

**SEPTEMBER
2013**

YBMA News

**Vol 23
No 1**

The Newsletter of the Yorkshire Branch of the Mathematical Association

Editorial

This is the 94th year of the existence of the YBMA. It started, all those years ago, with a discussion led by the newly elected Chairman, Professor W. P. Milne, on the 'Inclusion of Numerical Trigonometry Logarithms as a compulsory subject for the University Matriculation'. The nature of our meetings may have changed, as the curriculum and teaching have changed, but we still provide relevance, variety, interest and entertainment. We hope we shall see you at our meetings this year.

Advance Notice

W P Milne 6th Form Lecture

Wednesday 2nd April 2014 at 2.30 pm

Leeds University - venue to be confirmed

Ben Sparks

Freelance Mathematician / Musician / Educator

'The Creation of Number?'

A whistle-stop tour of some of the exciting bits in the development of number systems – with proofs and fractals thrown in. And along the way:

Who killed Hippasus?

Why is A4 paper such an annoying length?

How do you know when there are -1 sheep in the field?

What is the square root of -1 and why does it matter?

Are we just making all this up, or are we discovering it?

BRIEF NOTICES

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

If you have not yet paid it, your subscription for 2013 is now overdue. You may send your cheque for £5 payable to the YBMA to the Treasurer, Tim Devereux, Woodview House, 37 Hough Top, Leeds, LS13 4QW, or you may pay at a meeting

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FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Saturday 19th October 2013
at 2.00 for 2.30 pm

in MALL 1, School of Maths, University of Leeds

'Yo Ho Ho-ratio: Some Mathematics of Trafalgar'

Peter Ransom

President of the Mathematical Association

This session is presented by Able Seaman Ransom of HMS Pickle (the ship that brought the news of Trafalgar back to Britain) in 1805 seaman's dress. After considering the risks Nelson took it looks at the mathematics of cannon balls and demonstrates their destructive power. Crown and anchor dice may be used, and we will also make an old navigational instrument and work on a navigational chart with it. CD ROMs of all materials will be available.

Thursday 7th November 2013
at 7.00 for 7.30 pm

in MALL 1, School of Maths, University of Leeds

'UK Mathematics Trust - Challenging'

Rachel Greenhalgh

UKMT Director

Find out more about the work of the UK Mathematics Trust and its close relationship with the Mathematical Association. Enjoy problem solving as experienced in today's classrooms. And be prepared to have a go at UKMT questions without using a calculator.

Tuesday 10th December 2013
at 7.00 for 7.30 pm

in MALL 1, School of Maths, University of Leeds

'Christmas Quiz and Buffet' Tim Devereux and Alan Slomson

YBMA Committee Members

A sociable evening of brain-frazzling questions and quirky mathematical prizes, with seasonal food and drink. Cajole your colleagues to come and enjoy themselves!

From The Archives: 1927-8

There were 162 members of the Branch in 1927-8, and the map shows their 'distribution'. The discrepancy in numbers is explained by the fact that some members lived or worked outside the area covered by the map. For example, there were members in Shropshire, West Bridgford, Cambridge, Gravesend, Barrow-in-Furness, Monkseaton, and Chesterfield.



There were 3 meetings in that year, all held on Saturday afternoons. At the Autumn Meeting, at Leeds University, Professor Jessop (Armstrong College, Newcastle) read a "very interesting" paper on 'The Principles of Line Geometry', and Mr Montagnon (Leeds GS) read a "very thoughtful" paper on 'The Teaching of Mechanics in Schools'. In the Spring Meeting, also held at Leeds University, Professor E. A. Milne (Manchester University) gave a "most instructive paper" on 'The Radiative Equilibrium of a Rotating Star', and Mr Lowery (Huddersfield Technical College) led a discussion on Mr Montagnon's paper. At the Summer Meeting, held at Wheelwright GS, Mr Child (Manchester University) gave a "fascinating paper" on 'Isaac Barrow and the Calculus', and Miss Abbott (Wakefield Girls' HS) read a "most instructive" paper on 'The Teaching of Riders in Geometry'. The Annual Dinner was held in March at the Queen's Hotel, Leeds, and 44 members and guests were present. Mr Oldfield (Pudsey Secondary School) proposed the toast 'Mathematics, may it never be of any use to anybody'. [I well recognise the desperate attempts to describe each talk in a different way.]

The annual subscription was 5 shillings, but this was reduced to 3 shillings and 6 pence for those who were members of the parent Mathematical Association. This perhaps explains the origins of the annual subsidy paid to us by the MA. The Treasurer's Report indicates that only 93 members paid a subscription in that year – a problem not unknown today. The balance at the end of the year was £40 – 0 – 7.

For discussion: Comment on any changes since 1927, from mathematical, educational and political perspectives.