

6. Any ordinary member who has reached the age of 65 years and has been a fully paid up member for the previous five years may pay at the student membership rate of subscription.
7. Subscriptions normally fall due on 1 February each year.
8. Cheques should be made payable to the Irish Mathematical Society. If a Eurocheque is used then the card number should be written on the back of the cheque.
9. Any application for membership must be presented to the Committee of the I.M.S. before it can be accepted. This Committee meets twice each year.
10. Please send the completed application form with one year's subscription fee to

The Treasurer, I.M.S.
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Minutes of the Meeting of the Irish Mathematical Society

Ordinary Meeting
4th April 1996

The Irish Mathematical Society held an Ordinary Meeting at 12.15pm on Thursday 4th April 1996 in the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 10 Burlington Road. There were 16 members present. The President, D. Hurley was in the chair. Apologies were received from F. Holland and K. Hutchinson.

1. The minutes of the meeting of 21st December 1995 were approved and signed.

2. Matters arising

- A letter has been sent to the European Mathematical Society (EMS) explaining that the society could not afford to pay the full level of its subscriptions to the EMS, and enclosing part-payment. No reply has yet been received. Concern was expressed that individual membership should be continued in the usual manner and it was agreed that the individual memberships would be forwarded at the end of the month.

- It was reported that letters had been sent to the college officers of the University of Rochester, protesting at the proposed closure of its graduate program. No further information was available to date.

- It was felt that a perpetual trophy for the winner of the Irish National Mathematical Olympiad Competition would help in publicizing the event and raising sponsorship. It was suggested that the trophy should have some interesting geometric shape. T. Laffey, G. Lessells and J. Pulé agreed to investigate sponsorship, design and other practicalities of the trophy and to report back to the December meeting.

- It was agreed that the society should liaise with the Irish Mathematics Teachers Association (IMTA) to organize a mathematics afternoon for Transition Year students from secondary schools in



Cork, Dublin and Limerick in September 1996. All were encouraged to suggest speakers.

- R. Timoney was thanked for setting up an IMS page on the World Wide Web. Its address is <http://www.maths.tcd.ie/pub/ims>.

Departments were asked to add a pointer in the home pages of their entry on the WWW to the IMS page.

3. Bulletin

The issue of advertising in the bulletin was discussed. M. Tuite agreed to approach publishers on this matter.

It was mentioned that instructions to authors may be changed from Tex to Latex, as Latex appears to be more commonly used. Thanks were expressed to the editor.

4. Treasurer's business

The treasurer gave his financial report and was thanked. G. Lessells agreed to send a letter of thanks and a copy of the Bulletin to those people and institutions who gave financial support to last year's September Meeting.

5. September Meeting

D. Armitage reported that organization for the 1996 September Meeting is well under way and principal speakers arranged. Speakers for short talks were requested. The conference will be held in the Applied Mathematics building in Queen's University Belfast. A conference banquet will be held in the Great Hall of the university. The president appealed to all members to make a special effort to attend the September Meeting.

6. Any other business

The issue of awarding bonus points to honours mathematics in the Leaving Certificate was discussed. S. Dineen requested that any information or statistics that might support this practice be sent to him.

The meeting closed at 1.05pm.

Pauline Mellon
University College Dublin.

PROFESSOR JOHN LIGHTON SYNGE, FRS Obituary

Professor John Lighton Synge, the most distinguished Irish mathematician and theoretical physicist since Sir William Rowan Hamilton (1805-1865), died in Dublin on March 30, 1995, exactly one week after his 98th birthday.

He entered Trinity College in 1915 and by the end of his first year he won a Foundation Scholarship in mathematics, an extraordinary achievement in view of the fact that in those days the Foundation Scholarship examination was normally taken in the third year. He graduated in 1919 with a Senior Moderatorship in Mathematics and Experimental Physics and a Large Gold Medal.

After a brief lectureship in mathematics in Trinity College he left for Canada in 1920 to join the University of Toronto as Assistant Professor in Mathematics. He returned to Trinity in 1925 to a Fellowship and the Chair of Natural Philosophy until 1930. His most brilliant students during this period were the late Dr A. J. McConnell (geometer and one time Provost of Trinity College) and the late Professor E. T. S. Walton (experimental physicist and Nobel laureate with Cockcroft).

He left Trinity College again in 1930 and after a succession of senior appointments at the universities of Toronto, Ohio, Princeton, Maryland and Pittsburgh, and a brief appointment as ballistic mathematician in the US Air Force during the war, he returned to his native Dublin in 1948 as a Senior Professor in the School of Theoretical Physics of the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.

It was during Professor Synge's tenure that the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies became one of the great centres in relativity theory. Up to the mid sixties, and primarily under his influence, about 12% of the world's relativists passed, physically,