

**REPORT OF THE 1st JOINT MEETING OF THE
AMERICAN AND NEW ZEALAND MATHEMATICAL
SOCIETIES**

The meeting, which incorporated the 2007 New Zealand Mathematics Colloquium, took place at Victoria University of Wellington from 12–15 December 2007. It drew on the expertise of the American Mathematical Society’s sponsorship of international meetings, the New Zealand Mathematical Society’s joint meetings with the Australian Mathematical Society and the 2004 joint meeting of the NZMS and the Israel Mathematics Union at Victoria.

The meeting was opened by US Ambassador to New Zealand, Bill McCormick, CEO of the Royal Society of New Zealand, Dr Di McCarthy and VUW’s Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Neil Quigley. The AMS was represented at the meeting by Vice-President Ruth Charney.

The conference was attended by 293 delegates of whom 51 were students. Delegates came from New Zealand (125), the United States (73) and from 30 other countries on six continents. There were eight plenary addresses with three speakers from the US sponsored by the AMS—Michael Freedman (Microsoft Research), Assaf Naor (Courant Institute) and Theodore Slaman (University of California at Berkeley)—and a fourth, Bruce Kleiner (Yale University), funded by a grant from the NZ Institute of Mathematics and its Applications, together with four local speakers—Marston Conder, Rod Downey, Gaven Martin and Matt Visser—sponsored by the NZMS. There were 225 speakers in 15 special sessions, including 20 keynote addresses, in addition to 32 general contributed talks. These talks ran in seven parallel streams over the four days, including one set of evening sessions. Special sessions covered a wide range of pure and applied mathematics as well as history and philosophy of mathematics and mathematics education, with emphasis on university education. Organisers of the special sessions contributed greatly to the overall success of the meeting. Several reported that significant progress was made on problems and projects as a result of collaboration at or as a result of the meeting.

The quality of the presentations, especially the plenary addresses, was extremely high. Although the special sessions varied considerably in scale from 5 to 30 speakers, they all provided opportunities for communities of researchers to interact, embark on or continue collaborations. A notable feature of the talks, especially the plenary addresses, was the unexpected

degree of connection between them around the themes of computation and computability. This clearly represents an area of research strength in both countries but is also an underlying feature of a wide range of current mathematics research, both pure and applied.

At the conference dinner, Gaven Martin presented the Aitken Prize for best talk by a student jointly to Peter Humphries and Ratneesh Suri, the inaugural NZMS Early Career Award to Noam Greenberg and Catherine McCartin and the NZMS Research Award to Ernie Kalnins. Other enjoyable social events included a pre-conference reception for the registrants, a reception hosted by the Deputy Chief of Mission of the US Embassy for the organisers and plenary speakers, hikes along the Skyline Track and to Red Rocks and visits to the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary. Many delegates were able to explore Wellington, enjoy its excellent cafés and restaurants and extend their visits to see other parts of New Zealand, attend a number of adjacent mathematical meetings and visit colleagues at NZ universities.

The conference organising committee consisted of Peter Donelan, Rod Downey, Noam Greenberg and Dillon Mayhew at VUW, together with Matthew Miller (AMS Associate Secretary). Robert Daverman (AMS Secretary), Mick Roberts and Gaven Martin (NZMS Presidents) strongly supported the meeting's inception. The scientific committee included Jeff Cheeger, Peter Jones, Vaughan Jones. Superb administrative support was provided by Ginny Whatarau (VUW) and Donna Salter (AMS).

The meeting was supported financially by grants from AMS and NZMS, and from NZIMA which provided travel grants for graduate students as well as funding for the additional plenary speaker. The organisers endeavoured to keep the registration fee as low as possible (NZ\$140 standard, NZ\$40 for students). Unfortunately, some of the incidental costs came in above budget and the NZ Mathematics Colloquium float was consequently used. NZIMA and NZMS funding enabled the conference to provide travel grants worth NZ\$6,000 in total to 14 graduate students.

*Peter Donelan, Matthew Miller
Joint Meeting Conveners*