

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES OF THE IRISH MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY

*P.J. Boland*

The Irish Mathematical Society has continued to be active in support of various mathematical activities since the issue of the last newsletter in April, 1979.

In May 1979, the second annual Group Theory conference was held under the auspices of the Society at University College Galway. Professor Martin Newell organised this successful International Conference which was highlighted by lectures from Dr. R. Dark (UCG), Dr. R. Gow (UCD), Dr. A. Camina (East Anglia) and Professor W. Deskins (Pittsburg). In May 1980, the third annual Group Theory conference was held, and it was again very successful. Speakers included Dr. M.R. Vaughan-Lee (Oxford), Dr. T.C. Hurley (UCD), Dr. D. MacHale (UCC) and the organiser, Professor Martin Newell.

Professor J.J.H. Miller (TCD) and Dr. B. Brown (Kevin Street) were the organisers of the conference *Numerical Analysis of Semi-Conductor Devices* held in Dublin on June 27-29, 1979. This conference, which was modestly supported by the Society, was also very successful and attracted a large participation.

Professor Walter Rudin (University of Wisconsin) delivered two lectures

entitled *Non-Isotropy in Several Complex Variables* and *How Smooth must Infinitely Differentiable Functions Really be?* at UCD On September 25 and 26, 1979, respectively. In his first lecture, Professor Rudin showed very elegantly how nice the theory of several complex variables can be. In the second, given under the auspices of the Society, he delighted the audience with his clever construction of various differentiable functions.

Professor Gustave Choquet, well-known mathematician and member of the French Academy of Science, postponed his visit to Ireland in 1979 and we hope he will be visiting us later in 1980. It is hoped that Professor Choquet will give several lectures while here on both mathematical education and his mathematics.

In spite of the postal difficulties during the first half of 1979, the first Irish National Mathematics Contest, held on March 6, 1979, was a great success. Altogether, a total of 957 students registered to do the examination, and results were received on behalf of 674 pupils from 43 of the 58 schools that competed. The results compared favourably with other countries taking the exam, and this year a wider participation is expected. The Educational Company of Ireland generously sponsored a dinner for the five highest-ranking candidates of the 1979 contest on December 14, 1979, at the Green Isle Hotel in Dublin. The five winners and their mathematics teachers were honoured, and each of the students received a prize of a hand calculator. This year's contest was held on March 4, 1980, and it was even more successful. Almost a thousand students participated and even though the examination was somewhat more difficult than the previous one, the candidates scored well. The contest was won by Jonathan Griffin from Ard-Scoil Ris, Limerick. He also won the contest in 1979, so he completed a remarkable double, and so deserves our warmest congratulations.

Dr. Alan Bell (Nottingham) gave a lecture under the auspices of the Society in U.C.D. in May, 1980. Dr. Bell, who works in the area of mathematical education spoke on *Symbolism in Mathematics - Problems of Understanding Graphs and Algebra*.

The second conference on Matrix Theory and its Applications, run under the auspices of the society was held in U.C.D. on October 3,4, 1980. The conference was organised by F.J. Gaines and T.J. Laffey and it was sponsored by the Royal Irish Academy. It was well attended. The speakers included Professor Charles Johnson (Maryland and National Bureau of Standards), Dr. Stephen Barnett (Bradford), Professor Robert Grone (Auburn, Alabama and London), Professor Frank Uhlig (Aachen) and Professor Harald Wimmer (Wurzburg) who all travelled to Ireland specially for the conference, as well as Dr. Robin Harte (U.C.C.) and Professor D. Judge and Drs. F.J. Gaines, R. Gow, T.J. Laffey, D. Lewis and D. O'Connor, of U.C.D.

---

At the Annual General Meeting of the Society held on December 20, 1979, Ray Ryan was elected treasurer of the Society. The dues of the Society are still a modest £2.00 and Ray Ryan (UCG) would greatly appreciate receiving more (1979-1980) dues from members. The other officers of the society continue to hold their offices for another year, and a new committee was elected. A list of the officers and committee members appears on the last page of this newsletter.

Contributions to forthcoming issues of the newsletter on various mathematical topics are both needed and encouraged. Please send any to: The Editor, I.M.S. Newsletter, Mathematics Department, University College, Belfield, Dublin 4.