International Study Group on the Relations Between
the HISTORY and PEDAGOGY of MATHEMATICS
An Affiliate of the International Commission on
Mathematical Instruction

Nº 118 **March 2025**

This and earlier issues of the Newsletter can be downloaded from our website:

https://hpm.sites.uu.nl/

NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear colleagues,

Even if the new year does not bring too much news, here we have a new issue of our newsletter with plenty of interesting material. Here you will find the latest news from the journal *MAA Convergence* , as well as the usual information about publications and book reviews.

Évelyne Barbin has been kind enough to share with us her report about the past HPM-11 conference in Sydney. Also, you can find an announcement about a recently released book by our former president, Snezana Lawrence.

I particularly want to bring your attention to the call for submissions of the new journal *Annals of the TRIUMPHS Society*. This is the flagship publication of The TRIUMPHS Society, a very recently created society that aims to bring together practitioners and others interested in the use of primary historical sources in the teaching and learning of mathematics. In case you were not aware of the existence of this society, I encourage you to visit their website (https://triumphssociety.org/) and, eventually, to join them.

Finally, there is also information about an upcoming conference in Acapulco (Mexico). This event is addressed more directly to Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries, but I think that it can be of interest to the broad HPM community. It is the eighth edition of this series of conferences on the history of mathematics education, and this shows that this field of research is very active in the Iberoamerican context.

This raises an interesting point, related to the relation between HPM and other non-English research communities on the history of mathematics education. I have just mentioned the Iberoamerican case, but there is also an increasing work coming from the Chinese HPM community. In the near future we will have to explore ways of collaborating that make more visible the advances made from non-English speaking countries.

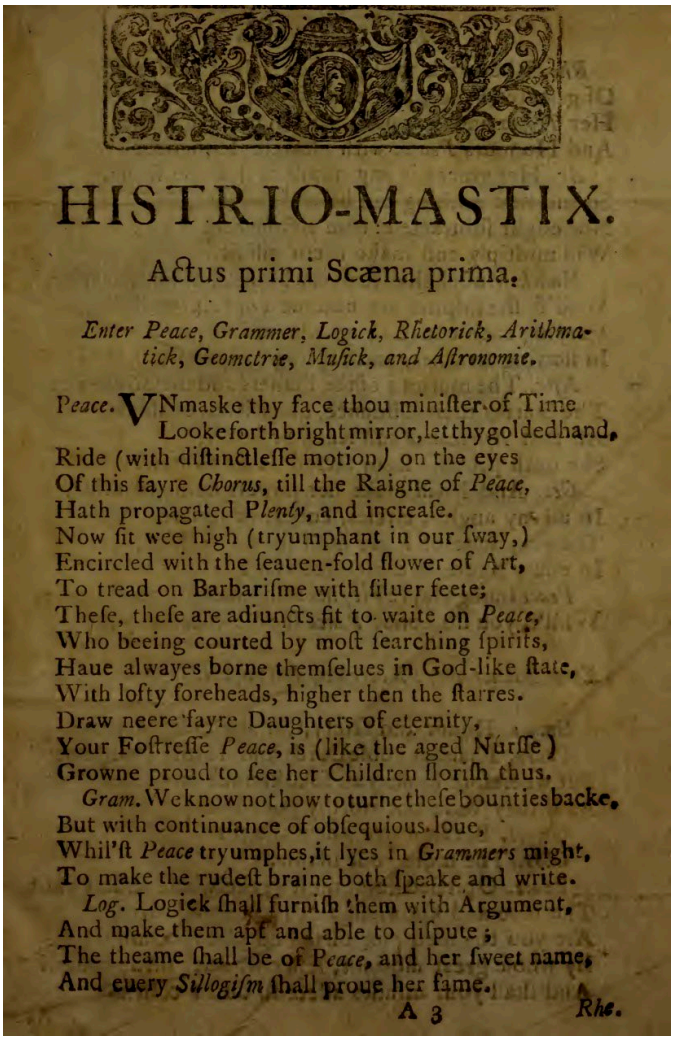
Antonio M. Oller Marcén

MAA CONVERGENCE

From Old to New

MAA Convergence, the MAA's refereed online journal for the use of the history of mathematics to teach mathematics, wrapped up 2024 its last full year at https://old.maa.org/press/periodicals/convergence with a flurry of new historical material for use in mathematics classrooms.

