

Review of LMS events during the year 2012/2013

1. Open Challenge

As in previous years, this year's Open Challenge competition was synchronised with the MEM Challenge competition. The competition was posted in late January for completion during the February half term week. The competition was sent to every one of the 250 schools or colleges with a sixth form in the North West, resulting in some new schools taking part who had not done so previously. There were 64 individual entries from 27 schools and 9 teams of 24 students which gives a total of 88 students from 29 different schools, the standards of which were very high. This year's theme was Chocolate, with questions created by, amongst others, Alison and Tony Carter with input from Peter Giblin and Val Hanrahan. Next year's competition will follow the same pattern, and offers of questions are gratefully received.

2. CPD programme

There have been no events this year. The committee has plans for both secondary and primary events for 2013-14.

Primary programme: We are hoping to include a master class type event for year 6 teachers and pupils and an event which covers problem solving skills.

Secondary programme: We are looking into the possibility of a couple of day events with well-known presenters and supporting the teaching of pupils at GCSE grade A and A*.

3. PopMaths Quiz

The LivMS PopMaths Quiz, held on Saturday 2nd March 2013, attracted 150 sixth-formers in 41 teams from 16 schools/colleges supported by 17 staff.

First-prize: a team from The Blue Coat School, Liverpool

Second prize: the team from Runshaw College, Leyland, Lancs

Joint third prize: a team from West Kirby Grammar School, Wirral and the team from Ulverston Victoria High School, Cumbria

Many thanks to:

- LJMU for their excellent hospitality
- staff of LJMU maths department for their support at the event
- Fazakerley High School for the loan of the electronic voting system
- the members of LivMS who gave up their Saturday morning to help with the event

4. Ordinary Meetings

There were two public lectures in 2012/13:

1. Kevin Houston and Rob Sturman 'In Tune with Mathematics', 11 October 2012, 5.30-6.30 at the University of Liverpool.

The talk was firstly a detailed exposition of the mathematics underlying various harmonic scales, starting with the 5 note scale and working up to the standard 12 note scale. The second part described Dr Houston's attempt to analyse the chord which begins the Beatles' song 'It's a hard day's night', one of many attempts and one of the most successful so far. This used Fourier analysis. There were about 60 present at the lecture.

2. Steve Humble (Dr Maths) 'The Randomness Show', 7 March 2013, 5.30-6.30 at Liverpool Hope University

Steve Humble presented several card tricks and other puzzles which have mathematical explanations and where apparent randomness in fact covers up an underlying order. There was a good deal of audience participation in the talk. He discussed his article, joint with Ehrhard Behrends, 'Triangle mysteries' which appeared in the Mathematical Intelligencer (March 2013). This started with an interactive event at the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art in Gateshead, where a colour game gave rise to interesting and significant mathematics. There were about 65 present at the lecture.

All events for the forthcoming year will appear on the LivMS Website. Currently, Ben Sparks will give a talk on 30 October 2013 and Thomas Wolley will give a talk on 6 March 2014. At this stage, all details are provisional for both events.

5. Roadshow Development

Version 6 of the FunMaths Roadshow was released on 1 January 2013 via a new online delivery method as a Digital Download (with the option of a CD for those who can find the right button to click). Currently, Version 6 is available either complete or as distinct Primary or A-Level sets. Welsh Primary is almost ready for release, with Polish and Spanish in development. Various discounts were available for a limited time following release, though these will be discontinued shortly.

Lonnie Readioff
Secretary, 28 April 2013