President's Report, 2017
New Zealand Mathematical Society

This year's New Zealand Mathematics Colloquium is at the University of Auckland. I would like to thank the organisers, especially the co-convenors Tom ter Elst and Hinke Osinga, for all the work involved with this.

Membership. The current membership is 260, up from last year's 253. We have 63 student members. We welcome several new members this year. Please encourage new colleagues and students to join our Society. The first year of membership is free.

Lecture Tours. The 2017 Maclaurin Lecturer was Ken Ono from Emory University. His public lectures "Gems of Ramanujan and their Lasting Impact on Mathematics" and colloquium talk "Jensen polynomials for Riemann's Xi-function and suitable arithmetic sequences" were very well received. I am grateful to Shaun Cooper for coordinating Ken's tour.

Unfortunately, Ken was the last Maclaurin Lecturer. The Maclaurin Lectureship has been a reciprocal exchange between the New Zealand and the American Mathematical Societies, and the agreement expires at the end of 2017. While the AMS viewed the exchange as a success, they did not want to extend the agreement. Instead, the AMS expressed interest in a second joint AMS–NZMS conference and we are currently in correspondence with them about that.

We also have the Forder and Aitken Lecture Tours which are reciprocal two-yearly exchanges between the London Mathematical Society and the NZMS. The current NZMS–LMS agreement is for one more Forder Lecture Tour in 2018 and one more Aitken Lecture Tour in 2019. Valerie Isham, from University College London, is the 2018 Forder Lecturer; she will tour NZ universities in April. I am grateful to Mick Roberts for coordinating Valerie's tour.

The Forder Lectureship is of great value to the New Zealand mathematics community and has historical significance. All the past Forder Lecturers have been research mathematicians of international acclaim who have spoken effectively at the research level, as well as at the more popular level of a public lecture. The feedback from mathematical departments has been very positive: there is general agreement that the Forder Tours are very beneficial to our community. We have written to the LMS expressing our wish to continue both Lectureships beyond 2019.

Nominating Committee. In the past we have sought nominations or applications for various positions, awards and fellowships through individual efforts, through Council, and by asking Councillors to consult with their departments. These include NZMS prizes and awards, nominations for fellowships (NZMS and Royal Society), Council positions, committee memberships (such as judging panels for prizes), the Lectureships and IMU positions. There are always good candidates for these, but I believe that there are also many good people that don't get considered, at least in part because the nomination process happens in an ad hoc fashion.

To ensure a broad pool of nominations, Council has recently established a Nominating Committee. In spite of its name, the Committee will not nominate: instead it will identify candidates, and suggest to others that a person should be nominated or nudged to apply. (There was some concern that a nomination from this Committee might be considered more worthy than others, and we don't want this.) In

particular, this Committee will be part of a framework that encourages and helps minorities to have active careers in mathematics.

The Committee will normally consist of four members of the NZMS, and will be appointed by the NZMS Council. It should include one person currently on the NZMS Council, usually the President or Vice-President. The Chair should not be a current member of Council; Hinke Osinga has agreed to be the inaugural Chair of the Committee. The Committee will start its work in 2018.

December 2016 to August 2017: Student Travel Grants and Other Funding. We awarded student travel grants to Jurij Volcic, Cris Hasan, Valerie Chopovda (Gloria Olive Award 2016), Anggha Nugraha, James Hannam, John Moala (Gloria Olive Award 2017), Jose Mujica, Barak Shani, S. Vahid Amirinezhad, Vee-Liem Saw, Yan Bo Ti.

We supported several conferences: MINZ 2017, NZMASP 2017, ANZAMP 2018 and the Mirzakhani Hui: Women in Mathematical Sciences Conference (Lower North Island). We also put aside funding for 5 students from outside the Auckland area to attend the Conformal and Symplectic Geometry Conference.

We supported the national Maths Craft Festival. While the NZMS does not fund postdocs to travel in general, this year we contributed towards additional costs arising from a postdoc's family responsibilities during their travel.

More Funding from the Kalman Trust for Students. The Margaret and John Kalman Charitable Trust has committed to support our Student Travel Grant Scheme by $5000 per annum in 2017–2019. This support will be reviewed in 2019, and will hopefully be continued. I thank Vivien Kirk for negotiating this support with the Trust.

Best Practice for Judging Panels. Everyone has unconscious biases, and there are practices which help to minimise their effect. Council has endorsed some straightforward guidelines for NZMS judging panels to follow.

Research Awards and Fellowships. At the time of writing, this year's awards are still confidential. They will be announced at the Colloquium dinner and published in the Newsletter version of this report.

Acknowledgements. It has been a privilege to serve as NZMS President. There are many people who contribute to the running of the NZMS, and I am grateful to them all. In particular, I want to thank Boris Beaumer for his service as webmaster, John Shanks for his service as Membership Secretary, Miguel Moyers-Gonzalez and Phil Wilson for their service editing the Newsletter, and Shaun Cooper for his service as Editor of the NZ Journal of Mathematics. I'm especially grateful to the members of the Council for their service, and in particular to Emily Harvey as Secretary, Bruce van Brunt as Treasurer and Vivien Kirk as Incoming President.

Astrid an Huef, December 2017