

Ordinary Meeting

An Ordinary Meeting of the Society will be held on Tuesday 21st December from 12.30 to 1.30 p.m. at the Dublin Institute for Advanced Study, 10 Burlington Road, Dublin 4.

The Committee of the I.M.S. have proposed that the meeting consider the following change in Rule 5 of the Constitution of the Society. Rule 5 states: "The Committee shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and six additional members. No person may serve as an additional member for more than three sessions consecutively". The proposed change is to increase the number of additional members from six to eight.

Secretary's Report for period January 1, 1981 to 31st December 1982.

The basic philosophy of the Officers and Committee over the last two years was to maintain and stabilize the operations of the society (which up to now had been developed by the efforts of certain individuals - notably Tom Laffey and Finbarr Holland) and to ensure continuity. To this end, we examined in detail what the society was doing, what it should be doing and what it could be doing. Persistent effort and realistic goals enabled us to achieve a number of our aims.

1. Financial Developments

A society needs a steady source of income. Until 1981, the Society's only funding came from the £2 membership fees. The haphazard method of collecting fees was a great waste of time for our Treasurer and Committee. It also resulted in a very low income and this in turn limited our choices and did not help morale. On the other hand, certain established projects - the Newsletter, Mathematics Contest and Conferences, were almost exhausting our meagre funds and at the same time not getting the financial support they deserved. We decided to increase our income and lower our expenses.

We increased our income by raising the membership fee to £3.50 and by introducing the direct debit system of payment. We were thus assured

of a regular income at a fixed time and the nuisance of collecting fees was reduced to a manageable size. These changes on their own put the Society on a sound financial footing. In the summer of 1982 we introduced Institutional Membership at £35 per institution. This has also proved very successful (see the Treasurer's report) and should match pound for pound our ordinary membership income. We reduced our financial outgoings (see items 2,3,5 below) in a proportional manner without reducing our services in any way and the net result ^{that} is we are now in a secure and stable financial position.

Finally, to rationalize our financial dealings we decided to plan our budget for the year at our Easter Committee meeting and it is hoped that any members who are seeking financial support for conferences, etc. will apply to the Committee to have their case discussed at that meeting.

2. Publications

The official publication of the Society is the Newsletter. We decided that it was desirable that the Newsletter should appear at regular intervals, that it should be as self-supporting as possible and that the presentation be improved. As a first step, we appointed D. Hurley as editor and P. Fitzpatrick as subeditor for 1981-1983. The Newsletter will now appear twice a year. Numerous discussions have taken place on the exact direction the Newsletter should take and we are still experimenting. Members will be happy to note the presentation of the current volume, to know that this quality will be maintained and to know that the practical assistance of the NBST allows us to present this improved format for our members with little drain on our finances.

In 1981, R. Timoney produced a comprehensive directory of Irish Mathematicians and this was distributed to all members. It is planned to update this directory triannually. Changes should be forward to the Secretary of the Society during the first half of 1984.

In 1981, we arranged with the R.I.A., that the Proceedings of the Academy (Series A) would be sold to members at a $33\frac{1}{3}\%$ discount. We also arranged that members can obtain DIAS publications at considerably reduced prices (see p.62 of this volume for further details). For various technical reasons, these schemes, which were only begun this year, were slow to get off the ground, but members are already benefitting from these arrangements and the future looks promising.

3. Mathematical Contest

Two successful mathematical contests were held in 1981 and 1982. These were organised jointly with the IMTA. Finbarr Holland and Tom Laffey organised on behalf of the IMS. Details of the contests, winners, etc. have already appeared in the Newsletter. This year, we obtained sponsorship for the running of the contest from the NBST and the Bank of Ireland. We also decided that our next priority is to send a team to the International Olympiad in Mathematics which is normally held in some European city. The team would consist of the top four students in the National Competition and a coach. If this could be achieved then we feel that the numbers entering the competition would double - the current figures are about 1500 - and perhaps inspire more young people to a career in Mathematics. We are currently exploring ways of realising this goal.

4. Liaisons

In 1981, we established formal contact with the NBST. As a result of this contact the NBST appointed Dr. Brian O'Donnell to liaise with mathematicians and all members of the Society, and also prospective members, should feel free to contact Dr. O'Donnell with any enquiries regarding research grants, etc.

