



Mathematical Association of America  
History of Mathematics Special Interest Group  
**NEWSLETTER**



Volume III, Number 1

July 2008

**Dates to Remember:**

**July 31-August 2  
2008 MathFest  
in Madison, WI**

**January 5-8, 2009  
Joint Mathematics  
Meetings in  
Washington, DC**

**March 31, 2009  
HOM SIGMAA  
Student Paper  
Contest deadline**

**HOM to Team with POM at 2009 JMM**

**2008 Joint Winter Meetings, San Diego.**

The theme of this year's JMM in San Diego was Mathematics of Indigenous Peoples, and HOM SIGMAA was honored to host one of the founders and leaders of the Ethnomathematics movement, Ubiratan D'Ambrosio of Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Brazil. D'Ambrosio gave our annual Guest Lecture, speaking on "Ethnomathematics in a Global World," and participated in a panel discussion with Ana Dias of Central Michigan University on The Political Dimension of Ethnomathematics. The HOM SIGMAA also sponsored a Contributed Paper Session on Ethnomathematics and Its Uses in Teaching.

Thought in Traditional and Indigenous Societies" and "Women in Mathematics." Every MAA member will receive a free copy of the "Ethnomathematics" poster in the September issue of *FOCUS*. Partially funded by HOM SIGMAA, this poster was organized, researched, and written by our own HOM SIGMAA Program Coordinator Amy Shell-Gellasch. All three days of MathFest, HOM SIGMAA will sponsor a Contributed Paper Session on Interesting Topics in History of Mathematics that Enhance the Teaching and Learning of Mathematics, organized by Dan Curtin and Amy Shell-Gellasch. Finally, on Saturday, August 2, we sponsor an Invited Paper Session on History of Mathematics, organized by Shawnee McMurran and Amy Shell-Gellasch, with speakers Janet Beery, Tom Drucker, Fernando Gouvea, Deborah Kent, and Amy Shell-Gellasch.

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Other math history events at the JMM included an MAA Invited Address, "4000 Years of Algebra: An Historical Tour from BM 13901 to Moderne Algebra," by Karen Parshall; an MAA Contributed Paper Session on Using Ideas from Asian Mathematics in the Classroom, organized by Victor Katz, Kim Plofker, and Frank Swetz; and an AMS-MAA Special Session on History of Mathematics, organized by Joseph Dauben, Patti Hunter, Victor Katz, and Karen Parshall.

**MathFest 2008, Madison, Wisconsin.** HOM SIGMAA will host events on each and every one of the three days of MathFest, July 31-August 2. On Thursday, July 31, we host the Grand Unveiling and Reception of two new MAA posters, "Ethnomathematics: Exploring the Role of Mathematical

**2009 Joint Winter Meetings, Washington, DC.** The JMM January 5-8 in Washington, DC, will feature two joint sessions with the Philosophy of Mathematics (POM) SIGMAA. First, our annual Guest Lecture will be given by Chandler Davis, of University of Toronto, speaking on "The Role of the Untrue in Mathematics." We'll also have a joint HOM-POM Panel Discussion on The Intersection of the History and Philosophy of Mathematics, organized by Bonnie Gold

*Please see HOM to Team with POM, page 3.*

**Greetings from the HOM SIGMAA Chair**

*Dan Curtin, Northern Kentucky University*

It is a privilege and a pleasure to serve HOM SIGMAA as Chair. I am also very grateful to all our officers for the great work they do. Amy Shell-Gellasch continues her outstanding work as Program Coordinator. Janet Beery is our excellent Secretary-Treasurer, as evidenced by this newsletter. Andrew Perry, our Electronic Resources Coordinator, has ably overseen our transition to the new website, <http://homsigmaa.org/>

The two offices of Program Coordinator and Secretary-Treasurer and the new office of Prize Coordinator will be up for election this October. Please pass nominations or suggestions to any of us on the Executive Committee.

We historians had a grand time at the JMM in San Diego,

including our HOM meeting, lecture, and reception. More details of the meeting are in the report above and in the photo spread on pages 4 and 5. I hope to see many of you at MathFest in Madison, where there will be three history sessions, including a poster reception and several talks; see the article above. The Joint Meetings this January are in Washington, DC. Last time the Joint Meetings were there we had a blizzard, so this time expect tropical weather!

HOM SIGMAA is strong and keeps getting better and better, thanks to your support. Keep giving presentations, keep encouraging your students to write for the Student Paper Competition, and, most of all, keep showing up at our sessions and meetings and encouraging the participation of all of our members. Please let us know any ideas that occur to you that can help us keep the historical ball rolling.



## 2008 Meeting and Conference Calendar

### ICME-11 2008

July 6-13, 2008, Monterrey, Mexico

Visit <http://www.icme11.org.mx/icme11/> for information on the Eleventh Quadrennial Conference of the International Congress on Mathematics Education.