For example, instructors whose students are ready to develop their identities as mathematicians by wrestling with stereotypical depictions in literature can utilize "'A Magazine of all perfection': Mathematics in the Early Modern Satire Histrio-Mastix," by Laura Søvsø Thomasen and Henrik Kragh Sørensen. The authors explicate references to mathematics in an English play by John Marston (ca 1575–1634) produced around 1600, and they offer suggestions for classroom discussions or exercises.



HISTRIO-MASTIX.

Actus primi Scæna prima.

Enter Peace, Grammer, Logick, Rhetorick, Arithmatick, Geometrie, Muſick, and Aſtronomie.

Peace. VNmaske thy face thou miniſter of Time
Looke forth bright mirror, let thy golded hand,
Ride (with diſtinctleſſe motion) on the eyes
Of this fayre *Chorus*, till the Raigne of *Peace*,
Hath propagated *Plenty*, and increaſe.
Now ſit wee high (tryumphant in our ſway,)
Encircled with the ſeauen-fold flower of Art,
To tread on Barbariſme with ſiluer feete;
Theſe, theſe are adiuncts fit to waite on *Peace*,
Who beeing courted by moſt ſearching ſpirits,
Haue alwayes borne themſelues in God-like ſtate,
With lofty foreheads, higher then the ſtarres.
Draw neere fayre Daughters of eternity,
Your Foſtreſſe *Peace*, is (like the aged Nurſſe)
Growne proud to ſee her Children floriſh thus.
Gram. We know not how to turne theſe bounties backe,
But with continuance of obſequious loue,
Whil'ſt *Peace* tryumphes, it lyes in *Grammers* might,
To make the rudeſt braine both ſpeake and write.
Log. Logick ſhall furniſh them with Argument,
And make them apt and able to diſpute;
The theame ſhall be of *Peace*, and her ſweet name,
And euery *Sillogiſm* ſhall proue her fame.

A 3 *Rhe.*

The first page of John Marston's *Histrio-Mastix; Or, the player whipt* (1610), a comedy in which a mathematician is one of the main characters. Internet Archive.

L'Hôpital's Rule: A Mini-Primary Source Project for Calculus 1 Students, by Daniel E. Otero, has been added to the TRIUMPHS team's "A Series of Mini-projects from TRansforming Instruction in Undergraduate Mathematics via Primary Historical Sources."

In our "Historically Speaking" series, edited by Betty Mayfield, V. Frederick Rickey considers the connection between the United States' first president and Nicholas Pike's 1788 *A New Complete System of Arithmetic* by reflecting on a 1954 column by Edmund E. Ingalls in *Mathematics Teacher*, "George Washington and Mathematics Education."

Top: Dickson (University of Chicago Photographic Archive), De Morgan (Internet Archive), and Abel (Wikimedia Commons). **Bottom:** Bowditch (Peabody Essex Museum), Germain (Gallica), and Fermat (Wikimedia Commons).

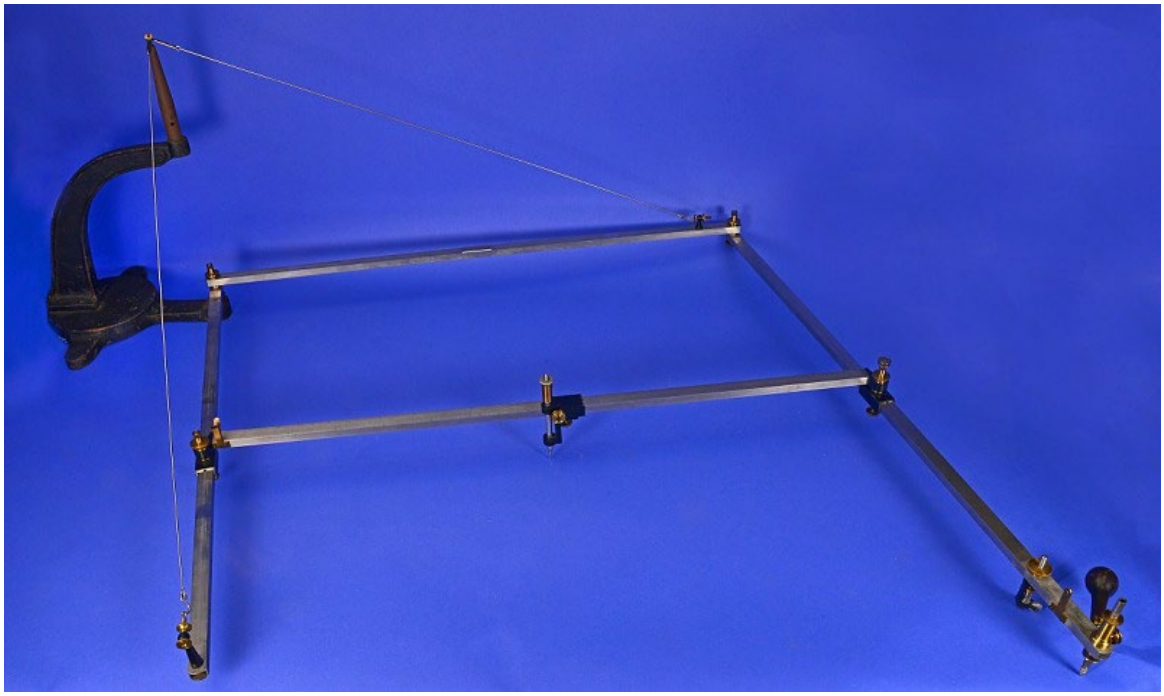
Additionally, Michael Molinsky has added his commentaries on six quotations about mathematics and mathematicians to his series of "Quotations in Context":

