



# Editorial

David and I welcome you to the final issue of the *Gazette* for 2017.

In this issue you will find the 2017 report to the Australian Mathematical Society of the President, Kate Smith-Miles. She reports on her agenda for the two years of her Presidency, and what has been achieved in the first year. She initially identified the following priorities:

- provide a forum for mathematicians to debate fundamental questions about our discipline
- expand reciprocal agreements between AustMS and like-minded overseas societies, and reciprocal agreements with other Australian societies in '01' fields
- review and adapt the London Mathematical Society's 'Good Practice Scheme' for gender equity, ensuring that all society processes conform to best practice.

Addressing the first of these, she notes that the inaugural debate 'The traditional mathematics blackboard lecture is dead!' will occur at next month's Annual Meeting of the Australian Mathematical Society. She reports on progress on the other two issues.

Kate updates us on Course Accreditation by AustMS and the ARC. She mentions that the Council of the Australian Mathematical Society has been asked to endorse the proposal to establish a Vice-President (Teaching and Learning) to recognize the fact that teaching mathematics is an important part of the lives of many of our members, and is an area where the Society can better support members.

As usual the News section of this issue updates us on activities around the country including comings and goings, visitors, conferences, and books published.

In AustMS News the Secretary, Peter Stacey, reminds us that the Society's 61st Annual General Meeting will be on Thursday 14 December at Macquarie University, during the Society's annual conference and that there is currently being held an election for President-Elect of the Society.

An 'exciting episode' of Talking Teaching, edited by Birgit Loch and Sid Morris, appears in this issue of the *Gazette*. This time Sid has a provocative suggestion for teaching advanced mathematics courses. He proposes replacing face-to-face lectures for this group of students. Interestingly the proposal does not cost more than traditional lectures, nor should it involve more work for academic or support staff and it realistically addresses the fact that the majority of students do not attend most lectures. Birgit and Sid look forward to comments from those who wish to critique what is proposed here.

In AMSI News Julia Collins discusses her work as the coordinator of the Women in Maths Network on AMSI's CHOOSEMATHS project. Julia's enthusiasm is very clear. We take this opportunity to acknowledge just how important AMSI is for the Australian mathematical community, and compliment Geoff Prince on the many achievements of AMSI during his period as AMSI Director.

Our book review in this issue is by Phill Schultz of the book MVT: A Most Valuable Theorem by Craig Smorynski. The book is about the Mean Value Theorem. Concerning this 500 page book, Phill says 'his provocative and idiosyncratic style has produced an illuminating overview'.

John Urbas reports in this issue on the Australian Mathematical Society Annual Meeting 2016 at Australian National University held in December 2016.

Peter Johnston publishes here his report on Higher Degrees and Honours Bachelor Degrees in Mathematics and Statistics Completed in Australia in 2016. The data provide an overview of activity at this level throughout the country.

Saul Freedman writes an interesting report on his attendance at the Heidelberg Laureate Forum. He begins

Running annually since 2013, the Heidelberg Laureate Forum (HLF) is a scientific networking event held in the beautiful city of Heidelberg, Germany. The main purpose of the Forum is for young researchers in the areas of mathematics and computer science to interact with each other, and with laureates of prestigious awards in those areas. I was one of approximately 200 young researchers from around the world who attended the 5th HLF from 24 September to 29 September 2017.

In this issue we have two Lift-Off Fellowship reports. These are always interesting.

Now MATRIX is an important part of the Australian mathematical research scene. David Wood reports here on recent and future activities of MATRIX.

A regular feature in the *Gazette* is Puzzle Corner. Peter Higgins challenges us again in Puzzle Corner 50.

One task of the *Gazette* is to publish obituaries. This time we have the obituary of Jonathan M. Borwein. Jon's untimely death was 2 August 2016. Jon contributed significantly to the Australian mathematical community and his leadership, wisdom and experience are greatly missed. In this issue we report on the death of Malcolm Hood. His obituary should appear next year.

Finally I mention that continuing Neville de Mestre's many contributions to using mathematics to understand sport better, we publish in this issue his article called 'Applying Mathematics to the Surf'.

David and I wish the Australian mathematical community an enjoyable and safe holiday period and all the very best for 2018.

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Sid Morris retired after 40 years as an academic. He received BSc (Hons) from UQ in 1969 and PhD from Flinders in 1970. He held positions of Professor, Department Head, Dean, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, CAO and CEO. He was employed by the universities: Adelaide, Ballarat, Flinders, Florida, La Trobe, UNE, UNSW, UQ, UniSA, Tel-Aviv, Tulane, Wales, and Wollongong. He was Editor of *Bull. AustMS* and *J. Research and Practice in IT*, and founding Editor of *AustMS Lecture Series* and *J. Group Theory*. He has been on the Council of AustMS for 25 years and its Vice-President. He received the Lester R. Ford Award from the MAA. He has published 160 journal papers and 4 books for undergrads, postgrads and researchers, plus an online book, translated into 8 languages and supplemented by YouTube videos and a Facebook group of 6,500 members. In 2016 he edited the book *Topological Groups: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow* and was ordained as a Rabbi. He enjoys spending time with his two grandchildren.