### MAA Mathematical Study Tour: Explore Peru

July 7-19, 2008, Cuzco, Machu Picchu, Lima, more

Participants will explore the mathematics, cultural heritage, and scenic wonders of Peru with expert leaders.

### Conference of the International Study Group for Relations between History and Pedagogy of Mathematics (HPM)

July 14-18, 2008, Mexico City

Visit <http://www.red-cimates.org.mx/HPM2008.htm> for details of this quadrennial satellite conference of ICME-11 (see above).

### 2008 Euler Conference

July 20-23, 2008, Garden City, New York

This year's conference at Adelphi University will include papers on Euler's contributions to mathematics, science, technology, philosophy, religion, and education, with emphasis on Euler's life and work during the 1770s and 1780s. For more information, visit [EulerSociety.org](http://EulerSociety.org) or contact Ed Sandifer at [esandifer@earthlink.net](mailto:esandifer@earthlink.net)

### MAA MathFest

July 31 – August 2, 2008, Madison, Wisconsin

For details, see page 1 of this newsletter, the April 2008 issue of *FOCUS*, and *MAA Online* at [www.maa.org](http://www.maa.org).

**MAA FOCUS, September 2008:** A free copy of the poster, "Ethnomathematics: Exploring the Role of Mathematical Thought in Traditional and Indigenous Societies," will arrive with your September *FOCUS*.

### Pohle Colloquium in the History of Mathematics

September 2008 - May 2009, Garden City, New York

The Frederick V. Pohle Colloquium in the History of Mathematics is hosted by the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science at Adelphi University in Garden City, New York. Watch [www.pohlecolloquium.org](http://www.pohlecolloquium.org) for announcement of the Fall 2008 and Spring 2009 speaker series. The colloquium usually meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 3:45 p.m., followed by dinner with the speaker at a local restaurant.

### Philadelphia Area Seminar on the History of Mathematics

September 2008 - May 2009, Villanova, Pennsylvania

This monthly seminar meets at Villanova University, usually on a Thursday at 6 p.m., and begins with a light dinner. Check [www.villanova.edu/artsci/mathematics/pashom/](http://www.villanova.edu/artsci/mathematics/pashom/) for dates and speakers.

### ARITHMOS Reading Group

September 2008, Danbury, Connecticut

Readings in the History of Mathematics from Original Sources (ARITHMOS) will meet at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury, on a Saturday-Sunday in September, with exact dates and topic to be announced. Organized by Ed Sandifer, Rob Bradley, and Chuck Rocca, ARITHMOS meets three to five times per year. For more information, visit [www.arithmos.org](http://www.arithmos.org) or contact Ed at [esandifer@earthlink.net](mailto:esandifer@earthlink.net).

### ORESME Reading Group

September 2008, Highland Heights, Kentucky

The Ohio River Early Sources in Mathematical Exposition (ORESME) Reading Group will hold its 21st meeting this fall at Northern Kentucky University, with exact dates and topic to be announced. Our January 25-26 meeting at Xavier University celebrated both ORESME's 10th anniversary and the 100th anniversary of the publication of the famous papers of Ernst Zermelo (1871-1953) setting out the axioms of set theory and a proof of the axiom of choice. Organizers Daniel J. Curtin (Northern Kentucky University) and Daniel E. Otero (Xavier University) welcome inquiries from anyone sharing our interest within striking distance of Cincinnati. Meetings usually are held in September and January. For more info, see [www.nku.edu/~curtin/oresme.html](http://www.nku.edu/~curtin/oresme.html) or contact us directly.

### The Culture of Print in Science, Technology, Engineering and Medicine

September 12-13, 2008, Madison, Wisconsin

Program, registration, and accommodation info is available at the web site of the Center for the History of Print Culture in Modern America: <http://slisweb.lis.wisc.edu/~printcul/>

### Midwest History of Mathematics Conference

October 3-4, 2008, LaCrosse, Wisconsin

The conference will take place in the Reinhart Center of Viterbo University, with keynote speaker Chris Christensen, Northern Kentucky University, presenting "The Theorem that Won the War", on the Polish, British and American mathematicians whose work culminated in the breaking of the Nazi Enigma Code. Registration and abstract submission forms (the latter due August 15, 2008) and more info can be found at <http://www.viterbo.edu/mhmc.aspx> and/or contact Michael Wodzack at [mawodzack@viterbo.edu](mailto:mawodzack@viterbo.edu). Viterbo University is easy to reach from I-90, and the area, nestled between the bluffs next to the Mississippi River, is beautiful in the fall.

