

6. Subscriptions normally fall due on 1 February each year.
7. Cheques should be made payable to the Irish Mathematical Society. If a Eurocheque is used then the card number should be written on the back of the cheque.
8. Any application for membership must be presented to the Committee of the I.M.S. before it can be accepted. This Committee meets twice each year.
9. Please send the completed application form with one year's subscription fee to

The Treasurer, I.M.S.
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Minutes of Meetings of the Irish Mathematical Society

Ordinary Meeting

16 April 1992

An ordinary meeting of the Irish Mathematical Society was held at 12.15 pm on April 16th 1992 at DIAS.

The President (R. Timoney) took the chair and there were 7 other members present.

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of 20th December 1991 were approved and signed.

2. Matters Arising

No matters arising.

3. Bulletin

M. Ó Searcóid reported on a really wonderful improvement in the production of the Bulletin, achieved with the help of Rex Dark of UCG (acting editor). The March '91 issue was with the printers, the December '91 issue was nearly done and would be ready by the time the March '91 issue came back from the printers. MÓs had also designed a new format file (in plain TeX) which had many useful features and incorporated an automatic system for keeping track of cross-references. MÓs would make his format file publicly available and encourage authors to use it.

The meeting warmly thanked Micheál Ó Searcóid for his excellent work and also expressed its thanks to Rex Dark.

4. European Mathematical Society

Fees from individual members of the IMS wanting to join the EMS had been collected and forwarded to the EMS.

Several reports were required for the European Congress of Mathematicians in July (nearly every 'Table Ronde' had requested some sort of information). This was being collected or had been collected.

A request to nominate Irish mathematicians willing to serve as referees for the evaluation of network applications to the Human Capital and Mobility scheme was discussed. A letter asking the IMS to suggest suitable names had been received from the EMS and that letter also asked for an Irish person willing to serve on the 'Mathematics panel' for networks. It was agreed that the Committee would discuss the matter further before deciding on what to do.

The advantages to be offered under the HCM scheme were pointed out to members.

5. Treasurer's business

The proposal for a change in the financial year to correspond with the calendar year was approved by the meeting following a motion proposed by D. Tipple and seconded by M. Ó Searcóid.

The Treasurer, D. Tipple then produced a report on the interim period October - December 1992 between the end of the financial year under the old system and the beginning of the financial year under the new system. This was accepted.

6. EUROMATH report

R. Timoney gave a brief report on the recent status of the EUROMATH project with the aid of a few slides, in his capacity as the chairman of the National Coordinating Committee for EUROMATH in Ireland. R. Timoney is also a member of the Project Committee of EUROMATH, which is charged with bringing the project work to a successful conclusion.

The overall objective of the EUROMATH Project is to promote the use of modern information technology among mathematicians in Europe.

The project is run by the European Mathematical Trust, an organization founded by the mathematical societies of 18 'European' countries (actually EC + EFTA countries). There is participation by Eastern European countries also, as observers. The project is funded under the SCIENCE program.

For what purposes do mathematicians use computers? Answers:

1. Document preparation
2. Symbolic and numeric computation
3. Database search
4. Electronic mail etc.
5. ...

Looking at databases for a moment (RT is in charge of overseeing the work being done by EUROMATH in this area), one might come up with the following ideal scenario:

1. access to online versions of Math Reviews and Zentralblatt would be cheap and simple;
2. formulae in screen views of an abstract from an online database would be easy to read;
3. references from a database search could be directly inserted in the list of references of a paper;
4. remote, local and personal databases would be accessible using the same query language.

The project hopes to realize all of these items (except that it depends partly on external bodies to completely REALIZE the objective of viewing Zentralblatt formulae on screen, for example).

On the question of document preparation, the project has identified a trend towards the use of SGML (Standard Generalized Markup Language) by publishers, database providers and others. The Project aims to cater for this trend (as well as \LaTeX typesetting) by producing a WYSIWYG editor which would combine the usual advantages of WYSIWYG systems with the power and flexibility of Markup-based systems like \LaTeX . Here is a short comparison of the usual WYSIWYG and Markup systems:

WYSIWYG:

- * Complete freedom in layout
- * Requires experience of document design
- * Direct manipulation on screen
- * WYSIAYG on screen

Markup:

- * Coherent and well designed documents
- * Can lead to excessive uniformity
- * Structure present in source
- * Edit-typeset-preview loop

(WYSIAYG = what you see is all you get.)

The whole EUROMATH system is being designed around this editor (using the editor as a coherent user interface in fact) and the schedule is for completion before mid 1993.

In the meantime Mathematics Institutes are being invited to participate in the project by subscribing to EUROMATH. Subscribing now will entitle institutes to receive an early version of the EUROMATH editor right away (for either SUN4, SUN3, DEC 3100/5000 or IBM RS600 workstations) plus getting the production version when it is ready in 1993. Also institutes will benefit from a special rate for the online version of the Zentralblatt. The cost of EUROMATH subscriptions for the period until the end of 1993 has been fixed at 1500 ECU for institutes who subscribe before the end of 1992 and 2000 ECU for those subscribing later.

Some of those present felt this was a lot of money.

7. Any Other Business

It was noted that two reports had appeared in the UK which might be of interest to members. One was 'The future for Honours Degree Courses in Mathematics and Statistics' (Feb 1992) by a group working under the auspices of the LMS and with the support of the Royal Statistical Society and the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications. It dealt with 3- versus 4-year degrees in the English context (excluding computing).

The second was the so-called Kingman report, officially entitled 'Mathematics strategy for the future', published by SERC and dealing more with support for research.

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