

## DUNEDIN WINS BID FOR ICOTS III

A team of eleven New Zealanders attending ICOTS II (the Second International Conference on Teaching Statistics) in Canada have secured ICOTS III for Dunedin, New Zealand in 1990. The delegation, led by Bryan Manly and Sharleen Forbes was ably supported by Andy Begg, Lynette Holland, Bruce Miller, Hugh Morton, Dave Saville, John Sealy, Fay Sharples, Murray Smith and Graeme Wood with assistance from Peter Thomson and David Vere-Jones back here in Wellington. They presented a thoroughly documented case which included letters of support from the Minister of Education and the Mayor of Dunedin. A short report on events appears in a separate news item elsewhere in this issue and more extensive reports on ICOTS II will be published in the November issue of *The New Zealand Statistician*.

## 38TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN CHRISTCHURCH

The 38th Annual Conference of the NZSA will be held at the University of Canterbury from Monday, 24th August, 1987 to Wednesday, 26th August. The conference is being held on those days to dovetail with the Australasian meeting of the Econometrics Society which is to be held from August 26th to the 28th, 1987.

Hostel accommodation will be available. The current cost for bed and breakfast is \$23.50 per day.

The organisation of the conference will be similar to previous years. Monday and Tuesday will be the conference proper, with Wednesday available for specialist seminars. A public lecture is planned for the Tuesday night prior to the conference dinner. Suggestions for suitable speakers will be gratefully received.

For information or suggestions regarding the conference contact:

Richard Penny  
Mathematical Statistics Division  
Department of Statistics  
Private Bag  
Christchurch. Telephone: (03) 793-700

For information regarding submission of papers contact:

Conference Chairman  
NZ Statistical Association  
P.O. Box 1731  
Wellington

As August is the height of the ski season and a trip away is great for the grey matter I hope to see you all at next year's conference.

Richard Penny

## NZ MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY VISITING LECTURER—Dr Terry Speed

Dr Terry P. Speed, Chief of the Division of Mathematics and Statistics, CSIRO, Australia is to tour New Zealand in September/October, 1986 as the NZ Mathematical Society Visiting Lecturer. His itinerary will include all six university centres and he will present two or three talks in each centre. The dates and titles of his Wellington lectures are as follows:

- (1) Wednesday, 24 September, 3.30 p.m., AMD Seminar Room, Room RB730, 7th Floor Rankine Brown Building, Victoria University of Wellington. "Triangulated Graphs and their Application"—An expository talk intended to introduce these graphs and briefly outline their main properties and many applications, e.g. in probability, game theory, computer science etc.
- (2) Thursday, 25 September, 7.30 p.m. Lecture Theatre 2, MacLaurin Lecture Block, Victoria University of Wellington. "The Hidden Contribution of the Mathematical Sciences to Everyday Life"—The illustration through examples from areas such as medical imaging, robotics, communication via space satellites and space travel, of the way in which recent mathematical research underpins well-known scientific and technological achievements.
- (3) Friday, 26 September, 4.30 p.m., Easterfield Conference Room, 6th Floor, Easterfield Building, Victoria University of Wellington (jointly sponsored with the Wellington Maths Assn and the NZ Statistical Assn).

"What statistics should be taught in schools?"

For dates, venues and titles of talks in other centres contact your local branch of the NZ Mathematical Society or Dr Murray Jorgensen, Department of Mathematics, University of Waikato, Private Bag, Hamilton, Telephone: (071) 62889.

## N.Z. STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Thanks to all the members who offered to assist with the secondary schools. It has been decided to have a two-tiered committee structure with a central committee based in Wellington and local co-ordinators providing liaison with schools and Maths Associations throughout the country. The details have not yet been finalised but a full statement of the aims of the committee and a list of members will be published in the November issue of *The New Zealand Statistician*.

Sharleen Forbes



## STATISTICS PRIZES AT THE AUCKLAND SCIENCE EXHIBITION, 1986 by John Maindonald

The prize-winning entries at the 1986 Auckland Science Exhibition were:

### First Prize—

*Ergonomics:* Suzanne Thomson and Sarah Vallings—Macleans College.