### American Mathematical Society Western Section Meeting

October 4-5, 2008, Vancouver, British Columbia

Shawn McMurran and Jim Tattersall are organizing a special session on history and philosophy of mathematics at this meeting, to be held at the University of British Columbia and the Pacific Institute of Mathematical Sciences. Another meeting highlight is that Freeman Dyson of the Institute for Advanced Study will give the 2008 Einstein Public Lecture.



## 2009 Meeting and Conference Calendar

### AMS-MAA Joint Mathematics Meetings

January 5-8, 2009, Washington, DC

For details, see page 1 of this newsletter, along with [www.maa.org](http://www.maa.org) and [www.ams.org](http://www.ams.org).

### Annual Meeting of Americas Section of International Study Group on Relations Between History and Pedagogy of Mathematics (HPM)

March 13-14 or March 20-21, 2009, Washington, DC

HPM Americas will meet in the MAA Carriage House (1781 Church St NW, Washington, DC) for the second year in a row, for a day of mathematics history presentations and conversations. For information, visit [www.hpm-americas.org/](http://www.hpm-americas.org/) or contact Bob Stein ([bstein@csusb.edu](mailto:bstein@csusb.edu)).

### HOM SIGMAA Student Paper Contest deadline:

March 31, 2009

### National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Annual Meeting

April 22-25, 2009, Washington, DC

See [www.nctm.org](http://www.nctm.org) for details. This meeting always includes several talks and workshops on incorporating mathematics history into the classroom.

### Canadian Society for History and Philosophy of Mathematics (CSHPM) Annual Meeting

June 6-8, 2009, Saint John's, Newfoundland

Watch [www.cshpm.org](http://www.cshpm.org) for details. This meeting with the Canadian Mathematical Society will include a special session on the history of mathematics, physics, and astronomy.

## HOM to Team with POM

*... continued from page 1*

(POM) and Amy Shell-Gellasch (HOM).

**2010 Joint Winter Meetings, San Francisco.** For the JMM January 6-9, 2010, in San Francisco, the HOM SIGMAA theme will be "Great Books and Texts." Our Guest Lecturer will be Reviel Netz, of Stanford University, discussing the Archimedes Palimpsest, and Glen van Brummelen and Amy Shell-Gellasch will organize an MAA Short Course on our theme. We also are proposing contributed paper sessions on "Using original sources in the classroom" and on "The most influential and infamous mathematics texts of all times."

**What HOM Sessions Would You Like to See at Future MAA Meetings?** Keeping in mind that paper sessions, panel discussions, and special lectures are approved about a year in advance, please share with Amy Shell-Gellasch HOM SIGMAA Program Coordinator ([shellgae@plu.edu](mailto:shellgae@plu.edu)), your ideas for HOM events at the JMM and MathFest. Please let her know, too, if you're willing to organize or co-organize such an event.

### Save these dates for future MAA meetings!

Summer 2009	Portland, OR	August 6-8
Winter 2010	San Francisco, CA	January 6-9
* HOM SIGMAA theme: Great Books of Mathematics		
Summer 2010	Pittsburgh, PA	August 5-7
Winter 2011	New Orleans, LA	January 5-8
Winter 2012	Boston, MA	January 4-7
Winter 2013	San Diego, CA	January 9-12
Winter 2014	Baltimore, MD	January 15-18
Summer 2015	Washington, DC	August 5-8
* MAA Centennial Celebration!		

## HOM SIGMAA Student Paper Contest Has 4 Winning Papers, 3 Winning Authors

*Amy Shell-Gellasch, Program Coordinator*

HOM SIGMAA is pleased to announce the results of its fifth annual Student Paper Contest in the History of Mathematics. Mame Maloney, of the University of Chicago, won both first-place and honorable mention awards. Her winning paper was "Constructivism: A Realistic Approach to Math?" and her honorably mentioned entry was "Pathological Functions in the 18th and 19th Centuries." There was a tie for second place between Woody Burchett, of Georgetown College, for "Thinking Inside the Box: Geometric Interpretations of Quadratic Problems in BM 13901," and Cole McGee, of Colorado State University-Pueblo, for "Jean le Rond D'Alembert: Mathematician, Philosopher, and Man of Letters." All four winning essays are posted at the HOM SIGMAA website at <http://homsigmaa.org>

HOM SIGMAA also is pleased to announce its sixth annual Student Paper Contest, with a **submission deadline of March 31, 2009**. The contest is open to all undergraduate students. Its purpose is to increase awareness of and interest in the history of mathematics among undergraduates. A grand prize winner and two runners-up are chosen each year. All three student winners receive a one year student membership to the MAA and to CSHPM; the grand prize winner also receives a \$25 gift certificate to the MAA Bookstore.

Papers may address a single person, topic, or period, or may survey the history of a broader topic or school of thought. They should be approximately 5000 words (12 double-spaced pages in 12 point type), should include a full citation list, and should not draw too heavily from internet sources (except for web sites that give access to printed material, such as JSTOR or Gallica). A panel of specialists will judge papers for content, presentation, and grammar.

