

School of Mathematics and Statistics

Newsletter

January 2022

Congratulations ...

- to Luke Elliott on successfully defending his PhD thesis entitled ‘On constructing topology from Algebra’ on 16th December.
- to Wei Jing on successfully defending her PhD thesis entitled ‘Advances on priors for the Dirichlet process mixture model’ on 13th January.
- to Teri Love for successfully defending her PhD thesis entitled ‘An investigation of the magnetic field structure of flaring solar active regions using global magnetic field models and automated techniques’ on 13th January.
- to Veronica Kelsey for successfully defending her PhD thesis entitled ‘Base size and generating graphs of primitive permutation groups’ on 18th January.

Welcome ...

- in a new capacity, to Theo Michelot, who has started as a Lecturer in Statistics. He completed his PhD in St Andrews in 2018, and since then he has been a postdoc in CREEM. His interests include hidden Markov and state-space models and their applications in ecology.
- to Rachel Sippy who joins us as a Lecturer in Statistics. Rachel took her PhD at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2018, followed by postdocs in Florida, and since 2020 in the Pathogen Dynamics Group in the Department of Genetics in Cambridge, where she has been working on infectious disease epidemiology.
- to Alan Logan who joins us as an Associate Lecturer in Mathematics. Longer-standing members of the School may remember Alan from when he was an undergraduate in St Andrews from 2004-09. He did his PhD in Glasgow where he remained until 2018 when he moved to a postdoc at Heriot-Watt University. Alan works on geometric and combinatorial group theory, including algorithmic aspects.
- to Gillian Deas who joins us as an Undergraduate Administrator in the Teaching Administration Team. Gillian has just come from a procurement role at Trend Technologies, a metal fabrication company, where she has spent the last 2 years. She was born and raised in Leven, so has a long-standing affection for St Andrews.

Farewell ...

- to Chuong Tran who retired at the end of December. Chuong took his undergraduate and PhD degrees in Canada before holding short term positions in Toronto, Alberta and Warwick. He joined us in 2005 as a postdoctoral fellow in the Vortex Dynamics Group and was appointed Lecturer in 2010. An expert on turbulence and Navier-Stokes theory, he has published nearly 50 papers, many of them jointly with other researchers at St Andrews. Chuong is moving back to Canada where he looks forward to ice fishing in northern Alberta.

What Might Have Been

- The annual trip to the Burn for PhD students, which was scheduled to take place from 17-19th January, has regrettably been postponed due to the covid situation.
- Deborah Kent organised a Special Session for the History of Mathematics at the *Joint Mathematics Meeting* (of some 13 organisations including AMS and SIAM), scheduled for 5-8 January in Seattle. In late December, the meeting was cancelled, and it has just been rescheduled as a virtual meeting for 6-9th April this year.
- Several of the Analysis Group were hoping to attend the *Junior Ergodic Theory Workshop*, which was due to be held in the ICMS in Edinburgh from 10-14th January. Unfortunately it has been postponed due to the covid situation. The workshop is organised by Natalia Jurga along with former School members Tom Kempton and Rhiannon Dougall, together with Solly Coles from Warwick.

Mathematics: Inclusive or Exclusive?

- An online workshop *Mathematics: Inclusive or Exclusive? Putting Colour, Culture and Context into the Curriculum* will take place on Tuesday 25th - Wednesday 26th January, organised by LMS, IMA, RSS, ORS, BSHM, SIGMA and ICMS. The programme and free registration are at www.icms.org.uk/events/workshops/MIE22 Edmund Robertson is a speaker and Isobel Falconer is on the organising committee.

One of the origins of the meeting was discussions over how mathematicians might take control in response to institutional pressures to ‘decolonise’ the curriculum. It will focus on three themes: diversity in the history of mathematics, racial considerations in the interaction of mathematics and statistics with society, and inclusive pedagogy. The aim is to identify strategies that can be easily implemented within existing modules, and goals on which the mathematics community could collaborate in the future. Tuesday will focus on history and personal narratives, and Wednesday will examine inclusive pedagogy and ethics.

Next Issue

- The next edition of the School Newsletter will be circulated in February. Items for inclusion may be sent to maths-news@st-andrews.ac.uk at any time but a reminder will be sent out a week before the deadline.