Standing height, sitting height, and upper and lower leg measurements were obtained for 30 students in each of the class ranges: Primers, Standards 1 & 2, Form 2, and Form 4. (Altogether three schools were represented). This data was then related to the furniture in actual use, and an assessment made of the proportion of pupils in each class range who fitted their furniture in each of the respects noted.

### Second Prize—

*Amazing:* Katie Potter and Libby Boak—Westlake Girls.

Subjects were required to pass their index finger through a finger maze that was hidden from view. Laughing put them off, banter and encouragement both helped them to get through quickly, and the offer of a reward seemed to have little effect. It was not quite clear how many subjects were used in each case—were the graphs shown a sample from the total? I liked the identification of an outlier on one of the graphs—“the subject got so annoyed with us laughing that she got lost for over two minutes.”

### Highly Commended—

*Screw Loose:* Emma Dobson, Papatoetoe High School. A torque meter was used to measure starting torque and stripping torque with a fixed size of screw but varying hole sizes. Results (in newton meters) can be summarised thus:

	Hole size (mm)		
	4.2	4.5	4.6
Starting torque	1.96	1.59	0.62
Stripping torque	5.54	3.85	1.14

In each case the frequency distribution of results from ten repeats was graphed. The standard deviations (calculated by JHM) ranged between 0.13 and 0.27. A low starting torque but high stripping torque is required. Other entries included:

### *Mental and Physical Test.*

This student ran 1 mile every three days for three months, recording on each occasion speed, heart-rate immediately after running and heart-rate two minutes later. Trends in the data, and particularly the substantial increase in speed in the final three months, were noted.

### *Astrology.*

Astrologically based predictions for favourite colour, day, and number were compared with those actually favoured, for each of her 23 classmates. The predicted colour (out of 6 choices) was right in 26% of instances, day was right in 13% of instances, and number (out of 1...10) was right in 43% of instances.

### *Rebounding of Tennis balls.*

The heights of rebound of three different makes of ball were recorded for each of four surfaces.

### *Clothes pegs.*

Comparisons between several different makes were made for ease of use (how long did it take to hang out the washing?), force required to pull a cloth off the line, and preferences as revealed in a small survey.

Finally, brief summaries will be given for a number of other projects:

Cooling curves (for water) were compared for cups made of plastic, china, metal, pottery, etc. Holofil, wool, green cotton and black cotton were compared for their ability to prevent heat loss from a test tube containing water?

Weights over a pulley were used to apply an upward force to plants, to see whether this will influence growth. Results on an aptitude test were compared for 20 females of each of four different hair colours.

Plant growth was compared under red, green, blue, purple light.

Weight loss over 16 days was compared for each combination of metal (Mg, Al, Fe, Sn, Pb, Cu) and immersant (Water, salt solution, sulphuric acid).

Ideas for interesting and useful projects abound, and a look around the exhibits is worthwhile on that account alone. Where results were replicated, few pupils found really satisfactory ways of coping with presentation of results. Means or medians are often needed to show trends, with some indication (such as an average range) of the scatter in the data values from which the mean or median has been calculated.

## ICOTS II AND ICOTS III

### by Sharleen Forbes and Bryan Manly

Many readers of this Newsletter will know by now that the Third International Conference on teaching Statistics (ICOTS III) is going to be held at the University of Otago in 1990. We have written this report to inform members of the Statistical Association how this came about, and to provide some information about the second conference in the series, ICOTS II, that has just taken place in Victoria, British Columbia.

The first ICOTS conference was held at the University of Sheffield in 1982 under the sponsorship of the International Statistical Institute. It attracted about 500 participants from 60 countries, and was considered to be a great success. As a result, in 1983 the I.S.I. Taskforces on Conferences and Education invited Jim Swift to arrange a second conference in Victoria in 1986. This also attracted about 500 participants, but the organizers were a little disappointed that these only came from 40 countries.

It is interesting that there were 15 Participants and Associates from New Zealand at ICOTS II. On a population basis this was by far the greatest national representation, and it was certainly not due to the bid being made for the next conference.