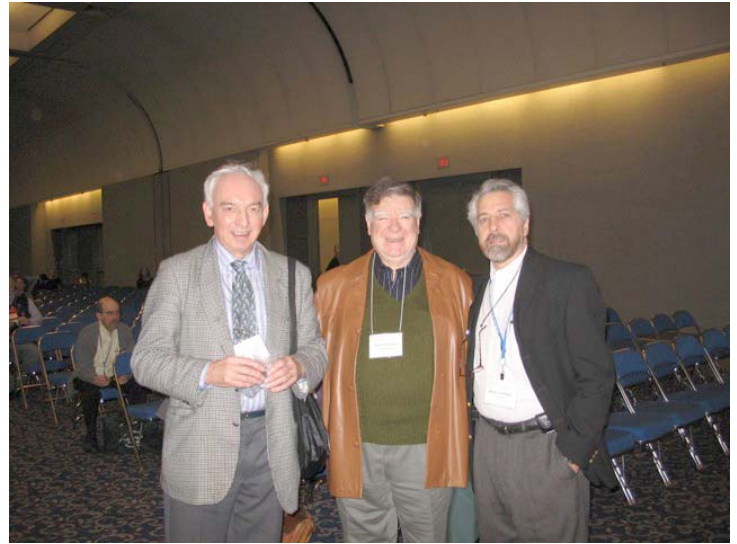
Submitted papers should include the student's name, institution, email and postal addresses, and the name of the supervising instructor, if applicable. Direct submissions and questions to Amy Shell-Gellasch at [shellgae@plu.edu](mailto:shellgae@plu.edu) or 253-538-6198. Winners are announced in May of each year.



## HOM SIGMA Celebrates Ethnomathematics at

Many events and presentations at the 2008 Joint Mathematics Meetings January 6-9 in San Diego featured mathematics history. HOM SIGMA events centered around the theme of Ethnomathematics or Mathematics of Indigenous Peoples, while Karen Parshall gave an Invited Address on the 4000-year history of algebra, Robin Wilson organized a short course that included the history of combinatorics, David Pengelley and others debuted books on the history of mathematics, and Joe Dauben, Patti Hunter, Victor Katz, and Karen Parshall organized two days of talks on research in the history of mathematics. Thank you to all participants, presenters, and organizers who have made mathematics history such an integral and exciting part of this and all recent Joint Mathematics Meetings!

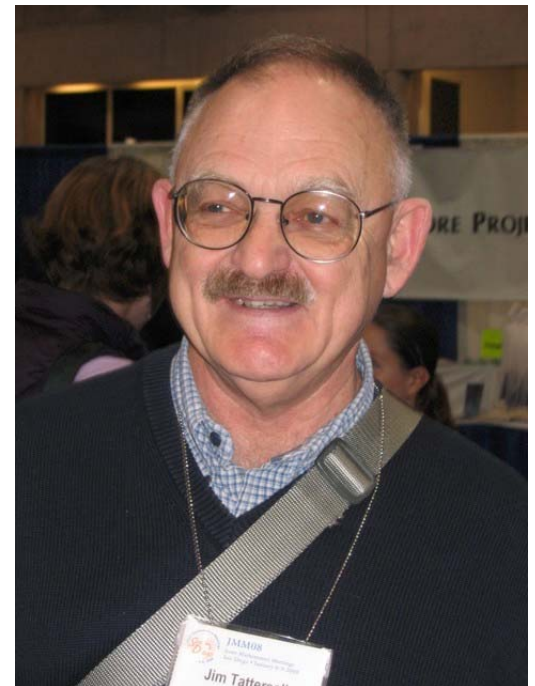
*Below: Robin Wilson, organizer of the short course, "Combinatorics: Past, Present, and Future," addresses his students.*



*Above: Ivor Grattan-Guinness of the UK, Ubiratan D'Ambrosio of Brazil, and Alejandro Garcadiago of Mexico (left to right) await Karen Parshall's Invited Address, "4000 Years of Algebra: An Historical Tour from BM 13901 to Moderne Algebra." D'Ambrosio gave the HOM SIGMA Guest Lecture, "Ethnomathematics in a Global World."*



