



# Editorial

The start of the new year always reminds us of the abacus. Not only because it features on the new covers of the *Gazette*, but publication collections, appraisals and looming ARC application deadlines all require a careful counting of one's yearly output. It's a bean counters paradise. In **Math matters** Tony Bracken considers the merits of citations and impact factors to quantify scientific productivity, and, alarmingly, notes the relatively low scores of mathematics compared to other sciences.

One of the obvious consequences of the rise of impact factors is that the prestige of journals in which we publish is becoming more and more important. In his **President's column** Michael Cowling urges us to contribute more to our own journals and to raise their profile and that of Australian mathematics.

The richness of Australian mathematics is evident, including for example research into "elliptic differential equations" and "bottom-up modelling of gene componentry". The former contains a challenge, described by John Urbas in **The 9th Problem**, and being part of the *Gazette's* millennium series will win you fantastic prize money and an honorary mention. The latter is explained eloquently by researchers from the ANU and UQ, demonstrating the fact that bio-mathematics research has definitely taken off in Australia.

Speaking of genes, could these be the reason why so few female mathematicians occupy senior positions around the country? New York Times scientific editor Cornelia Dean fiercely rejects recent such comments made by Dr Lawrence H. Summers, president of Harvard. Although genes might play a role, she writes, the real issue still is society's deprecative attitude towards mathematically talented girls and women.

On a lighter note your mathematical inventiveness is tested by Norman Do's card trickery in **Mathellaneous**.

Finally, we wish to thank retiring local correspondents K.-G. Choo (Sydney) and G. Robertson (Newcastle) and welcome M. Myerscough (Sydney) and J. MacDougall (Newcastle). We would also like to draw your attention to the call for nominations for the election of officers and ordinary members of the AustMS council.