Moves to have ICOTS III in New Zealand began some time ago when John Turner, the ICOTS National Co-ordinator for the country, circulated Mathematics and Statistics departments in the universities, asking them whether they would be prepared to host the conference. Bryan Manly said “yes” on behalf of Otago, little realizing that there was any chance of this happening! It was discovered later through David Vere-Jones’ contacts in the I.S.I. that the idea of having a conference in New Zealand had been well received, and was worth following up.

At that stage our energetic President, Peter Thomson, entered the scene. Together with David Vere-Jones, he oversaw the production of an extremely professional looking bid document for us to take to ICOTS II to present to Lennart Rade, the Chairman of the I.S.I. Taskforce on Conferences. Consisting of a list of reasons for holding a conference in New Zealand, tourist information, a detailed budget, and letters of support from the Minister of Education, the University of Otago, the Mayor of Dunedin and the Department of Education, this document clearly impressed everyone



who saw it. We think that to a large extent it was responsible for convincing the I.S.I. Taskforce that an ICOTS III in New Zealand would at least be a well managed one.

There is no space here to go into the details of how it was that our bid for ICOTS III was accepted. Originally we thought that the decision was going to be made on the Sunday before ICOTS II began. However, for various reasons, it was not confirmed until midday on the Thursday of the conference week. It seems to have been a decision that was hard to make. There was pressure for the next conference to be in a developing country. Morocco was mentioned as a possibility and it was suggested that delegates from Sweden brought a last minute offer from that country also. Although some delegates were surprised by the New Zealand choice, many told us how much they were looking forward to coming here, especially after seeing the brochures and video-tapes we displayed on the Friday.

There were 11 Invited Papers Sessions for ICOTS II. The topics were Teaching (6-11), Teaching (12-18), Initial and In-Service Training of Teachers, Use of Computers in Teaching, Teaching in Developing Countries, Principles of Learning Probability and Statistics, Education of Statisticians, Statistics in Government, Statistics in Industry, Statistics in Business, and Miscellaneous. Plenary talks were given by James Zidek on "Statistication: the Quest for a Curriculum", by Terry Speed on "Questions, Answers and Statistics", by James Adichie on "Statistical Education in the Developing Countries of Africa: the Nigerian Experience", and by William Kruskal on "Is Anyone Listening Out There?—Statistics and the Public".

When we had recovered from the flight from New Zealand to Victoria (including missed connections, unplanned overnight stops, etc.), it became obvious that there was the usual problem with the programme for the conference. Most times of the day there were at least four things going on. Often two or three appeared interesting and at this conference the problem was compounded by additional workshops and tutorials which covered a whole morning or afternoon block. These were a source of resentment in themselves costing extra on top of a substantial conference fee and all being booked out weeks before the conference started. Although extras were accommodated in some cases this resulted in chaotic room changes.

As the week went on we found that the quality of the talks, both invited and contributed, was uneven. (Someone pointed out that this was a polite way of putting it.) The incoming International Programme Committee for ICOTS III is aware of this and is intending to referee invited papers to that conference to a greater extent than was done for ICOTS I and ICOTS II. The mechanism for doing this is not yet clear, but it is of the utmost importance. On several occasions the view was expressed that the teaching of statistics must be treated with professionalism and competence so we do not alienate either the educationalists or the statisticians.

What did we gain personally from the Victoria conference? We found that we were not the only ones to think that statistics teaching should be undergoing great changes. We found that the question of how to make appropriate use of computers in teaching is being asked everywhere round the world. We found that other people are also concerned to improve the quality of first year university courses and make them more interesting for students. It was pleasing to see the creativity displayed by some people in their approach to the

teaching of statistics and we picked up a few specific ideas that we will try in our own courses. We enjoyed the change of going to a conference where the emphasis was on the teaching of statistics rather than the theory of statistics. It appears that the teaching of statistics is coming of age with a group being established to look at the history of teaching statistics on an international basis.

At the present time, 1990 seems a long way off. However, preparations for ICOTS III will be starting, in a small way, quite soon. An organizational structure will be set up. The dates of the conference will be fixed. Early advertising material will be prepared. The I.S.I. taskforces are rather concerned by the distance of New Zealand from many parts of the world, and we have had to convince them that any shortfall in numbers from Europe will be made up for by increased participation from the Pacific region. We are relying particularly on strong support from members of the Statistical Association both in terms of attendance and in the promotion of the conference overseas.

