

## **New Zealand Mathematical Society President's Report, 2019**

2019 was another busy year for the NZMS.

**NZMS Colloquia:** This year's New Zealand Mathematics Colloquium is hosted by Massey University in Palmerston North. I thank the organisers, especially Tammy Lynch who chaired the organizing committee, for all their work. The 2020 Colloquium will be hosted by AUT and the 2021 Colloquium will be hosted by the University of Canterbury. Don't forget that the 2023 Colloquium will be held in Auckland as part of a joint meeting with the American Mathematical Society and the Australian Mathematical Society; it is not too early to start talking to overseas colleagues about the possibility of them joining us for the 2023 meeting.

**Lecture Tours:** Bakh Khoussainov (University of Auckland) was the 2019 Aitken Lecturer and visited the UK in June and July 2019. In addition to giving lectures at various universities around the UK, Bakh delivered the Aitken Lecture at the General Meeting of the London Mathematical Society in June. Bakh's visits were very well received and some reports on his tour can be seen in latest edition of the Members' Newsletter of the London Mathematical Society at [https://www.lms.ac.uk/sites/lms.ac.uk/files/files/NLMS\\_485\\_for%20web.pdf](https://www.lms.ac.uk/sites/lms.ac.uk/files/files/NLMS_485_for%20web.pdf)

Lisa Clark (Victoria University of Wellington) has been selected by the London Mathematical Society to be the 2021 Aitken Lecturer and is expected to tour the UK in mid-2021. Congratulations to Lisa for this honour.

The 2020 Forder Lecturer will be Julia Wolf (University of Cambridge). Julia will be in NZ from March 8<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>, and will spend several days visiting each university's mathematics department or school. I am grateful to Brendan Cruetz for coordinating Julia's tour.

**Student Travel Grants and Other Funding, December 2018 to September 2019:** The NZMS awarded student travel grants to Hamed Amirinezhad, Martin Bachraty, Emma Greenbank, Jo Knox, Christian Offen, and Giorgia Vattiato. More student travel awards will be made in December 2019. We are grateful to the Kalman Trust for their ongoing support for our student travel grants programme.

The NZMS supported the annual MINZ and NZMASP conferences and provided funding for speakers for the biennial NZAMT conference and the 2019 NZMS Colloquium. We put aside funding to support participation by researchers from the Pacific Islands and by students in the Auckland Algebraic Geometry Conference. We also provided some funding to Maths Craft and made caregiver support grants to Stefanie Hittmeyer and Marie Graff.

**Nominating Committee:** The Nominating Committee has once again had a busy year identifying candidates for positions, awards and fellowships associated with the NZMS (e.g., NZMS prizes and awards, Fellowship of the NZMS and RSNZ, positions on Council, lectureships, etc). The Nominating Committee does not nominate anyone, but suggests to others that a person might be nominated or encouraged to apply. Individuals are also free to nominate themselves or someone else, independently of the activities of the Nominating Committee. I would like to thank the committee for their sustained work throughout 2019.

**NZMS Research Awards, Prizes and Fellowships:** I thank the members of the judging panels for their work in judging the applications and nominations we received for the 2019 Awards and Prizes. I also thank the members of the Accreditation Committee for their work in assessing applications and nominations for Fellowship of the NZMS. This year's prize winners and new Fellows will be announced at the conference dinner at the Colloquium.

**Other Honours:** Astrid an Huef (Victoria University of Wellington) was made a Fellow of the Royal Society Te Apārangi for her distinction in research. Jeanette McLeod and Phil Wilson (University of Canterbury) were awarded the Cranwell Medal for Science Communication by the NZ Association of Scientists, for their important work with the MathsCraft project. Christian Offen (Massey University) was awarded the Hatherton Award by the Royal Society Te Apārangi, for the best scientific paper by a NZ PhD student in chemical sciences, physical sciences, or mathematical and information sciences. Christian was also selected to be a participant at the Heidelberg Laureate Forum 2019; a short video clip of Christian describing his research, made at the HLF, can be viewed at <https://plus.maths.org/content/young-research-0> Congratulations to Astrid, Jeanette, Phil and Christian!

**Diversity in the NZ Mathematics Community:** The benefits that would result from having more diversity amongst the people who engage with and succeed in mathematics are many, including more equitable access to the activities and careers that require mathematical thinking and the availability of a much larger pool of talented people to work in the mathematical sciences. Despite this having been known for a long time, there is woefully uneven participation in mathematics in all its guises, in NZ and internationally, relative to socio-economic status, ethnicity and gender, as well as a range of other identity factors.

The Council has continued to work this year to support diversity in our Society and the wider mathematics community. Concrete actions by the Council this year include the organization of a panel discussion on diversity at the 2019 Colloquium and the collection of data of various types, and such activities are useful. However, of more significance is the wonderful work done by individual members of the Society who have been active in their daily practice, trying to change the culture of our institutions, and to encourage, recruit and support students from non-traditional (for mathematics) backgrounds. You know who you are! Thank you for your efforts. If anyone has ideas about how we can do better, individually or collectively, please get in touch.

**Education Group:** The Education Group within the NZMS has continued its focus on secondary and tertiary level mathematics education. The group has had a particular focus on the proposed changes to NCEA and the subsequent Ministry of Education review of the achievement standards. More information about the work of the Education Group and opportunities to contribute can be found on the Education Group page of the NZMS website.

**Membership:** The current membership is 257, down slightly from last year's 265; this number includes 57 student members. Please encourage new colleagues and students to join our Society. The first year of membership is free.

**Acknowledgements:** Many people contribute to the running of the NZMS, and I am grateful to them all. I thank David Simpson for his service as webmaster, John Shanks for his service as Membership Secretary and work on the website, Shaun Cooper for his service as Editor of the NZ Journal of Mathematics, and Melissa Tacy and Fabien Montiel for their service as Newsletter editors.

I am grateful to all the members of the Council for their contributions to the Society. This year we farewell Emma Greenbank, who completed a one-year term as student representative, as well as Emily Harvey and Shaun Cooper, who have both completed six years on the Council and are stepping down. I thank them all for their fine service and wise counsel over their terms.

I am indebted to Rua Murray (Secretary) and Stephen Marsland (Treasurer) who have again put long hours into their roles. Shaun Hendy takes over as President of the NZMS at the Annual General Meeting of the Society in December; I thank Shaun for agreeing to take on this role. Lastly, thanks to the Council and the wider membership for their support over the last two years.

Vivien Kirk  
December 2019