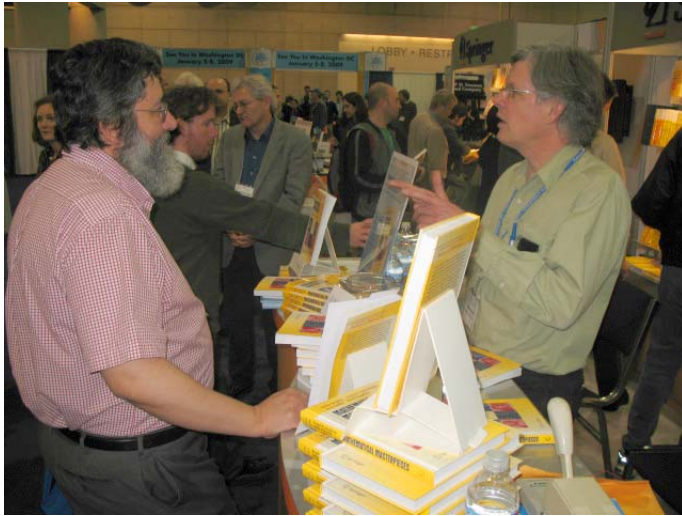
*Above: George Andrews (left), presenter in the short course, "Combinatorics: Past, Present, and Future," and David Bressoud (right), MAA President-Elect, await a banquet.*



*Above: As MAA Associate Secretary for the past ten years, Jim Tattersall has organized all MAA national meetings.*



## 2008 Joint Mathematics Meetings in San Diego



*At left: David Pengelley (right) shows Fernando Gouvea (left) his new book, *Mathematical Masterpieces: Further Chronicles by the Explorers*, at the Springer booth. Pengelley's co-authors are Art Knoebel, Reinhard Laubenbacher, and Jerry Lodder.*

*Gouvea is the editor of both MAA Online and MAA FOCUS.*

## Spring and Early Summer Events Celebrate History of Mathematics

Several HOM SIGMAA members organized, led, and participated in meetings, conferences, and workshops featuring the history of mathematics this past spring and early summer.

The Americas Section of the International Study Group for Relations Between the History and Pedagogy of Mathematics (HPM) held its annual meeting in the beautifully restored MAA Carriage House in Washington, DC, on April 19, 2008. Americas Section Chair Bob Stein, Florence Fasanelli, Amy Ackerberg-Hastings, Betty Mayfield, Kimber Tysdal, Maryam Voulis, Ilhan Izmirli, and Smithsonian historians Alain Touwaide and Peggy Kidwell gave talks on mathematics history and pedagogy.

Founded and organized by Sloan Despeaux, the fourth annual Smoky Mountain Undergraduate Conference on the History of Mathematics (SMURCHOM) was held at Western Carolina University on April 26, 2008. It featured keynote speaker Patti Hunter and student talks and posters.

At the annual meeting of the Canadian Society for History and Philosophy of Mathematics (CSHPM), held June 1-3, 2008, at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Glen van Brummelen delivered the featured Kenneth O. May Lecture, "In Search of Vanishing Subjects: The Study of Trigonometry Before 'Trigonometry'." Other HOM SIGMAA members gave talks in the special session on the history of trigonometry and in numerous other sessions on the history and philosophy of mathematics.

Several intrepid HOM SIGMAA members traveled to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to speak in a Special Session on History and Philosophy of Mathematics organized by Jim Tattersall at the first-ever Joint International Meeting of the American Mathematical Society (AMS) and the Brazilian Mathematical Society held June 4-7, 2008.

Danny Otero of Xavier University and David Pengelley of New Mexico State University led the 2008 MAA Ohio Sec-



*Emanuela Appetiti (Scientific Program Specialist, National Museum of Natural History), Mia Abeles (Mathematics Teacher, Paul Public Charter School), Florence Fasanelli (Mathematician in Residence, AAAS), and Alain Touwaide (Historian of Sciences, Smithsonian Institution) enjoy the HPM Americas Conference.*

tion Summer Short Course titled "Study The Masters: Using Primary, Historical Sources In Teaching And Research" June 18-20 at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Maria Zack, of Point Loma Nazarene University, organized Nexus 2008: Relationships between Architecture and Mathematics, held June 23-26 at her home university in San Diego, California. The Nexus conferences are international conferences dedicated to explorations of the relationships between architecture and mathematics through a broad panorama of topics, many of them historical.

Readings in the History of Mathematics from Original Sources (ARITHMOS) met at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury June 28-29, 2008, to read selections from Cauchy's *Cours d'analyse*. Organized by Ed Sandifer, Rob Bradley, and Chuck Rocca, the ARITHMOS Reading Group meets three to five times per year.



## ***Convergence* Keeps Mathematics, History, and Teaching Foci, Despite Move to New *Loci***

*Victor Katz, University of District of Columbia*

*Convergence: Where Mathematics, History, and Teaching Interact*, is the MAA's online magazine about the history of mathematics and its use in teaching. Part of the Mathematics Digital Library (MathDL) and soon to be part of MathDL's new magazine, *Loci*, *Convergence* is aimed at teachers of mathematics, be they secondary teachers, two- or four-year college teachers, or college teachers preparing secondary teachers. Topics include grade 9-14 mathematics: algebra, synthetic and analytic geometry, trigonometry, probability and statistics, elementary functions, calculus, linear algebra, and differential equations. The editors, Victor J. Katz, University of the District of Columbia, and Frank Swetz, Penn State University, Harrisburg, welcome you to visit [mathdl.maa.org](http://mathdl.maa.org) to see the *Convergence* magazine.