We gratefully acknowledge the support provided by the NZ Convention Association, Air New Zealand, Otago University, the Tourist and Publicity Department, the Wellington Mathematics Association and Queen Margaret College for assistance with the preparation of the bid and for our return travel expenses to ICOTS II.

## SURVEY OF MEMBERS—RESULTS SO FAR

So far, as at September 5th, 116 members have returned the questionnaire which was included in the last issue of this newsletter—a response rate of about 48%. No attempt has been made to contact non-respondents. The executive committee thanks those members who responded promptly especially the 50 or so who volunteered to assist seventh form secondary school teachers (Sharleen Forbes, or, your "regional coordinator" will be contacting you soon).

A membership directory will be published next year but in the meantime members are welcome to request "incomplete" lists of members subsetted by region or area of interest.

If you have not returned your completed questionnaire we urge you to do so. The executive committee values your opinions and is keen to assemble a useful directory of members.

### Glitches in the Questionnaire

The most embarrassing snafu was the command "Strike out the appropriate word" in Section D on Statistics in the Secondary Schools. This command should have read "Strike out the inappropriate word" or "Circle the appropriate word". We are assuming most respondents caught our drift, but please don't be too upset if you're asked to help out the secondary schools when you thought you'd made it clear to us that you weren't interested!

The distinction between interest or application areas (topic areas in which specialist conferences or workshops might be held) and skills (topic areas in which you might be able to assist fellow members or enterprising non-members) was a little fuzzy and it is clear some respondents felt they themselves were square pegs being driven into round holes. If the survey exercise is repeated in two or three years' time, this section will be modified.

The coarse rating scales upset some respondents and the provision of two levels of support and only one level



of nonsupport may well have biased things a bit. Also, as one respondent said "The question asking for opinions reminds me of the question 'Are you in favour of motherhood?'", so some questions might have been better left unasked. The (intentional) omission of a modifying phrase like "Subject to finance" or "Given only a small increase in annual subs" in front of the questions about additional activities and alternative publication ventures also bemused some respondents.

The best repartee was from an Auckland Statistician, "All these good ideas need funds. Should we set up mechanisms whereby the association says it wouldn't object to the odd bequest?"

**Association Activities**

Responses to the statement, "I would like to see the association sponsoring the following additional activities", were as follows:

	Strongly Support	Support	Do Not Support	No Opinion/ No Response
Regional Meetings	29	56	1	30
Workshops for Statisticians	32	60	0	24
Workshops for non-statisticians	28	42	7	39
Visits from Overseas Statisticians	17	67	3	29
Lecture Tours by NZ Statisticians	16	45	13	42
Overseas Travel Awards to Members	5	30	34	47
Awards for Student Theses or Papers	14	47	12	43
Awards to Members	2	23	33	58

It would seem that the introduction of travel awards and other awards to members might upset a non-trivial portion of the membership (Quite right too! Why should my hard earned sub money be spent on someone's overseas holiday...Ed). However, while we do have a committee (the SAPQC) whose function is (in part) to purge society of statistical deviants, that is recognize and comment on bad behaviour, we do not have, apart from the Honorary Life Membership category, a means of recognizing good behaviour. It is probably one of the functions of a professional society to acknowledge excellence and some sort of annual lecture award which would provide a travel grant for a distinguished NZ statistician to tour the country presenting a special lecture would not only be a means of acknowledging that member's contributions to statistics but would also fulfill

the association's limited educational role.

The "Others" category generated five suggestions, namely, ...

- (i) Liaison with similar organisations overseas.
- (ii) Promotion of research.
- (iii) Summer Research Schools of 3-5 days' duration.
- (iv) Professional Public Relations, Development of Statistical Consulting as a profession, guidance on setting fees, etc.
- (v) Training for Secondary Teachers.

**Association Publications**

*The New Zealand Statistician*

Overwhelming support for the current technical level of the content and some support, but not a majority, for a cosmetic upgrade. The most common comment centred on the need for better mathematical typesetting.

