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### NEW NZ STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE

The NZ Statistical Association (NZSA) Executive is now based in Christchurch following the election of the new committee at the annual conference in Hamilton earlier this month. Jennifer Brown is now the President of the NZSA and Peter Smith is on the executive, along with Department Fellows Richard Penny (Secretary) and Ian Westbrooke. Carl Scarrott is the convenor of the local Canterbury group.



*Incoming President Jennifer Brown and outgoing President Roger Littlejohn with Professor Sharleen Forbes, who is holding two awards received at the conference – the NZSA Campbell Award for contribution to statistics and a certificate conferring NZSA life membership. (Photography by Harold Henderson)*

### ITYPE - ENTRE 40K CHALLENGE PRIZEWINNER

Congratulations to Michael Langton, who was awarded the second prize of \$10,000 in the Entré 40K challenge this month for his product, iType. The 40K Challenge is the premier competition run by Entré (the UC Entrepreneurship Challenge). It offers entrants the chance to develop and present a business plan to a panel of judges comprised of experienced business leaders whilst learning valuable business skills along the way.

iType makes it possible to type efficiently without a keyboard. It works like an on-screen keyboard with a context-sensitive list of word predictions. Michael has used this for years on a daily basis, including for his PhD research and thesis. From a market perspective, he says, there is considerable demand already for products like this, and bigger opportunities are likely to arise as touch-screen devices become more popular.

## HoD NEWS

I was at the Entré prizegiving last week – a very swish affair with excellent and highly motivating talks by the invited speakers. It was very pleasing to see our Mathematics PhD student Michael Langton awarded the runner-up prize. Great work, Michael!

Welcome to our new Statistician, James Degnan. James and his wife Vanessa arrived last Thursday, slightly shell-shocked from the journey and their on-again off-again schedule as they awaited their visas from London. Hopefully, the shock is now subsiding as they settle into their new positions.

This past week has been a busy one with telephone interviews for our vacant lecturing positions. I'll be in a position to give you more information via email shortly.

John Hannah has the teaching allocation for 2009 well underway, so academics should have had a visit from him by now. If not, please contact him.

Next week the BSc(Hons), MSc and PGDipSci programmes will be reviewed, so some time later we will find out how we are doing with regard to those programmes.

We are all in for a busy few weeks before the end of term. Have fun!

- David Wall

## WELCOME TO OUR DEPARTMENTAL VISITORS (E = Erskine Fellow)

<u>Visitor</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Host</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Extn</u>
David Sutton	University of York	A James	1/5/08	15/9/08	616	8876
Prof Christopher Bose	University of Victoria, Canada	R Murray	1/7/08	31/12/08	605	8028
Prof Horst Malchow (E)	University of Osnabrück, Germany	A James	1/9/08	2/11/08	607	8875
Prof Brian Sleeman (E)	University of Leeds, UK	M Plank	6/9/08	19/10/08	607	8875
Jenny Burrow	University of York	M Plank	11/10/08	6/12/08	703	8878
Prof Eamonn O'Brien	University of Auckland	B Martin	15/10/08	17/10/08	605	8028

### ERSKINE FELLOWS

#### Prof. Horst Malchow

Horst Malchow, Professor for Applied Systems Science at the Institute for Environmental Systems Research, University of Osnabrück, Germany, is visiting the Department for the month of September. During his time here he will present a seminar entitled *Reaction, Diffusion and Noise in Models of Plankton Dynamics* and teach at postgraduate level. Prof. Malchow's special field of interest is theory and computer simulation of self-organization in nonlinear biological, ecological, chemical and physical systems far from equilibrium. He is based in Erskine Room 607 (extn 8875) and is hosted by Alex James.



Horst Malchow

#### Prof. Brian Sleeman

Brian Sleeman comes to us from the Department of Applied Mathematics at the University of Leeds. His special research interest is mathematics applied to biology and medicine, including tumour angiogenesis, scattering theory, dynamical systems and inverse problems. He is visiting the Department from 6 September to 19 October to present a seminar entitled *The Ins and Outs of Acoustic Obstacle Scattering* and to teach MATH363 (Dynamical Systems). Prof. Sleeman is also based in Erskine Room 607 (extn 8875) and is hosted by his former PhD student, Michael Plank.



Brian Sleeman

### **PAPER ACCEPTED**

**Hannes Diener & Iris Loeb:** *Sequences of Real Functions on  $[0, 1]$  in Constructive Reverse Mathematics* (Annals of Pure and Applied Logic)

### **STATISTICIANS LOSING THEIR MARBLES?**

Contrary to appearances, this photo shows our Statisticians engaged in the serious business of looking at the 100-level statistics courses, with the assistance of UTCL, who devised this team-building exercise involving the passing of marbles from one to another without dropping same – a feat that our team, unlike some others, achieved with ease! Thanks to Mike Plank, who just happened to be lurking in the vicinity with a camera at the time.



### **CONFERENCES & VISITS**

**Qui Bui:** to attend the Workshop on Potential Theory at Gakushuin University, Tokyo, 17-20 December 2008. Talk entitled: *Affine frames and the solution of the Mexican hat problem.*

**Gunter Steinke:** to attend the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Computational Mathematics and Combinatorial Computing at the University of Auckland, 15-19 December 2008. Talk entitled: *Finite elation Laguerre planes whose automorphism groups are doubly transitive on the set of generator – the elementary abelian case.*

### **HOT OFF THE PRESS!**

Congratulations to John Hannah and his partner Sandie on the birth of their granddaughter Emma at 7.30pm on Thursday, 25 September 2008. We look forward to the photos in due course.



## **CONGRATULATIONS!**

### **Peter Humphries - PhD**

Congratulations to Peter Humphries who successfully defended his PhD thesis (*Combinatorial Aspects of Leaf-Labelled Trees*) on Friday, 19 September.

### **UCSA Lecturer of the Year Nominee**

Congratulations also to Rick Beatson, who was one of 4 nominations from this Department for the UCSA COE Lecturer of the Year award. Rick was overseas at the time of the last newsletter when the other nominees were announced.



### **NEW ARRIVAL**

Congratulations to Richard & Emily Brown, who are the proud parents of their third child and first daughter, Eliana Grace, born on 29 August.



### **WEDDING BELLS**

Tanja Gernhard, a regular Summer student visitor to this department from Germany, ties the knot! Tanja recently submitted her PhD and will be moving to Zurich to take up a postdoctoral fellowship working on the evolution of diseases. We look forward to seeing her out here again in February for the phylogenetics conference.



### **GALERIES LAFAYETTE, BERLIN (left)**

For those who are interested in geometry, here is a photo of the interior of Galeries Lafayette in Berlin courtesy of Douglas Bridges, who was in Europe recently on a research visit. This exclusive department store, designed by French architect Jean Nouvel, is renowned for its glass cones that are a feature of the interior from the underground parking levels to the top floor.