- By studying the masters and not their pupils"—attributed to Niels Henrik Abel, who uttered this memorable line in the midst of an encomium for Laplace's accomplishments;
- "I never came across one of Laplace's 'Thus it plainly appears,' without feeling sure that I have hours of hard work before me to fill up the chasm and find out and show how it plainly appears"— attributed to Nathaniel Bowditch due to the years he invested in translating *Traité de mécanique céleste*;
- "The moving power of mathematical invention is not reasoning but imagination"—attributed to Augustus De Morgan, an English mathematician, in reference to the Irish discoverer of quaternions, William Rowan Hamilton. Molinsky relates how this man was one of three near-contemporaries who shared the name William Hamilton!

- "Thank God that number theory is unsullied by any application"—attributed to Leonard Eugene Dickson. Molinsky tells us that the attribution may be "legendary," but that Dickson willingly cooperated with the legend!
- "And perhaps, posterity will thank me for having shown it that the ancients did not know everything"—mused by Pierre de Fermat at the end of a 1659 letter to French scholar and lawyer Pierre de Carcavi;
- "Algebra is but written geometry and geometry is but figured algebra"—an observation by Sophie Germain that was preserved in her posthumously-published manuscript, *Pensées diverses*.

We were also delighted to close out *Convergence*'s 21 years as a website publication with several new, substantive Mathematical Treasures:

- Gaspar Schott's *Cursus Mathematicus sive absoluta omnium mathematicarum disciplinarum encyclopædia* (1661), by Jacqueline Dewar and Sarah Greenwald;
- Suspension Pantograph by G. Coradi (ca 1928), by Peggy Aldrich Kidwell;
- Vera Sanford's *A Short History of Mathematics* (1930), by Toke Knudsen and Leah Bridgers;
- Mary Ellen Rudin's *Lectures on Set Theoretic Topology* (1975), by Daniel E. Otero.



Suspension Pantograph Used by Mary Spear, manufactured before 1928,
Smithsonian Negative Number NMAH-AHB2016q012400.

All of these articles may be accessed via the *Convergence* homepage through at least July 2025. Currently, *Convergence*'s page on MAA's new website also leads to the back catalog. As a general rule, any *Convergence* URL you may have in your records, discover on an internet search, and the like, will become active by replacing the "www" prefix in the web address with the letters "old". For instance, our popular Classroom Resources Index may be accessed at https://old.maa.org/press/periodicals/convergence/classroom-resources-index. We will continue to update *Convergence*'s Calendar of upcoming events relevant to the history of mathematics and its use in teaching as long as the website remains live.

Meanwhile, we are building *MAA Convergence*'s new presence within the Taylor & Francis (T&F) suite of MAA journals. These journals are available to MAA members and those whose institutions subscribe to the appropriate T&F database; the webpage for *MAA Convergence* is at https://maa.tandfonline.com/journals/ucnv20. New content is starting to be added there, a submissions portal will soon be available, and we expect that all of *Convergence*'s legacy articles will be loaded into this space by the end of 2025. We are still searching for a permanent home for our web-based features such as On This Day, Quotations, Problems from Another Time, and the Calendar. If you have questions about the transition, please contact the editors at convergence@maa.org.