		Content				
		Too Technical	About Right	Not Technical Enough	No Response	
<i>Appearance</i>	Upgrade	2	34	4	2	42
	About Right	4	60	4	0	68
	Downgrade	0	0	0	0	0
	No Response	0	3	0	3	6
		6	97	8	5	116

*The newsletter*

Again, overwhelming support for the technical level of the content of the newsletter and its cosmetics (phew!...Ed).

		Content				
		Too Technical	About Right	Not Technical Enough	No Response	
<i>Appearance</i>	Upgrade	0	2	0	0	2
	About Right	0	107	0	0	107
	Downgrade	0	3	0	0	3
	No Response	0	0	0	4	4
		0	112	0	4	116

**Other Publishing Ventures**

*Textbooks*

While a goodly portion of the respondents had no response to make, among those who did respond there seemed to be more support for the publication of secondary school textbooks than tertiary level

textbooks. However this may simply be a spinoff from the publicity surrounding statistics in the secondary schools.



		Tertiary Level Textbooks				
		Strongly Support	Support	Do Not Support	No Opinion/No Response	
Secondary School Textbooks	Strongly Support	8	3	4	6	21
	Support	2	18	12	7	39
	Do Not Support	0	0	16	0	16
	No Opinion/No Response	0	0	5	35	40
		10	21	37	48	116

The support for publishing statistical software was not nearly as strong as the support for publishing careers information, information for the general public and

casebooks for applied statisticians. However several suggested our association publish evaluations of software rather than software per se.

	Strongly Support	Support	Do Not Support	No Opinion/No Response
Careers Booklets	34	49	1	32
Casebooks for Statisticians	27	56	7	26
Educational Material for Lay People	34	42	6	34
Statistical Software	15	32	29	40

There were four suggestions in the Other category:

- (i) Reports on Statistical Software
- (ii) Conference Proceedings
- (iii) Casebooks for Secondary Schools
- (iv) Guidelines for Secondary School Statistics Teachers

**Public Profile**

Most respondents agreed that the association should play a more active role in statistical matters affecting the community. The methods suggested were:

- (i) the issuing of public statements on published misuses of statistics,
- (ii) a higher profile and more funding for the SAPQC,
- (iii) the provision of in-service training courses for various professional groups especially journalists and secondary school teachers,
- (iv) supplying radio and TV with a list of members willing to comment on statistical matters especially opinion polls,
- (v) five-minute TV segments on things statistical like the recent Maths programmes,
- (vi) supplying the media with advice on statistical graphics,
- (vii) look at what similar associations have done overseas,
- (viii) promote QA methods in the public sector especially in health and social welfare, and,
- (ix) public lectures.

Specific matters mentioned were the 245-T debate, past debates over fluoridation, impact of government net funding, and, electoral representation. Many respondents pledged their support for the work of the SAPQC (nee SAC).

**NEWS FROM AMD/DSIR**

Jean Thompson and Nye John comprised the AMD delegation to the Eighth Biennial Conference of the Statistical Society of Australia. Meanwhile, back in the division's tearooms, embarrassing topics of conversation include, not only proposals to shoot huskies or recreate the Pink and White Terraces, or, Tommie Tippee Teats,

but also the \$50,000 sponsorship of a racing car. The department still has some money left to employ summer students and AMD has summertime vacancies for students at Auckland and Wellington. Any student interested in working for AMD this summer should write to the Director, Dr Robert Davies, AMD/DSIR, P.O. Box 1335, Wellington and enclose details of courses they have taken, their grades and the name of one of their lecturers who could be contacted for more details.

**NEWS FROM SAS INSTITUTE (NZ)**

SAS users are invited to submit papers for presentation at SUNZ'86 which will be held at the Michael Fowler Centre in Wellington on November 6 and 7, 1986. The first prize awarded for the best paper presented at the conference will be a return airfare and 3 nights' accommodation to attend SUGI 12 in Dallas, Texas on February 8-11, 1987. Abstracts of no more than 200 words should be sent by September 30 to:

SUNZ'86  
P.O. Box 10-109  
Wellington, New Zealand.

