



# Editorial

The big news just before this *Gazette* went to press was the awarding of the Fields Medal to Terry Tao at the ICM in Madrid. On behalf of the Australian mathematical community we wish to congratulate Terry with this wonderful achievement. Terry has been the first Australian ever to receive the highest accolade in mathematics, and his award has received considerable attention in Australian and international media — even making it to the National News on several television stations. The *Gazette* has prepared a special online-only edition dedicated to Terry, and we invite our readers to visit <http://www.austms.org.au/Publ/Gazette/2006/Jul06/Supplement/>.

It is perhaps somewhat of a coincidence that Terry's Fields Medal success, and the subsequent media attention for mathematics, coincides with John Henstridge's contribution to the **Math matters** column. According to John — himself a business-mathematician rather than a research-mathematician — the AustMS and all of its members should, like any other business or science, give much more serious thought to its brand image and to the importance of marketing mathematics. The image of mathematics and its perceived importance by the general public determines our funding to a large extent. If mathematics and its contribution to society are not valued and/or appreciated by the wider community, it is our task to change this perception. Terry Tao's inspirational success should be the first stepping stone in lifting the image of Australian mathematics.

That the branding of mathematics is intrinsically difficult was well understood by Bertrand Russell, who remarked that

*Mathematics may be defined as the subject in which we never know what we are talking about, nor whether what we are saying is true.*

However, paraphrasing one blog, there also is hope,

*Branding itself may be another one of those subjects. For how can we truly speak to the essence of branding when the matter is purely subjective in nature? Sure, we can provide our viewpoint and a myriad of examples. But the insights and real work of branding take place in the communities of passionate, like-minded people; be they gardeners, motorcyclists, footy fanatics, wine connoisseurs, gadget freaks, and even bloggers.*

We could certainly add “mathematicians” to the blogger's list, taking advantage of our love and passion for the profession to bring us further. There is good hope for the brand image of Australian mathematics as long as greats such as Sir Gustav Nossal make comments like

*Do as much mathematics and statistics as you can in your degrees – these skills will empower your professional lives.*

### Rectification

In the article *The behaviour of Tsunamis*, Gazette **33(3)** (2006), 195–199, the name of the author Maurice N. Brearley has been misspelled as Maurice N. Brearly. We apologise to the author for this mistake.

### Vacancy: Editor(s) for the Gazette

The present Editors of the *Gazette*, Drs Jan de Gier and S. Ole Warnaar, are sadly stepping down from their position on 31 December 2006. So the hunt is on for a replacement Editor or Editors, to carry the *Gazette* forward from 2007 on. An overlap in the position of a few months, from about October 2006, is envisaged, to enable a smooth transition.

Anyone interested in the position of Editor is invited to send (via e-mail) a brief resumé and covering letter to both the President and the Secretary, at [President@ AustMS.org.au](mailto:President@ AustMS.org.au) and [Secretary@ AustMS.org.au](mailto:Secretary@ AustMS.org.au).

There is financial assistance available for part-time secretarial help. Knowledge of L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X is essential. For further information about what the position entails, please contact the present Editors at [gazette@ms.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:gazette@ms.unimelb.edu.au).

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