Amy Ackerberg-Hastings
Independent Scholar (USA)

Daniel E. Otero
Xavier University (USA)

Editors, *MAA Convergence*

Call for Submissions: The Annals of the TRIUMPHS Society

The *Annals of the TRIUMPHS Society* is currently accepting submissions for its inaugural issue. The two primary submission categories considered for the *Annals* are:

- Primary Source Projects (PSPs): Classroom-ready projects designed to teach specific mathematical topics using excerpts from primary historical sources.
- Research articles and general scholarship on the use of primary historical sources in teaching and learning mathematics.

More information about types of submissions can be found on the "For Authors" page of the journal's website.

Submissions are accepted (and will be published) on a rolling basis. For questions about submissions, or if you would like to propose an idea for a submission, please contact the Editors-in-Chief:

- Michael P. Saclolo, St. Edward's University, mikeps "at" stedwards.edu
- Kenneth M Monks, College of Southern Nevada, Kenneth "dot" Monks "at" csn.edu

The *Annals* is the flagship publication of the TRIUMPHS Society. More information about the TRIUMPHS Society — including how you too can become a member and support the use of primary sources in the teaching of mathematics! — can be found on its website (https://triumphssociety.org/).

VIII Congreso Iberoamericano de Historia de la Educación Matemática

The eighth Iberoamerican Conference on the History of Mathematics Education will take place between the 18th and 21st of November 2025 in Acapulco (Mexico).

The main goals of this conference are:

- To exchange ideas between researchers in History of Mathematics Education from Latin America, Portugal and Spain.
- To disseminate results arising from research about History of Mathematics Education carried out in different countries from Ibero-America.
- To promote the creation of international groups through the collaboration in collective research projects.
- To analyze the current state of this field of research and its future perspectives.

The topics of the conference are:

- Advances in research on the History of Mathematics Education.
- Research methodologies in the History of Mathematics Education.
- Study and documentation centers: Experiences and organization.
- Sources for the study of the History of Mathematics Education: textbooks and books for teachers and students, notebooks, student work, examinations, didactic materials, illustrations.
- The genesis of the History of Mathematics Education as a disciplinary and research field.
- The role of the History of Mathematics Education in Mathematics Education.
- The professionalization of mathematics educators: training, selection, and career development.

Detailed information about deadlines and modes of participation can be found on the conference website:

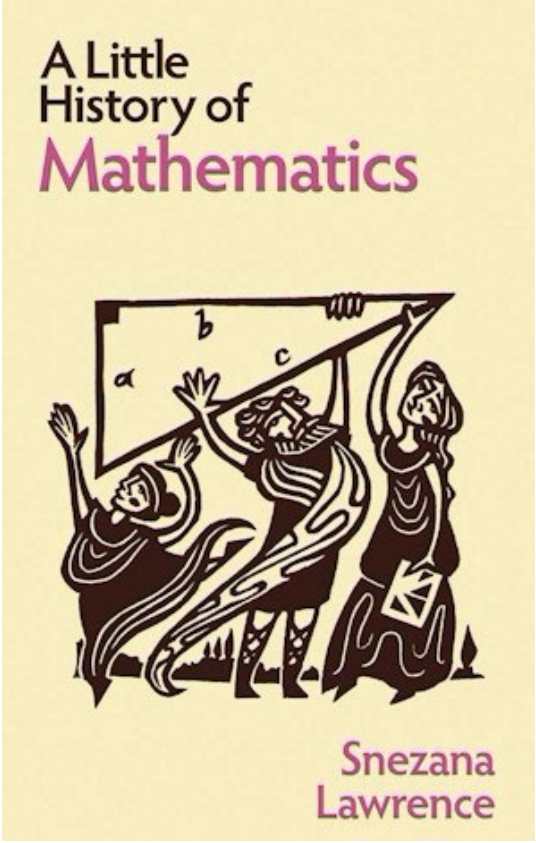
https://viii-cihem.uagro.mx/index.php

“A Little History of Mathematics” by Snezana Lawrence

Our former chair, Snezana Lawrence has recently published the book “A Little History of Mathematics” with Yale University Press.

The following excerpt comes from the publishing house:

> In this Little History, Snezana Lawrence traces the fascinating history of mathematics, from the Egyptians and Babylonians to Renaissance masters and enigma codebreakers. Like literature, music, or philosophy, mathematics has a rich history of breakthroughs, creativity and experimentation. And its story is a global one. We see Chinese Mathematical Art from 200 BCE, the invention of algebra in Baghdad’s House of Wisdom, and sangaku geometrical theorems at Japanese shrines. Lawrence goes beyond the familiar names of Newton and Pascal, exploring the prominent role women have played in the history of maths, including Emmy Noether and Maryam Mirzakhani.