As a result of our contact, the NBST has become an Institutional Member of the Society, and has given us considerable help with the Newsletter and the Math. Contest. We also have been kept informed on details of the drafts of the many international cultural and scientific exchange programmes which are currently being prepared by the NBST in order to make sure that the interests of the mathematical community are safeguarded. We hope to publish details of agreements of interest at regular intervals in the Newsletter. As a particular example, we would like to mention the NBST/CNRS (or Irish-French) scientific agreement. This agreement has been extremely useful, especially in the current recession, to mathematicians in Ireland. It was frequently used by mathematicians, and in fact mathematics was a priority area in the agreement. This made it easier for our members to avail of the agreement. In 1980 the CNRS replaced mathematics by some other area in the priority list. The reason was not any reflection on mathematics but due to the fact that there is a limit on the number of priority areas. The CNRS wanted a new priority area and chose at random to remove mathematics. After making representations to the NBST and some correspondence with Societe Math. de France, we are happy to say that mathe-

tics was restored as a priority area in 1982. (Members interested in this scheme should contact Grainne Ni Uid at 01-68311.)

Finbarr Holland represented the Society to the European Math. Council (= U{European Math. Soc.}) and John Miller is on a Committee of this council which is looking at the crisis facing mathematical publishing. A short report of the work of this council has appeared and may be obtained from the secretary of the Society.

We are currently having informal discussions with the IMTA (Irish Math. Teachers Association) concerning more cooperation on matters of mutual interest and with the possibility of establishing reciprocal membership. Details will be presented at an ordinary meeting before any decisions are made on this matter.

Our Newsletter has been distributed to many national mathematical societies and has been quite useful in informing people abroad of the nature and extent of mathematical activities in Ireland.

For the past two years, we have endeavoured to secure the right to nominate two members to the National Committee for Mathematics - which up to now, represented Irish mathematicians to the world, and to the National Subcommission for Mathematical Instruction, rather than accept the current individual membership nominations. It appears that the constitutions of the National Committees are currently under review and perhaps there will be a change when this review is completed.

5. Conferences and Visiting Speakers

The Society has supported practically all mathematical conferences held in Ireland over the last two years. Our policy is to help financially as much as possible but to strongly encourage organisers to seek funds elsewhere. The fact that we can now guarantee reasonable support should give organisers confidence to make plans. At the same time, the knowledge that unused funding will be given to the next conference (organised perhaps by their own colleagues) is a strong motivation not to call in our guarantees.

The only speaker supported by the society recently was Steve Smale who gave an excellent lecture on the Simplex Method in Dublin in September 1982. This lecture was very well attended. More effort could perhaps have been made in this regard.

6. Prize for Mathematical Research

The Committee proposed to an ordinary meeting (December 1981) the motion that a prize for research in Mathematical Science be awarded by the

Society. This motion was passed and a Committee was set up to consider the most suitable way of implementing this motion. The Committee will report shortly on this matter to an ordinary meeting of the Society.

7. Humanitarian Support

The most controversial topic of the last two years discussed at Committee meetings (and also at ordinary meetings) was the topic of how much, and in what fashion, the Society should support mathematicians who are prevented from practising their profession because of racial, religious or political discrimination. At the December 1981 ordinary meeting of the Society, a motion was passed agreeing in principle to support such people (see the minutes of that meeting for an exact wording of the motion). At the April 1981 meeting, the ordinary members clarified the procedure that should be adopted by the Committee in dealing with such situations.

In September 1981, the Secretary, on the instructions of the Committee, wrote a letter of support for Jose Luis Massera (an Uruguayan mathematician). A complete dossier on the Massera case will be on public display at the next ordinary meeting of the Society. A voluntary collection will also be taken at that meeting and the proceeds sent to the Canadian Math. Society which is currently coordinating the campaign to obtain Massera's release.

