

53rd Annual Meeting of the Australian Mathematical Society

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The 53rd Annual Meeting of the Australian Mathematical Society (AustMS) was held between 28 September and 1 October 2009 at the City West Campus of the University of South Australia, in Adelaide. The meeting hosted 12 plenary speakers, including the 2006 Fields Medallist Terence Tao, and 280 contributed talks from Australia and around the world in 24 special sessions and one general session. More than 350 participants, including secondary-school teachers, enjoyed the scientific and social program. For the first time, the meeting featured an Early Career Researchers Workshop, which attracted around 80 participants. The Education Afternoon, another highlight of the meeting, offered talks and a panel discussion aimed at secondary-school teachers and other participants who are interested in the teaching of mathematics in secondary schools.

The recipients of the 2009 AustMS Medal, awarded during the meeting, were Dr Stephen Lack, School of Computing and Mathematics, University of Western Sydney, for his work in category theory and its applications, and Dr Ian Wanless, School of Mathematical Sciences, Monash University, for his results in Latin squares, combinatorial permanents and graph theory¹.

A public lecture, entitled ‘Structure and randomness in the prime numbers’, was given by Terence Tao. The lecture was very well attended, in particular by secondary-school teachers and students. The public lecture and the plenary talks were recorded, and can be accessed at www.unisa.edu.au/austms2009/.



Photo: Angela Suckling, Haute Photography

Terence Tao

The Early Career Researchers Workshop was held prior to the start of the meeting, at Mt Lofty House on Sunday 27 September. The workshop consisted of short research presentations by leading early career researchers, advice presentations on various aspects of mathematical careers in academia and industry by more senior mathematicians, and plenty of time for discussion.

The Education Afternoon was especially designed for teachers and prospective mathematics teachers. Other conference attendees also participated in the event,

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¹See www.austms.org.au/Publ/Gazette/2010/Mar10/CommsAustMSmedal.pdf for full citations

which featured non-technical talks as well as a panel discussion ‘The Future is Mathematics’. The afternoon was followed by a special reception for teachers just before the public lecture.

The topic for discussion in this year’s women’s lunch was ‘No! When to use the two letter word’. Further discussions included the impostor syndrome, and mentoring—the benefits of mentoring relationships and types of mentors (such as research, teaching, career, work/life balance).



Photo: Angela Suckling, Haute Photography

The student reception was an opportunity for PhD students from all around Australia and overseas to meet and enjoy socialising with pizza and drinks. The possibility of electing a Student Observer for the AustMS Council was also discussed at the reception. A raffle was held, with six signed copies of *The Computer as Crucible: An Introduction to Experimental Mathematics* by Jonathan Borwein and Keith Devlin as prizes.

The B.H. Neumann prize for the best student talk this year was won by Samuel Cohen for his talk entitled ‘Dynamic risk measures and nonlinear expectations with Markov chain noise’. Sam’s prize was presented by AustMS President Nalini Joshi at the meeting dinner.

The meeting dinner was held at the National Wine Centre on 30 September. Wine, food and a band was followed by dancing by the participants. See symomega.wordpress.com/2009/10/02/austms-conference/ for further comments.

The sponsors of the meeting included the Australian Mathematical Society, the Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute (AMSI), the Clay Mathematics Institute, the International Centre of Excellence for Education in Mathematics (ICE-EM), the Defence Science and Technology Organisation, the Mathematical Association of South Australia (MASA), Cambridge University Press, Ceanet, Cengage Learning, Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, and John Wiley and Sons. Within the University of South Australia, the conference was supported by further funds from the School of Mathematics and Statistics, the Vice-Chancellor’s Office, the Division of Information Technology Engineering and the Environment, and the Institute of Sustainable Systems and Technologies.

We warmly thank the many people who helped to make the conference successful.