

## 54th Annual Meeting of the Australian Mathematical Society

In the last week of September 2010 over 300 mathematicians descended on Brisbane for the 54th Annual Meeting of the Australian Mathematical Society. The meeting, held at the St Lucia Campus of The University of Queensland, comprised four days of plenary lectures and contributed talks, a public lecture, an education afternoon, an early career workshop and a large number of social events including a women's lunch, an early-career and students' lunch, and a conference dinner.

The meeting was kicked off by the second instalment of the Early Career Workshop, held not on the UQ Campus, but in the resort-town of Caloundra. This workshop aims to be a meeting-point for younger mathematicians, where they can discuss — and listen to advice about — issues related to 'post-doc'ing, grant applications, networking and the struggles of juggling a family with a career in mathematics. This year advice talks were given by past AustMS Presidents Cheryl Praeger and Tony Guttman, as well as Cheryl's close confidant John Henstridge from Data Analysis Australia. The Early Career Workshop, which was attended by 60 students and early-career researchers, also featured a number of research talks by rising stars of Australian mathematics.



Opening session (photo: K. Biggs)

The meeting proper started late in the afternoon on Sunday the 26th of September with the traditional welcome reception. The official opening took place on Monday morning, with The University of Queensland's Deputy Vice Chancellor, Professor Deborah Terry, welcoming participants. The first actual presentations were made by Kate Smith-Miles, recipient of the 2010 AustMS Medal, and Peter Hall, who

received the George Szekeres medal\*. The remainder of the four days saw no fewer than 11 beautiful plenary talks. These were given by international high-flyers: Wolfgang Dahmen (Leibniz Prize), Ben Green (Salem and SASTRA prize), Mike Hopkins (Oswald Veblen Prize), Thomas Lam and Elizabeth Mansfield; and some of Australia's best: James Borger, Jonathan Borwein, Larry Forbes (the ANZIAM lecturer), Jan de Gier, Cheryl Praeger (the inaugural Hanna Neumann lecturer), and Vladimir Gaiatsgory. Further highlights included a public lecture on the life of  $\pi$  by Jonathan Borwein, and 257 contributed talks, of which 53 were given by students. After attending (and enjoying) every single one of the student talks, the selection team, chaired by Andrew Francis, awarded the 2010 B.H. Neumann Prize to Anita Ponsaing from The University of Melbourne for her talk on Sklyanin's  $Q$  operator.



Ben Green and Bill Barton (photo: A. Phillips)

The now-traditional AMSI-sponsored Education Afternoon was held on the second day of the conference. Over 60 secondary school teachers from in and around Brisbane enjoyed talks by Bill Barton on the Klein Project, Hugh Possingham on 'how maths is saving species' and Michael Evans and Janine MacIntosh on The Improving Mathematics Education in Schools (TIMES) Project. The afternoon concluded with a very lively panel discussion — which probably could have lasted a lot longer — followed by a reception.

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I would like to conclude with a word of thanks to all those who helped, in one way or another, to make the 54th Annual Meeting such a resounding success. Program committee members, special session organisers, local organisers, EC workshop organisers, the people at AMSI, B.H. Neumann committee members, the many student volunteers, the professional staff in the School of Mathematics and Physics at UQ, John Banks at La Trobe and Andree Phillips at UQ all played a vital role in the smooth running of the conference. Special thanks must be extended to The University of Queensland for their very generous financial support of the conference.

I wish David Pask and his team at The University of Wollongong much success in organising the 55th Annual Meeting, and hope to see many of you there.

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\*See <http://www.austms.org.au/Publ/Gazette/2010/Nov10/CommsMedals.pdf> for full citations.