*Convergence* includes the following features.

- \* Expository articles on the history of topics in the mathematics curriculum. These may contain interactive components and color graphics, to take advantage of the capabilities of the Web. Each article has a discussion group attached, where readers can share suggestions on how to use the material in the classroom.

- \* Translations of original sources, generally accompanied by commentary showing the context of the works. The goal of these translations is to show teachers how ideas were developed in various cultures and how knowledge of this development is useful to teaching the same ideas to today's students.

- \* Reviews of current and past books, articles, and teaching aids on the history of mathematics of use to teachers, as well as reviews of websites providing information on the history of mathematics.

- \* Classroom suggestions. These may be self-contained articles showing how to use history in the teaching of a particular topic or they may be materials closely related to a main article, showing how to use the article in a classroom setting.

- \* Historical problems or "Problems from another time"

- \* "What Happened Today in History?"

- \* Quotation of the day. The reader also can search our database of quotations to find many more quotations.

- \* An up-to-date guide to what is happening around the world in the history of mathematics and its use in teaching. The magazine will report on past meetings and give notice of future meetings.

Because our goal is to bring out new material on a regular basis, we need a continual flow of articles and classroom suggestions. We therefore welcome your ideas for articles as well as your completed manuscripts. In particular, we welcome short classroom suggestions that can be implemented immediately by teachers. Materials should be sent both in hardcopy and electronically, with hardcopy to Victor Katz, *Convergence*, Mathematical Association of America, 1529 18th St. N.W., Washington, DC 20036, and electronic files to Victor

Katz at [vkatz@udc.edu](mailto:vkatz@udc.edu). We can take articles in Word or TeX, but please include illustrations (in jpg format), applets, etc. as separate files, and give explicit instructions for both internal and external hyperlinks. If there are many illustrations or applets, it is best to send the electronic version on a CD to the MAA address. If you have an idea for an article, but do not know how to produce applets for it, we suggest that you contact an expert on your own campus for help. If necessary, however, we can provide help in the editorial office, provided you give us very explicit instructions as to what you need.

If you are interested in writing reviews for *Convergence*, please contact Frank Swetz at [guru6@myway.com](mailto:guru6@myway.com). We also welcome interesting quotations as well as information on mathematical dates to add to our database.

### **Cajori Two Project Collects Data on History of U.S. Collegiate Mathematics Education**

*Walter Meyer, Adelphi University*

The Cajori Two Project, which intends to create a series of snapshots of curricular change in college mathematics at a sample of American institutions through the 20th century, continues. We have collected catalog photocopies from many of the schools on our list. In parallel with this collection effort, we have been formulating a set of standard courses to look for in the various institutions.

We have investigated and discussed two ways to record the data: one possibility was with database software; the other (which we decided upon) was to use Excel workbooks (files), one for each institution. Within an Excel file, the rows will be the standard courses and the columns will be the years 1905, 1915, . . . , 2005. Within a cell, the presence or absence of the course will be recorded along with other abbreviated data. We have carried out literature searches in journals such as the *Monthly* and have explored additional sources of funding. (We have a small grant from the HOM SIGMAA.)

The Cajori Two Project is named after the mathematics historian and early MAA president Florian Cajori, who published a detailed study of U.S. mathematics curricula in 1890. Beginning with Cajori's "still picture" from 1890, we hope to animate the history of U.S. collegiate mathematics education by providing snapshots for 1905, 1915, . . . , 2005, making a sort of curriculum movie in which we follow about 20 institutions through time. The Cajori Two team consists of Walter Meyer, Joe Malkevitch, Jack Winn, and new member Chuck Lindsey. For more information, please contact Walter Meyer at [meyer1@adelphi.edu](mailto:meyer1@adelphi.edu)



## MAA Centennial to Include MAA History

*Anthony Piccolino, Chair*

*HOM SIGMA Working Group on MAA Centennial*

The MAA will celebrate its Centennial in 2015. Although that date may seem to be in the very distant future, planning for this momentous event already is underway. MAA has established an *ad hoc* committee, chaired by Deanna Haunsperger and Steve Kennedy, whose charge is to plan the Centennial. A central focus of the Centennial will be the history of MAA and, as such, MAA has invited HOM SIGMA to encourage its members to direct their scholarly pursuits and research to the history of MAA. Such scholarly output can be disseminated through the MAA journals, special Centennial publications, presentations at MAA and related meetings, and various other ways.

