

Mathematics

A Chair of Mathematics, and effectively the Department of Mathematics, was established in the Research School of Physical Sciences by the University Council in 1959 on the initiative of the then Director, Sir Mark Oliphant. The original proposal was for a department of nine tenured positions, including three professors, and a corresponding number of non-tenured posts. The foundation head was Professor B.H. Neumann, who took up his appointment at the beginning of 1962 and held it until his retirement in 1975. He has since been active as an Honorary Fellow in the department.

The other early chair holders were Professor J.W. Miles (1962-1965) and Professor K. Mahler (1963-1968). In 1970, the department lost six positions to allow for the creation of the Department of Applied Mathematics. Professor R.E. Edwards held a personal chair from 1970 to 1986; Professor J.H. Coates was the head of the department for a brief period (1977-1979). In 1980, two new professors were

appointed: D.W. Robinson (1982—) as head, in which capacity he served until the end of 1989, and L.M. Simon (1981-1990). At the time of leaving the RSPHysS, there were seven tenured and six non-tenured posts in mathematics.

The department had a major impact on the international standing of research in mathematics in Australia. Initially this was in Group Theory, Number Theory, Fluid Mechanics, Functional and Harmonic Analysis, and Differential Equations, and later also in Operator Algebras and Partial Differential Equations. It also had a major impact on research training in pure mathematics in Australia. It was for some time the main producer of doctorates in pure mathematics in the country, and a majority of departments of mathematics in Australia, which are active in research in pure mathematics, have graduates or former staff from this department.

Mike Newman



Some of the members of the Department of Mathematics, IAS 1974.

Front Row: L to R

Dr S. Yamamuro, Dr Marcel Herzog, Mrs Barbara Geary, Professor K. Mahler, Dr Cheryl Praeger, Professor B.H. Neumann, Mrs Masako Izumi, Dr Shin-ichi Izumi, Miss Sybil Stuckey, Dr J.L. Hickman.

Standing: L to R

Dr D. Wright, Dr J. Staples, Mr A.H. Dooley, Mr J.W. Sanders, Dr D. McDougall, Mr D.R. Jackett, Dr M.F. Newman, Mr R.H. Hunter, Mr D.J. Glover (SGS - being supervised by LGK).