chief Executive of the Economic and Social Research Council. Ian will doubtless apply his knowledge that it is possible to do excellent work and achieve eminence without writing any papers on one’s thesis! We wish him well.
- Freda and David Kemp were in Hamilton, Ontario for the Annual Meeting of the Statistical Society of Canada at the very attractive campus of McMaster University. Freda gave a paper on “True odds with a biased coin”. From there they travelled to Greece to attend the 5th International Conference on Lattice Path Combinatorics and Discrete Distributions, held at the University of Athens. Freda gave an invited paper on “Steady-state Markov chain models for certain q -confluent hypergeometric distributions” and David chaired the final plenary session. They also visited the Athens

University of Business and Economics, where Freda gave a seminar this time on “True odds with a biased coin”.

New Experts Guide

Claire Grainger asked me to include this in the next Chemistry newsletter. I have decided to put it the Maths one instead!

- **New Experts Guide**

The Press Office is currently working on the creation of an Experts Guide, a list of Academics and their general area of expertise, which will ultimately be an online resource of ‘experts’ for the media.

A paper version of the Experts Guide was created some time ago, but this is now largely outdated. By creating an on-line version, in common with other Scottish Universities, it will be easier to disseminate and update on a regular basis.

If you would like to be included in this resource, please contact the Press Office with your name, contact details and area of expertise, preferably worded in a non-technical manner (e.g. Shakespeare, Solar Phenomena, Volcanoes, Bird Song).

If you are to be listed as an expert, you should be aware that this would be likely to lead to approaches from press interested in your research, or looking for an ‘expert comment’ on a current news story.

In the meantime, we are adding to the database experts the Press Office has dealt with before, and also new experts gleaned from the University webpages. Those individuals will be contacted in the coming months to check whether they are happy to be included in the finished guide.

Submissions should be emailed to Allison Irvine, Press Secretary, on ai@st-andrews.ac.uk.

Please include the following information:

Name: Area of expertise (could be more than one): Email: Tel (work / home / mobile if appropriate):

All submissions will be replied to with a further explanation as to how we will deal with future media requests.

NEXT ISSUE?

- As I previously warned I am now stepping down as Editor of the Newsletter. I do not know when or if a next issue will appear. If any of you feel that it is important that the Departmental Newsletter should continue and you can spare 30 mins every month then please contact me or Ken Falconer.