

## EDITORIAL

It is an honour to have been appointed Editor of the Society's Bulletin at the 2024 Annual General Meeting in Belfast. I wish first and foremost to echo the appreciation of the Society, as expressed at its AGM, for Professor Tony O'Farrell's trojan work as Editor over the past fourteen years or so. I've surely been given some big shoes to fill. While Tony never made much of it, or even hinted at the work involved, believe me when I say that producing an issue of this Bulletin is a non-trivial task. The scripts that Tony has written to automate the various steps in the process is impressive. Having learnt the ropes with Tony's assistance, and with the help of David Malone and of Michael Mackey, this next issue of the Bulletin has miraculously seen the light of day.

Another who must have our heartfelt thanks is Ian Short (The Open University) who has produced the Problem Page for as long as Tony has been editor. Thank you most sincerely, Ian, for your service to the Society. Beginning with this issue, J.P. McCarthy (Munster Technological University) has kindly agreed to take up the mantle of the Problem Page. Please support J.P. by suggesting problems and solutions for future issues: [imsproblems@gmail.com](mailto:imsproblems@gmail.com).

The continued success of the Bulletin rests squarely on the quality of submissions. Thankfully, we have several excellent articles in the current issue. It was agreed at the December 2023 IMS Committee Meeting that occasional interviews with members of our mathematical community would be a welcome addition to the Bulletin. Here we have a fascinating interview with Tony O'Farrell conducted by Pauline Mellon (University College Dublin). Also in this issue is a paper on Threshold Concepts in Undergraduate Teaching by Sinéad Breen and Ann O'Shea. As I understand it, a threshold concept is one that, when mastered, opens the door to the next level of understanding and facility with one's subject. Another example in a mathematical context, over and above those discussed in the article in question, might be 'linear independence of vectors': students who understand and internalise this concept can progress in their study of linear algebra and perhaps then on to functional analysis, whereas those who do not succeed in crossing this threshold, or climbing this ladder, are restricted to a lower conceptual level. Also noteworthy in this issue is an enlightening obituary of Petros Serghiou Florides written by Paul D. McNicholas (McMaster University).

I hope that you will enjoy reading these and the many other interesting articles in this issue. Remember that, for a limited time and beginning as soon as possible after the online publication of this Bulletin, a printed (grayscale, not full-colour) and bound copy may be ordered online on a print-on-demand basis at a minimal price<sup>1</sup>.

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