More information can be found in https://yalebooks.yale.edu/book/9780300273731/a-little-history-of-mathematics/.

HPM-11 Congress in Sydney

The 11th meeting of the affiliate group HPM (International Study Group on the Relations Between History and Pedagogy of Mathematics) was held in the vast Campus of the University New South Wales (Kensington) from Monday 1 July 2024 to Friday 5 July 2024. It was hosted by Jim Pettigrew and Donald Shearman and it was organized by Snezana Lawrence, Chair of HPM (2020–2024), and a seven-member team from the HPM Advisory Board. The first HPM satellite congress was organized in Adelaide (Australia) 40 years ago by George Booker. Every four years, the HPM meeting takes place at a location close to those of the ICME congress, usually after it. This time, the HPM congress was very close to that of ICME but before it. It welcomed around fifty participants, a quarter of whom were new participants from Oceania and Asia.

As usual, participants were mathematics teachers, teacher trainers, researchers in mathematics education, mathematicians and historians of mathematics who were interested in knowing how the history of mathematics can be integrated into teaching at all levels and how it can help students to learn mathematics. The organization of the congress was very well planned in order to promote exchanges between participants involved in mathematical education in different ways, with discussions after each activity, two panel discussions and well-prepared breaks.

The UNSW campus, and some lively exchanges

The scientific program included plenary lectures, panel discussions, oral presentations, workshops and poster exhibitions concerning theoretical frameworks for integrating history in mathematics education; history and epistemology in teacher mathematics education; classroom experiments and teaching materials; mathematics and its relation to science, technology, and the arts; cultures and history of mathematics; and topics in the history of mathematics education.

Many new topics were discussed at HPM-11, which will make it a landmark event for the types of research discussed at HPM meetings. In addition to several original presentations, we can note a plenary conference on the place of women in history and in mathematics education and a panel on the use of history to link mathematics and cultures in the classroom. These developments were made possible by the presence of many colleagues from Australia and the Indo-Pacific region. A special panel marked the 50th anniversary of HPM, where participants were invited to reflect on past, present and future of the Group. The participants hope to meet again soon to continue working on old and new fields of research.

Évelyne Barbin
Emeritus professor – Nantes University (France)

Have you read these?

Bonner, Anthony, Pedro Juan Planas Mulet, and Lola Badia. "Graphs and Lattices in the Early Versions of Ramon Llull's Art." *Historia Mathematica*, 70 no. 1, (2025). 31–52. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hm.2025.02.001.

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HPM Book Reviews

Compiled by Gail FitzSimons

Ackerberg-Hastings, A. (2025). The Flawed Genius of William Playfair: The Story of the Father of Statistical Graphics. David R. Bellhouse. University of Toronto Press (2023). *Historia Mathematica*, *70*, 1–2. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hm.2025.02.002

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Please send references to gfi@unimelb.edu.au

