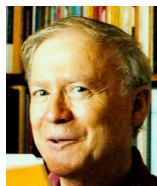


## 2004 Australia Day honours

### Member (AM) in the general division

Professor Alfred Jacobus van der Poorten, Killara, NSW. For service to mathematical research and education, particularly in the field of number theory.



Alf's response:

"I am delighted that mathematics in Australia, and more particularly number theory research, has received this sign of public recognition and, naturally, I am truly pleased by the pleasure this award will have given my family and friends.

And, I should add, I am very grateful to those of my colleagues who recommended and supported the present award. Just so, I remain indebted to my teachers back in the sixties at the University of New South Wales, particularly to the late John Blatt and to George Szekeres, and to the late Kurt Mahler at the ANU.

I have enjoyed my first forty or so years as a mathematician. I recall, when appointed to a chair twenty-five years ago, startling an SMH reporter so much that my remark 'Mathematics is fun' became a quote of the week<sup>†</sup>. Whatever, I have attempted to act on that principle by giving vivid and interesting colloquium talks (necessarily, most of them overseas) and putting real effort into bright expository writing. In the meantime, I also wrote some 150 research papers, some of them influential — and that's not just my joint papers with (brighter) luminaries in the subject. I expect to get yet more pleasure from my next forty years as a mathematician."

---

<sup>†</sup>That same reporter also made much of my relatively young age, leading a colleague, later a Vice-Chancellor, to wonder aloud why it's PC to emphasise a low age but not a small size.

<http://www.maths.mq.edu.au/~alf/MCH.html> mentions some of Alf's mathematical career highlights.

### Medal (OAM) in the general division

Olive Gwenne Moore, Ringwood East, Victoria. For service to the community, particularly as a contributor to genealogical studies, and to mathematics education.

### Medal (OAM) in the general division

Brenda Frances Nettle, Brighton, SA. For service to education through the Australian Federation of University Women (SA) and the Mathematical Association of South Australia.