A contributed paper session on the history of the MAA will be proposed for an upcoming national meeting. Contributions on any era or aspect of the history of the MAA would be welcome, including histories of MAA sections, special interest groups, publications, meetings, workshops, membership trends, and leaders. Our hope is that presenting in or attending this session will inspire research on the history of the MAA, to be presented more formally later during the Centennial.

We need more ideas for compiling and celebrating the history of the MAA before and during the MAA Centennial. Please send your suggestions for incorporating the history of the MAA into the MAA Centennial to any member of the HOM SIGMA Working Group on the Centennial History of the MAA.

### **HOM SIGMA Working Group on the MAA Centennial:**

Anthony Piccolino (Chair), Montclair State University,  
[piccolino@mail.montclair.edu](mailto:piccolino@mail.montclair.edu)

Nkechi Agwu, Manhattan Community College,  
[Nagwu@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:Nagwu@bmcc.cuny.edu)

Florence Fasanelli, AAAS, [ffasanel@aaas.org](mailto:ffasanel@aaas.org)

Joel Haack, University of Northern Iowa, [Joel.Haack@uni.edu](mailto:Joel.Haack@uni.edu)

Paul Schuette, Meredith College, [Schuette@meredith.edu](mailto:Schuette@meredith.edu)

Benjamin V.C. Collins, Univ. of Wisconsin, Platteville,  
[collinbe@uwplatt.edu](mailto:collinbe@uwplatt.edu)

Herb Kasube, Bradley Univ., [hkasube@hilltop.bradley.edu](mailto:hkasube@hilltop.bradley.edu)

Larry D'Antonio, Ramapo College, [ldant@ramapo.edu](mailto:ldant@ramapo.edu)

Hector Rosario, Univ. of Puerto Rico,  
[hector.rosario@math.uprm.edu](mailto:hector.rosario@math.uprm.edu)

### **Join the History of Mathematics SIGMAA!**

The annual HOM SIGMAA membership fee for MAA members is \$10. The MAA membership form has a check-off box for HOM SIGMAA, and we ask you to check this box when you pay your annual MAA membership dues. If you have already joined or renewed for 2008, please contact the MAA at (800)331-1622 and ask to join HOM SIGMAA.

## Make a Deposit to the National Curve Bank

*Shirley Gray, California State University, Los Angeles*

The year 2008 has significant happenings in the History of Mathematics. First, we learn that the BSHM and WALMATO will hold a joint conference in Wales honoring the 450th anniversary of the death of Robert Recorde (1519?-1558), the first to publish our equals sign symbol. Thanks to the Huntington and Cambridge University libraries, Shirley Gray published "On the Equals Sign – Our 'Twins': A Tour Through Original Sources" in *The Mathematical Intelligencer*, 30 (2), 2008.

The National Curve Bank Project – A MATH Archive provides other opportunities to view original sources. In particular, the newest deposit on the classic Catenary has the illustrations submitted to Jacob Bernoulli by Leibniz and Huygens in 1691 for the widely acclaimed *Acta Eruditorum*. See <http://curvebank.calstatela.edu/catenary/catenary.htm>. In addition, the NCB now has an annual award of \$250 for the best deposit of the year. Recent entries submitted by both faculty and students have come from as far away as Germany and Korea.

The National Curve Bank is an international database for all kinds of curves. Intended as a resource for both students and teachers, it strives to provide features - for example, animation and interaction - that a printed page cannot offer. If you have a favorite curve, you are welcome to make a deposit. Visit the National Curve Bank at [curvebank.calstatela.edu/](http://curvebank.calstatela.edu/)

The NCB has been blessed to have the riches of the Burndy Collection added to the already impressive holdings in History of Mathematics at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California. Please note a new permanent exhibit of math and science treasures is scheduled to open in November. HOM SIGMAA members should plan to include this stop on a trip to Southern California.

### **2008 HOM SIGMAA Executive Committee**

**Chair:** Dan Curtin, Northern Kentucky University  
Email: [curtin@nku.edu](mailto:curtin@nku.edu)

**Secretary-Treasurer:** Janet Beery, University of Redlands  
Email: [janet\\_beery@redlands.edu](mailto:janet_beery@redlands.edu)

**Program Coordinator:** Amy Shell-Gellasch,  
Pacific Lutheran University  
Email: [shellgae@plu.edu](mailto:shellgae@plu.edu)

**Electronic Resources Coordinator:** Andrew Perry,  
Springfield College  
Email: [perryand@yahoo.com](mailto:perryand@yahoo.com)

**Past Chair:** David Zitarelli, Temple University  
Email: [zit@temple.edu](mailto:zit@temple.edu)



## HOM SIGMAA Seeks Prize Coordinator for Book and Journal Prizes

### Run for HOM SIGMAA Office!

Balloting for the three offices of HOM SIGMAA Prize Coordinator, Program Coordinator, and Secretary-Treasurer will be held October 1-31, 2008. If you are interested in running for any of these offices, please contact David Zitarelli, Nominating Committee Chair, at [zit@temple.edu](mailto:zit@temple.edu)

