

55th Annual Meeting of the Australian Mathematical Society

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During the last week of September 2011, over 200 mathematicians made the trip to Wollongong for the 55th Annual Meeting of the Australian Mathematical Society. The meeting, held at the University of Wollongong, consisted of four days of plenary lectures and contributed talks, a public lecture, an education afternoon, an early career workshop and a number of social and networking events including a women's lunch, an early career and students' lunch, and a conference dinner. The annual meeting was then followed by the ALTC workshop: 'Effective Learning, Effective Teaching in the Quantitative Disciplines'.

The meeting started with the third Early Career (EC) Workshop, which was held at the Chifley Hotel in downtown Wollongong. This workshop is a chance for younger mathematicians to meet and discuss how to succeed in the current academic climate. The advice talks were given by Nalini Joshi (Sydney) and Mark Nelson (Wollongong). The EC Workshop, which was attended by 47 students and EC researchers, featured research talks by Aidan Sims (Wollongong) and Vigleik Angeltveit (ANU) who are outstanding young researchers in their respective fields.

The meeting itself started late in the afternoon on Sunday the 25th of September with the traditional welcome reception, at the Novotel in downtown Wollongong. The official opening took place on Monday morning, with the University of Wollongong's Deputy Vice Chancellor, Professor Rob Castle, welcoming participants to the conference. The first presentation was made by Todd Oliynyk (Monash), recipient of the 2011 AustMS Medal. Over the four days, seven more plenary talks were given by Paul Tod (Oxford, UK), Vigeick Angeltveit (ANU), John Sader (Melbourne), George Willis (Newcastle), Hiroshi Matano (Tokyo, Japan), Mick Roberts (Massey, NZ) and Nalini Joshi, who delivered the second Hanna Neumann Lecture. Further highlights included a public lecture on 'The mathematics of epidemics and pandemics' by Mick Roberts, and 171 contributed talks, of which 46 were given by students.

Peter Forrester together with his anonymous helpers awarded the 2011 B.H. Neumann Prize for the best student talk to James Wan from the University of Newcastle for his talk entitled 'Legendre polynomials and pi'.

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The AMSI-sponsored Education Afternoon was held on the second day of the conference. Delegates and a group of secondary school teachers from the Illawarra region enjoyed talks by Michael Barnsley (ANU) and Michael Giudici (UWA). The afternoon concluded with a panel discussion ‘Cave or tunnel? Is there light ahead?’, which was followed by a reception.

I would like to finish my report by thanking all those who helped to make the 55th Annual Meeting such a great success. In particular, thanks to the Program Committee members, the special session organisers, the local organisers, the EC workshop organisers, the people at AMSI, the B.H. Neumann Prize committee members, the local student volunteers, the academic staff in the School of Mathematics and Applied Statistics at the University of Wollongong, John Banks at La Trobe, and Lisa Pyle in the general office; all played a vital role in the smooth running of the conference. Special thanks is also extended to Faculty of Informatics at the University of Wollongong for their generous financial support of the conference.

I wish David Yost and his team at the University of Ballarat well in their preparations for the 56th Annual Meeting and hope to see many of you there.



James Wan
(photographer: Chelsea Lowe)