

IRISH MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY

Annual General Meeting

December 22, 1988

The Annual General Meeting of the Irish Mathematical Society was held at the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies at 12.15 p.m. on Thursday December 12 1988.

Twenty-two members were present, and the President, Professor S. Dineen was in the Chair.

1. The minutes of the meeting of September 9 1988 were read, approved, and signed.
2. Arising from these, the President announced the decision of the Committee to expand the September Meeting to a two-day event, and to hold the 1989 meeting in Maynooth. The meeting will begin after lunch on Thursday, September 7, 1989, and conclude on Friday the 8th. Overnight accommodation will be available for those who require it. Suggestions for invited speakers and proposals for contributed talks should be sent to Professor O'Farrell, preferably before the end of February 1989.

The Committee invites application by institutions willing to host the 1990 September meeting. Applications should be sent to the Secretary before the end of February 1989.

3. Correspondence: The two reports of the EUROMATH project were summarised for the meeting by the Secretary. These are:
 - (1) State of the Art Report, July 1988.
 - (2) The EUROMATH Surveys, August 1988.

Members expressed a strong view that EUROMATH should support \TeX . Members who wish to obtain copies of the reports could apply to John Carroll, head of the EUROMATH unit at NIHE Dublin, Glasnevin, Dublin 9.

4. Consideration of the Treasurer's report, which was delayed in the post, was postponed until the next meeting.

5. The Secretary presented his report, and was thanked for it.

6. Elections: The following were proposed, seconded, and elected unopposed:

President: F. Gaines.

Vice President: R.M. Timoney.

Committee Members: P. Barry, B. Goldsmith, M. O'Reilly, M. Ó Searcóid, and R.O. Watson.

Professor Dineen did not wish to serve on the Committee, but was appointed as the Society's representative to deal with EOLAS.

7. Maurice O'Reilly presented a short paper on 'Mathematics at Third Level: Questioning how we teach'. He raised interesting questions, on the subject of how teachers go about teaching, as opposed to the actual content of the courses. He provided two questionnaires, which teachers were invited to use for assessing themselves from this point of view. Copies of his material may be had by writing to him at Dundalk Regional Technical College. The paper and questionnaires provoked some spirited discussion. He was thanked by the President and the meeting closed.

Anthony G. O'Farrell,
Secretary

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Secretary's Report 1987-88

The Society met three times during this year, and the Committee three times.

The main development this year was the first September Meeting of the Society. Other noteworthy items concerned the Olympiad, the Bulletin and Exchanges.

The September Meeting is intended to be an annual affair, devoted principally to scientific papers on Mathematics. The first was a one-day meeting, on the ninth of September, in Trinity College Dublin. The invited speakers were S. Gardiner, W.K. Hayman and T.W. Körner. Each gave a one-hour talk, and there was an hour of short contributed talks, and a panel discussion on the impact of computers on the curriculum in Mathematics. The meeting was well attended, and was generally considered a success. Encouraged by this, we propose in future to have two-day September meetings.

The Schools Mathematics Contest (sponsored by Eolas) continued to attract more entrants, and competition in the Contest and the Irish Mathematical Olympiad was very keen. The prize-giving ceremony was held at UCD on the second of December, and was attended by representatives of Eolas, the IMTA and the teachers of prizewinners.

This year, for the first time, an Irish team competed in the International Mathematical Olympiad in Australia. The team was coached and accompanied by Finbarr Holland and T.J. Laffey, who have put an enormous amount of work into the contest down through the years. The entry was coordinated by a joint committee of the Departments of Education and Foreign Affairs, and sponsored by the Government.

As the Society grows, its various functions become more time-consuming, and there is a danger that some of them might suffer as a result. It is the policy of the Committee to identify and circumscribe the various important functions, and find volunteers to manage each one on a long-term basis.

This year, the maintenance of the Membership List and the management of Institutional Members, formerly the responsibility of the Treasurer, was taken over by Bob Critchely. It has been agreed to rent the list to interested publishers.

The management of exchanges, formerly the function of the Bulletin Editor, was also separated, and is looked after by me. Existing exchanges have been regularised, and a campaign to create new ones launched. To date, six new exchanges have been agreed.

The Bulletin continues under the editorship of Ray Ryan, assisted by Ted Hurley. After some period of uncertainty, Seán Dineen successfully negotiated with Eolas to have the printing done gratis, indefinitely. It has been agreed to include advertisements in the Bulletin. Ray Ryan is launching a membership drive, using free copies of the Bulletin as an inducement.

The Society has become a member of the European Mathematical Trust, and has appointed Tony Seda as Chairman of the Euromath Coordinating Committee for Ireland.

The system of Local Representatives has proven very effective in ensuring the cohesion of the Society. This year, we added Local Representatives in the Queen's University of Belfast (D.W. Armitage) and in St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra (John Cosgrave).

The Society sponsored a meeting on Group Theory at UCG, a meeting on Operator Theory at UCC, a meeting on Matrix Theory at UCD, and a meeting on Differential Equations at NIHED.

Anthony G. O'Farrell,
Secretary