8. Administration

To ensure greater efficiency in the running of the Society, the Committee organised and implemented certain changes in the last two years. These are as follows:

(a) All Officers and Committee members are now elected for a two-year period. Half the Committee is now elected every second year. This involved a change in the rules and the required changes were passed at the ordinary meeting in December 1981. Consequently, the incoming and the outgoing Committee have nonempty intersection and we have more continuity in the committee. It also means that Committee members have more time to get familiar with the workings of the Society. At the December 1982 meeting, the Committee are also proposing that the Committee be increased from six to eight members.

(b) The general philosophy until 1980 on the composition of the committee and Officers was that most major institutions and regions should be represented. While this is admirable in theory, it led to two major problems in practice. In the first place, it led to a

Committee which was very dispersed geographically and had difficulty meeting, and secondly, people who had no interest in the running of the Society were elected sometimes without their consent or knowledge.

To overcome these problems the Committee decided to approach certain people to go forward for election. This partial panel was to ensure that people were not put forward without their consent and that there was at least one conscious candidate for each important position. To have an efficient set of Officers and Committee, we felt it best that the chief Officers of the Society (the President and Secretary) plus two more Committee members should be located close to each other. Thus the main centre of the Society should be located in a certain area, but could move to other centres such as Cork, Galway, etc. whenever a group of people from these places were willing to run the Society for a few years. This plan would also eliminate any regional problems we might have.

(c) To further improve the problem of representation, we are currently investigating the question of appointing local representatives. These representatives would be appointed by the Committee and help in the distribution of the Newsletter and in the collection of membership fees. In this way, all institutions would have some representation, and communication between the Committee and the ordinary members would improve.

Sean Dineen

TREASURER'S REPORT

The state of the Society's finances as of Nov. 1, 1982 is as follows:

<u>INCOME</u>	£	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	£
Balance from 1981	48.35	Newsletter (Sept. issue)	94.66
Membership subscriptions	360.00	Direct. Of Irish Mathms.	15.00
Institutional Memberships	140.00	Visit of S. Smale	11.00
Groups in Galway '82		Groups in Galway '82	
Conference fees	55.00	Expenses & Refreshments	215.00
Support from R.I.A.	100.00	Support for Algebra Conf.	
		at M.I.C.E., Limerick	50.00
		Balance in hand	317.69
	703.35		703.35

R.A. Ryan

FOREIGN MEMBERSHIP

The Irish Mathematical Society has decided to launch a membership recruitment drive amongst mathematicians based abroad. At present we have a small number of members in this category and we are confident that this can be greatly increased, especially by making the Society known to Irish people in the mathematics departments of overseas universities and colleges.

Foreign membership, which is available on the same basis as home membership, ensures regular contact with the Irish mathematical scene through the Newsletter.

Existing members, who know of colleagues abroad who may be interested in joining the Society, are requested to send names and addresses to me.

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NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTSEUROPEAN MATHEMATICAL COUNCIL

A meeting of the European Mathematical Council took place in Warsaw on August 10, 1982 at the Banach Centre, under the Chairmanship of Professor M.F. Atiyah. Delegates from nineteen European Mathematical Societies attended. The Irish Mathematical Society was represented by Finbarr Holland who prepared this report.

1. Chairman's address:

In his opening remarks, the Chairman recalled the origins of the European Mathematical Council, reminding those present that it was a loosely structured body of representatives of European Mathematical Societies working together for the mutual benefit of the entire European mathematical community, and reviewed its activities.

2. European Mathematical Newsletter

This is prepared and circulated every 3 months on request to mathematical societies by the Mathematisches Forschungsinstitut, Oberwolfach; it contains information about forthcoming mathematical conferences and other items of common interest.

Information for inclusion in the Newsletter should be sent, in the first instance, to

Professor M. Barner,
Mathematical Institute, Hebelstr. 29,
D-7800 Freiburg/Br.,
German Federal Republic.

3. European Directories:

It was announced that, by August 11th, 1982, eleven European Societies, including the Irish Mathematical Society, had compiled either national or regional directories of mathematicians working in their country or region.

Information about these directories is available from Professor A. Dold, Math. Institut Universität, Im Neuenheimer Feld 288, D-6900 Heidelberg 1.

4. Research Reports:

Professor P.C. Baayen outlined a proposal from the Librarian of the Mathematical Centre, Amsterdam, concerning the collection and distribution of information about such reports. The librarian has offered to include