As part of its continuing efforts to encourage and reward excellent writing of mathematics history, the History of Mathematics SIGMAA will elect its first Prize Coordinator to administer its ongoing Student Paper Contest in the History of Mathematics, its soon to be inaugurated Mathematics History Book Prize, and its eventually to be inaugurated Mathematics History Journal Article Prize. The first Prize Coordinator term will be a 2-year term, beginning in January of 2009 and ending in January of 2011. The second term and all terms thereafter will be 3-year terms.

The Program Coordinator plans and organizes HOM SIGMAA events for the two national MAA meetings, the JMM and MathFest. These events include the annual reception, business meeting, and lecture at the JMM and contributed paper sessions, panel discussions, and special receptions and speakers at both meetings. Beginning with this election, the Program Coordinator will serve a 3-year term, from January of 2009 to January of 2012.

The Secretary-Treasurer prepares the annual newsletter, proposes the annual budget, submits the annual report, and records minutes of meetings of the membership and of the ex-

ecutive committee. Beginning with this election, the Secretary-Treasurer will serve a 3-year term, from January of 2009 to January of 2012.

The link for the electronic ballot will be distributed via e-mail through the HOM SIGMAA listserv by October 1, 2008. Paper ballots will be provided by request only.

### Changes to HOM SIGMAA Charter

During our January 2008 business meeting at the JMM in San Diego, the HOM SIGMAA membership approved the following three changes to the HOM SIGMAA Charter.

1) Introduction of a new officer and member of the Executive Committee, the Prize Coordinator. This officer would be responsible for administering the annual HOM SIGMAA Student Paper Contest, the soon to be inaugurated HOM SIGMAA Book Prize, and the eventually to be inaugurated HOM SIGMAA Journal Article Prize.

Article V, Section 1 now begins "Elected officers of this SIGMAA will be Chair, Program Coordinator, Prize Coordinator, Electronic Resources Coordinator, and Secretary/Treasurer." Section 2.b.iii now reads, "The Prize Coordinator will be responsible for administering the annual HOM SIGMAA Student Paper Contest; administering the HOM SIGMAA Book Prize, including chairing the HOM SIGMAA Book Prize Committee; and administering the HOM SIGMAA Journal Article Prize, including chairing the HOM SIGMAA Journal Article Prize Committee. The Prize Coordinator will also perform other duties as may be directed from time to time by the Executive Committee."

2) Extension of terms of HOM SIGMAA Executive Committee members (officers) from two years to three years.

Article V, Section 3.c now reads, "All HOM SIGMAA Executive Committee members shall serve terms of three years effective with officers beginning their terms in January of 2009. (The only exception is that the first Prize Coordinator will serve from January of 2009 to January of 2011.) Terms will begin at the conclusion of the January Joint Mathematics Meetings."

3) Designation of HOM SIGMAA immediate Past Chair as Chair of three-member Nominating Committee.

Article V, Section 3.a now begins, "The Executive Committee will appoint a Nominating Committee of three members. When possible, the immediate Past Chair will chair this committee." The words "the immediate Past Chair" replace "an outgoing executive officer."

The revised charter is posted at the HOM SIGMAA website: <http://homsigmaa.org>. Or contact HOM SIGMAA Secretary-Treasurer Janet Beery at [janet\\_beery@redlands.edu](mailto:janet_beery@redlands.edu) or Dept. of Mathematics, Univ. of Redlands, Redlands, CA 92373, for a copy.

### Visit the HOM SIGMAA Website! Join Our Electronic Mailing List!

*Andrew Perry, Electronic Resources Coordinator*

Our website has the new url, <http://homsigmaa.org>, and includes HOM SIGMAA news, announcements of upcoming conferences, links to other history of mathematics pages, and other resources. Since we publish the HOM SIGMAA Newsletter only once per year, please check the HOM SIGMAA website for news throughout the year. Suggested additions to the website (for example, conference information, links or photos) are always welcome at [perryand@yahoo.com](mailto:perryand@yahoo.com).

To subscribe to the HOM SIGMAA list, send an email to [perryand@yahoo.com](mailto:perryand@yahoo.com) with the subject line: subscribe HOMSIGMAA-list ADDRESS, with your own e-mail address in place of the word ADDRESS. See <http://homsigmaa.org/list> for instructions for subscribing to the list in digest form or for unsubscribing from the list.

Please contact Andrew Perry at [perryand@yahoo.com](mailto:perryand@yahoo.com) if you have any problems subscribing, or with any other questions or comments on HOM SIGMAA electronic resources.

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