Dr James Goodnight, President of SAS Institute Inc (USA) is an invited keynote speaker, and the after dinner speaker will be Jeremy Coney.

Pre-conference training courses scheduled in conjunction with SUNZ include "Automatic Forecasting", November 4 and 5. This course is being conducted by Dr John Brocklebank, Manager of Statistical Training for SAS Institute Inc (USA). The course covers practical applications of automatic forecasting techniques in SAS/ETS software. Course topics include:

- An Introduction to Statistical Forecasting Methods
- Exponential Smoothing Methods
- Residuals
- Autoregressive Error Structures
- ARIMA Modelling
- State Space Modelling
- Seasonal Variation



For further information on the course, contact Brian Bee, SAS Institute (NZ) Ltd, (04) 727-595.

## HISTORY OF TEACHING STATISTICS

Sharleen Forbes writes, "I am interested in researching the history of statistics teaching in New Zealand up until the beginning of the sixties. Any relevant information or source material would be appreciated. In particular, information on Silverstone, an early lecturer at the University of Otago. Please post to Sharleen D. Forbes, R.D.1, Featherston."

## THE BEATTIE REVIEW

The association received a last-minute invite to submit its views on Science and Technology Policy to the Ministerial Working Party chaired by Sir David Beattie. Our submission appears below:

### Submission to the Ministerial Working Party: Review of Science and Technology

The New Zealand Statistical Association represents the professional statisticians of New Zealand. It has in excess of 250 members who are typically employed as research, teaching and consulting statisticians. Many members are statistical consultants working in a wide variety of Government Departments, industry and teaching institutions.

The profession plays a key role in Science and Technology, since it is principally concerned with the promotion, application and creation of well-founded statistical methodology (the so-called "scientific method"). This methodology is a catalyst which can lead to direct financial gain (e.g. improving export quality using statistical quality control methods, design of horticultural experiments for export produce etc.) or to significant gains in scientific knowledge (e.g. statistical models for earthquake risk, statistical methods in meteorology, oceanography etc.). In either case it can be argued that a direct consequence of the application of sound statistical methods leads to an increase in efficiency, whether it is in terms of the production of income, knowledge or both.

Particular concerns of the Association include:

- lack of use of sound statistical methods in research
- the abuse of statistical methods in research
- the inadequate number of statisticians employed in government and industry
- the inadequate number of statistically qualified people graduating from our tertiary institutions
- lack of universal recognition of the fundamentally important role of statistics in optimising research

The following comments include a comment on Item 1 of the enclosed Terms of Reference of the Ministerial Working party, but are primarily concerned with Item 2.

#### Item 1:

Is there a need for a national S&T policy? From time to time scientific effort may have to be directed. A national policy-making group (in consultation with distinguished scientists and captains of industry) might decide on new areas for allocation of effort and entice scientists into these areas. The primary need is for high quality scientists and high quality science. Top calibre people will automatically turn their attention to science that is important to New Zealand while making the best use of the resources available to them. Too much direction will simply stifle initiative.

#### Item 2:

The current and future activities of our members

directly lead to optimisation of government investment in science and technology in terms of either financial return or scientific knowledge. However we are concerned about the future of basic research which is of value to New Zealand, and in many cases peculiar to New Zealand, but which cannot function easily in a user-pays environment. Unless funding for such research is significantly *increased*, we may well be unable to play our part in optimising this research effort.

Other concerns related to the "user-pays" principle are:

- the user is frequently ill-defined at the outset and yet the research proves to have great general benefit at a later date. Such research may be at risk under this policy.
- the danger that the quality of research will diminish while the quantity of non-innovative short-term paying projects will increase.
- it is likely to prevent the free flow of information essential for scientific research.
- it is likely to inhibit the work of statisticians in educating potential and current users of data in the proper application of statistical methods.

C. J. Thompson  
Secretary

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

As you will have read elsewhere in this issue of the Newsletter, the New Zealand bid to hold ICOTS III in Dunedin in 1990 was successful, despite somewhat stiffer competition than expected. Thanks to Bryan Manly, Sharleen Forbes and their supporting team, New Zealand teachers will have an outstanding opportunity at ICOTS III to make themselves familiar with international developments in the rapidly changing field of statistical education. I also believe that we will be able to show overseas teachers new and interesting developments in teaching statistics on the local front.

