



Editorial

Sid and I welcome you to the September issue of the *Gazette*. We record here the passing of Joe Gani and Bob Bryce, with two obituaries discussing their lives, and the influence they had on the Australian mathematical scene.

We continue the new feature ‘Talking Teaching’. Peer assisted study remains as important as ever, but its form may be different from the past. In this column, Birgit Loch describes her experience of peer assisted study as an undergraduate, far away and long ago, and then reflects on the circumstances of teaching today. Many things have changed, most notably lower student attendance for a variety of reasons, ranging from work and care commitments to the flexibility offered by recorded lectures. Birgit poses many thoughtful questions about the effectiveness of traditional and contemporary teaching methods.

Indeed, a debate on the topic ‘The traditional mathematics blackboard lecture is dead’ will be held at the AustMS annual conference in December. The debate is an initiative of the Society’s President, Kate Smith-Miles. In her column, she reports on a recent survey of highly ranked jobs, many of which require mathematical skills. Good as it may be for mathematical skills to be in demand, she also asks whether we are teaching our undergraduates the broader set of skills that industry needs. She also points out that the industry collaboration we have now is not well publicised, not even to the CEOs and Boards of companies involved.

Competitions are one way of encouraging interest in Mathematics. In the last issue, we advertised the Simon Marais Mathematics Competition for undergraduate students, which is being held on 7 October. In this issue, we advertise the Australian Mathematics Trust’s support for an Australian team to compete at the 2018 European Girls’ Mathematical Olympiad. Details can be found at the beginning of the News section.

Maaïke Wienk and Yvonne Stokes report on the ACE ‘Forum on Women in research and higher degrees in the mathematical sciences’, which took place in June. The main topic was how to improve the retention of female students into research and higher degrees, an ongoing issue which should concern all of us.

The Advanced Collaborative Environment (ACE) is one of the services facilitated by AMSI; it enables mathematics departments to collaborate through advanced video conferencing and desktop sharing facilities. AMSI has recently welcomed new key staff to its Research and Higher Education program. They are introduced in this issue’s AMSI report.

An election will be held later this year for the office of President-elect. The Society is fortunate to have two enthusiastic candidates running, Jacqui Rammage and Geoff Prince. Further details of this and other Society matters are in Peter Stacey’s report.

The first ever Alf van der Poorten Travelling Fellowship has been awarded to Dr Joshua Howie. We include a report on that in this issue, as well as our regular Puzzle Corner, David Wood's report on activities of the Mathematical Research Institute MATRIX, and another conference report.

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David Yost is a graduate of the University of Melbourne, the Australian National University and the University of Edinburgh. He has lived in eight countries and ten cities, returning to Australia in 2003, where he has now completed 14 years at Federation University Australia and its predecessor institution, the University of Ballarat, including a three-year period as Deputy Head of School. While most of his research is in functional analysis, he has lately been interested in convex geometry.