



President's Column

Tim Marchant*

The 59th annual meeting of the AustMS has recently been held at Flinders University in South Australia. At the opening ceremony a number of high profile invited guests spoke; the Honourable Christopher Pyne, Federal Minister for Industry, Innovation and Commerce, the Flinders University VC, Professor Colin Stirling, Ms Katrine Hildyard and Mrs Annabel Digance, members for the local SA electorates of Reynell and Elder respectively. All the speakers discussed the importance of mathematics and the other STEM disciplines, in terms of creating Australian jobs in new knowledge based industries and the vital role that technology transfer, between the university and industry sectors, will play in that development. The mathematical sciences community in Australia is already involved with some exciting industry schemes, such as AMSI Intern, The Mathematics in Industry Study Group and the ATN Industry Doctoral Training Centre in Mathematics and Statistics. However, the challenge is set for our members to increase their engagement with industry, in order to help achieve the government's aims.

Some of the Society's most important prizes were announced at the meeting; congratulations to Dr Scott Morrison (ANU) on being awarded the 2015 AustMS medal, for distinguished research in the mathematical sciences by a Society member under 40 and to Professor Andrew Hassell (ANU) on being awarded the 2015 Gavin Brown prize, for the best publication in the previous nine years. The plenary speakers at the conference included some extremely high profile mathematicians such as Professor Terry Tao, Fields medalist (UCLA), Professor Manjul Bhargava, Fields medalist (Princeton) and Professor Dame Frances Kirwan (Oxford). Terry Tao is a South Australian and Flinders graduate so it was especially appropriate that he was invited to present a plenary talk. Congratulations to the Conference Director, Associate Professor Vladimir Ejov, and his team for organizing such a successful conference.

The AustMS meeting also coincides with our annual Society Council meeting. For a few years now the journals of the Society have been generating a significant profit, and Council decided to spend a portion of this on what we believe are worthwhile and important activities for our members. Funding for special interest meetings was increased from \$25,000 to \$35,000 a year, for the next three years. In an important new joint initiative with AMSI, it was decided to provide up to \$25,000 of new funding to support two international meetings, to be held before and after the 2016 annual AustMS conference in Canberra. One of aims of these new satellite

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meetings is to provide a block of high profile events for mathematicians and attract additional international delegates to the 2016 AustMS conference.

Also, Society support for female mathematicians was significantly increased with funding for the Cheryl Praeger Travel awards now \$20,000. These awards are for female mathematicians to attend conferences or visit collaborators. Also funding for the Anne Penfold Street Awards was increased to \$3,000. These awards are to support the caring responsibilities of mathematicians, whilst travelling to conferences or visiting collaborators.

I look forward to seeing you all next year at either of our major annual meetings; the 2016 ANZIAM meeting to be held at Canberra in February or at the 2016 AustMS meeting, also being held at Canberra, in December.



Tim Marchant received his Doctorate from Adelaide University in 1989. After graduation he joined Wollongong University where he is currently Dean of Research and Professor of Applied Mathematics. His research areas include nonlinear optics, nonlinear waves and combustion theory. Tim is a Fellow of the Australian Mathematical Society, a Member of the Endeavour Awards selection panel and on the editorial board of *Applied Mathematical Modelling*. His other interests include playing bridge and learning Mandarin.