At the Executive Committee meeting of the 24th July we shared around the various responsibilities. These are now rather grandly referred to as portfolios—much more in keeping with an Executive Committee! In no particular order the portfolios and their holders are as follows:

Royal Society Representative:	Peter Thomson
SAPQC:	Garry Dickinson
Education Committee:	Sharleen Forbes (Convener)
Science Fairs:	David Harte
Publications Committee:	To be decided
Public Relations:	Peter Thomson
Science and Technology Reviews:	No candidate as yet
Annual Conference:	
Local Organiser	Richard Penny
Programme Committee	Peter Thomson (Convener)
Medical Statistics	Clare Salmund
Special Projects:	
ICOTS III	Bryan Manly
Public Data Bases and Charging	Colin Cryer

As you can see there are a few gaps just waiting for volunteers!

The SAPQC is working well and the Education Committee is also under way. David Harte could do with some help in organising the Science Fairs.





Although very interesting, it involves much more work than you might imagine including co-ordinating with statisticians and science fair organisers throughout the length and breadth of New Zealand.

We hope to begin organising the Publications Committee soon and already a number of people have expressed interest in helping out in this important area. However, more would not go amiss.

The portfolio on Science and Technology Reviews is a response to the fact that, more often than not, the Association finds itself ill-prepared to make submissions to reviews such as the recent review of Science and Technology. Reviews of various sorts have been appearing with monotonous regularity. The resources of a small professional body such as ours together with frustratingly tight deadlines for submission mean that we often do not have the time to develop a well prepared and documented case that genuinely represents the views of our members. It would be good if we had time to canvas our members' views, but this is rarely a practical possibility. So the thrust of this portfolio is in the direction of generating position papers that can be used as a background resource from which to respond to future submissions. Any offers or suggestions as to how we might achieve this will be gratefully received.

One way would be to generate more discussion of relevant issues in the *Statistician* and the *Newsletter*. A starting point might be the recent submission to the Review of Science and Technology prepared by Jean Thompson with help from an assorted collection of AMD and VUW statisticians. (This has been

reproduced elsewhere in this *Newsletter*.) Thanks to Jean's considerable efforts this submission was finally completed and sent off (just) in time. Please feel free to comment on or augment the views expressed in that submission. Commentaries, letters to the Editor even articles for the *Statistician* on such matters will be welcomed.

On a related topical matter, Colin Cryer is currently looking at public data bases and charging with a view to publishing his findings in either the *Statistician* or the *Newsletter*. Any information you feel that he should be aware of can be sent to him via the Association's Post Office box.

Turning to local groups, the first meeting of the Otago Local Group of the NZSA will be held on the evening of Thursday, 18th September. Geoff Jowett is going to speak about the introduction of statistics into the schools in the 1960's and about project work. I hear that moves are afoot in Auckland to set up a meeting between the Auckland Mathematics Association and NZSA members. We would also be pleased to learn of the activities of the Waikato Statistics Group and the Manawatu Statistics Group. I would particularly like to make contact with Wellington members interested in setting up a local group.

Stronger local groups will help broaden the membership base of the Association both numerically and geographically. Be on the lookout for new members—we need them (possibly more than they need us!).

Peter J. Thomson

#### DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

The deadline for submitted material for the February, 1987 issue of this newsletter is February 7.

Please send all notices of seminars, news items, letters-to-the-editor, etc. to ...

John Reynolds,  
Newsletter Editor,  
AMD/DSIR,  
P.O. Box 1335,  
Wellington.

The deadline for "News and Announcements" for the November, 1986 issue of *The New Zealand Statistician* is November 3.

## OVERSEAS CONFERENCES

### American Statistical Association Winter Conference: Statistics in the Information Age

To be held in Orlando, Florida, January 7-9, 1987. Write as soon as possible to ASA, 806 15th Street, N.W., Washington DC 20005, USA.