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Area	Name and address	Email address
Argentina	Juan E. Nápoles Valdés, Lamadrid 549, (3400) Corrientes, ARGENTINA	jnapoles@exa.unne.edu.ar
Australia	Jim Pettigrew, School of Mathematics and Statistics, University of New South Wales (UNSW) Sydney, High St, Kensington NSW 2052, AUSTRALIA	j.pettigrew@unsw.edu.au
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Brazil	Marcos Vieira Teixeira, Departamento de Matemática, IGCE – UNESP, Postal 178, 13 500 - 230 Rio Claro, SP BRAZIL	marti@rc.unesp.br
Canada	David Guillemette, Département de mathématiques, UQAM - Université du Québec à Montréal, Montréal, CANADA	guillemette.david@uqam.ca
China	Ma Li, Linkoping University, ITN, SE - 601 74 Norrkoping, SWEDEN	ma_li@mac.com
Colombia	Edgar Alberto Guacaneme, Facultad de Ciencia y Tecnología, Universidad Pedagógica Nacional – Bogotá, COLOMBIA	guacaneme@pedagogica.edu.co
Denmark	Marianne Thomsen, Teacher Education, University College, Copenhagen, Humletorvet 3, 1799 Copenhagen V, DENMARK	mart@kp.dk
France	Evelyne Barbin, Laboratory of mathematics LMJL, Faculté des sciences et des techniques, 2 Chemin de la Houssinière, BP 92208, 44322 Nantes cedex, FRANCE	evelyne.barbin@wanadoo.fr
Germany	Gert Schubring, Inst. f. Didaktik der Math., Universitaet Bielefeld, Postfach 100 131, D-33501, Bielefeld, GERMANY	gert.schubring@uni-bielefeld.de
Hungary	Kati Munkácsy, Eötvös Loránd University, Centre of Mathematics Education, Budapest, street Pázmány 1/c, HUNGARY	katalin.munkacsy@gmail.com
Iceland	Kristín Bjarnadóttir, University of Iceland, School of Education, v. Stakkahlid 105 Reykjavík, ICELAND	krisbj@hi.is
Iran	*- vacant -*	
Israel	Ted Eisenberg, Mathematics Department, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva 84105, ISRAEL	eisen@math.bgu.ac.il eisenbt@barak-online.net
Italy	Marta Menghini, Dipartimento di Matematica (Universita` La Sapienza), Piazzale A. Moro 5, 00185 Roma ITALY	marta.menghini@uniroma1.it
Japan	Osamu Kota, 3-8-3 Kajiwara, Kamakura Kanagawa-ken, 247-0063 JAPAN	kota@asa.email.ne.jp
Malaysia	*- vacant -*	
Mexico	Alejandro R. Garciadiego, Caravaggio 24, Col. Nonoalco Mixcoac Del. Benito Juárez 03700 México, D. F. MÉXICO	gardan@servidor.unam.mx
Morocco	Abdellah El Idrissi, E.N.S. B.P: 2400 Marrakech, 40 000, MOROCCO	a_elidrissi@hotmail.com abdellah_elidrissi@yahoo.fr
New Zealand	Clemency Montelle, Head of School | Tumuaki Kura, School of Mathematics and Statistics | Te Kura Pāngarau, Jack Erskine, Room 400, University of Canterbury | Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch 8140, NEW ZEALAND	clemency.montelle@canterbury.ac.nz
Other East Asia	*- vacant -*	
Other South America	*- vacant -*	

Area	Name and address	Email address
Peru	María del Carmen Bonilla, Calle Reni 272, San Borja, Lima 41. Lima, PERU.	mariacbonillat@gmail.com
Poland	Ewa Lakoma, Institute of Mathematics Military University of Technology Warsaw, POLAND	ewa.lakoma@wat.edu.pl
Portugal	Hélder Pinto, Instituto Piaget, Vila Nova de Gaia, PORTUGAL	helder.pinto@ipiaget.pt
Russia	Vasilii Mikhailovich Busev RUSSIA	vbusev@yandex.ru
Scandinavia	Sten Kaijser, Department of Mathematics, P.O. Box 480, SE- 751 06 Uppsala, SWEDEN	sten@math.uu.se
South Asia	*- vacant -*	
South East Europe	Nikos Kastanis, Department of Mathematics, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki 54006, GREECE	nioka@auth.gr
Southern Africa	Marcos Cherinda**,** Universidade Pedagogica, Campus de Lhanguene, Faculdade de Ciencias Naturais e Matemática, CP 4040, Maputo, MOZAMBIQUE	mCherinda@gmail.com
Spain	Luis Puig, Departamento de Didáctica de las Matemáticas, Universitat de València Estudi General, SPAIN	luis.puig@uv.es
Taiwan	Jia-Ming Ying, Center for General Education, National Tsing Hua University, 101, Section 2, Kuang-Fu Road, Hsinchu 300044, TAIWAN	jiaming.ying@mx.nthu.edu.tw
Turkey	*- vacant -*	
United Kingdom	Snezana Lawrence, Middlesex University, London, England, UK	snezana@mathsisgoodforyou.com
United States of America	Janet Heine Barnett, Colorado State University, Pueblo, Colorado, USA	janet.barnett@csupueblo.edu

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Editors:
Janet Heine Barnett, janet.barnett@csupueblo.edu
Snezana Lawrence, snezana@mathsisgoodforyou.com
Antonio M. Oller-Marcén, oller@unizar.es
Luis Puig, luis.puig@uv.es

A note from the Editors

The Newsletter of HPM is primarily a tool for passing along information about forthcoming events, recent activities and publications, and current work and research in the broad field of history and pedagogy of mathematics. The Newsletter also publishes brief articles which they think may be of interest. Contributions from readers are welcome on the understanding that they may be shortened and edited to suit the compass of this publication.