### The First International Conference on Statistical Computing ICOSCO-I

To be held in Cesme, Izmir, Turkey from March 30 to April 2, 1987. Invited speakers to date include: E. Cinlar (USA), E. J. Dudewicz (USA), A. S. Hedeyat (USA) and R. Sibson (UK). For a copy of the first announcement write to:

Prof. A. Ozturk, Conference Secretary,  
First Int. Conf. on Statistical Computing,  
Ege Universitesi,  
Bilgisayar Arastirma ve Uygulama Merkezi,  
35100 Bornova,  
Izmir, TURKEY.

### Charter Centenary Conference of the Royal Statistical Society

To be held in Cambridge, UK, from April 8-10, 1987. For further information contact J. H. Blenkinsop, Exec. Secretary, Royal Statistical Society, 25 Enford Street, London W1H 2BH, UK.

### Second International Tampere Conference in Statistics

To be held in Tampere, Finland from June 1-4, 1987. For further information contact Conference Secretary, C123, Dept. of Math. Sci., Univ. of Tampere, P.O. Box 607, SF-33101 Tampere, Finland.

### American Statistical Association/Biometric Society

The 1987 joint meeting is to be held August 17-20, in San Francisco, California. For further information write to ASA, 806 15th Street, N.W., Washington DC, 20005, USA.

### 46th Biennial Session of the International Statistical Institute

To be held in Tokyo, Japan from September 8 to 16, 1987. Information from ISI Permanent Office, 428 Prinses Beatrixlaan, P.O. Box 950, 2270 AZ Voorburg, Netherlands.



### **Fifth International Symposium on Data Analysis and Informatics**

To be held in Versailles, France from September 29 to October 2, 1987. Sponsors include ISI and RSS and the Organising Committee includes: J. M. Chambers (Bell Labs, USA), J. C. Gower (Rothamsted, UK) and R. R. Sokal (SUNY, USA). For a copy of the First Announcement write to:

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ROCQUENCOURT—B.P. 105  
78153 LE CHESNAY Cedex (FRANCE)

### **ANNUAL AWARDS**

The more popular magazines give out annual awards in their December issues, this year the NZSA newsletter scoops them all by announcing the end-of-year prizes in September ...

### **THE PRIZE FOR THE MOST ORIGINAL TITLE FOR A PUBLISHED STATISTICAL PAPER GOES TO ...**

K. O. Bowman and L. R. Shenton (1986, *Sankhya*, Volume 48, Series A, 219-231) for ...

“The dark side of asymptotics and moment series”

### **...AND THE PRIZE FOR THE MOST-APT-TYPO-OF-THE-YEAR-AWARD GOES TO...**

“There are  $2^{*5}$  terms in the long-linear model if all interactions are included”

Khamis, H. J. (1986) Log-Linear Model Analysis of the Disease-Genotype Association Problem: Two-Loci Case. *Biometrical Journal*, 28, 171-181.

### **...AND THE PRIZE FOR THE WEIRDEST CITATIONS GOES TO...**

Bowman and Shenton (op.cit.) again, ladies and gentlemen, for...

“Moment series of unsment estimators of the parameters of a Waiback density”

and

“Method of mussments, In Encyclopedia of Statistical Scerices”.

### **...AND THE PRIZE FOR THE STEAMIEST LITERARY REFERENCE TO STATISTICS (SUBMITTED AND JUDGED BY ROGER LITTLEJOHN OF INVERMAY) GOES TO RUDY WIEBE FOR THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE FROM “THE MAD TRAPPER”...**

“Shirley Adam’s voice had a thin strip of irony along its edge, quite out of keeping with the way she fit against his chest. ‘Heroes just misquote poetry, they never ache.’

‘Ache?’ Millen tilted back and stared at her in astonishment. ‘Ache, after two short back-to-back hundred-mile patrols and a fast little shoot-out, as they will say in the papers and then a twenty-hour run into Aklavik at forty-two below—ache?’. His drawl pulling the word into two long syllables.

‘Corporal Millen,’ she began in her most severe impossible-patient tone, ‘you are full of...statistics!’”

### **MOVING?**

Members are requested to notify the Treasurer, NZSA, P.O. Box 1731, Wellington of any change of address in order that newsletters and journals (and subscription reminders) can continue to be despatched to them.