

(Past) President's Report to CAIMS Board of Directors

Montréal, June 1, 2008

CAIMS President Robert Russell is unable to attend the CAIMS Board of Directors Meeting this year. I (Bill Langford), as Past President, will report in his place. Since I do not have first-hand knowledge of all the activities of our President this year, there may be some omissions, but I hope that I can give a reasonable overview. I would like to say at the outset that I have great admiration for the many outstanding people who work on behalf of CAIMS•SCMAI, especially our President, Bob Russell.

The 2007 CAIMS Annual Meeting, May 21-24, in Banff, Alberta, was a huge success. The scientific program, organized by Peter Lancaster (Calgary) and his Scientific Program Committee, was outstanding. The Local Organizing Committee headed by Jack Macki, Michael Li and the Applied Mathematics Institute of the University of Alberta worked professionally on a thousand jobs, including the beautiful website and program. The Banff Centre staff kept everyone comfortable and well fed. Contributed Minisymposia, perhaps the greatest number ever at a CAIMS Meeting, added breadth and excellence to the program. The weather was fine and the incomparable Canadian Rocky Mountains made this Annual Meeting an unforgettable experience. The final “frosting on the cake” for this meeting was that it closed its books with a financial surplus for the Society.

The ICIAM 2007 Congress was held in Zurich, Switzerland, last July 16-20. The level of Canadian participation there was unprecedented for any ICIAM Congress. This was a valuable learning experience, as we gear up to cohost ICIAM 2011. The numbers of Canadian speakers and of Minisymposium organizers were at an all-time high. A new innovation was the CAIMS Travel Bursary, for a Canadian graduate student to make a presentation at ICIAM 2007. It was won by Malcolm Roberts at the University of Alberta.

CAIMS continues to work with SIAM and MITACS as co-hosts of the 2011 International Congress on Industrial and Applied Mathematics. ICIAM 2011 will be held in Vancouver, Canada. This is a great coup for Canadian applied mathematics, and will enhance the reputation of CAIMS•SCMAI both nationally and internationally. A Steering Committee was formed to oversee the preparations for ICIAM 2011, and it continues to meet regularly by teleconference. The CAIMS representatives on this Steering Committee are Ken Jackson, Bob Russell and myself. The Scientific Co-Chairs of ICIAM 2011 are Jerrold Marsden and Ivar Ekeland. The President of ICIAM 2011 is Arvind Gupta of MITACS. An outstanding Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) has been formed. Jacques Bélair will report in more detail on the state of the preparations for ICIAM 2011.

The 2008 membership year is the first for the new CAIMS-SIAM Reciprocal Membership Agreement. Such an agreement has been a goal of the CAIMS Board for many years. I thank Leah Keshet of CAIMS and Past President Marty Golubit-

sky of SIAM for initiating the discussions in 2006 that led to this agreement. Over time, this Agreement is expected to strengthen the membership of both societies.

NSERC undertook an International Review of the Discovery Grants Program in 2007. A Mathematics-NSERC Liaison Committee was formed in response to this development. Bill Langford represented CAIMS on this Liaison Committee and will report on developments later on the Agenda.

The year 2008 marks the 400th anniversary of the founding of Québec by Samuel de Champlain and his brave group of settlers from France, and so it is appropriate that we welcome an influx of mathematicians from France this year, for the Second CanadaFrance Mathematical Congress. I want to thank all who have worked so hard to make this Congress possible, especially the professional staff employed by the CMS and MITACS, who have looked after a myriad of organizational details. I mention in particular Gertrud Jeewanjee of CMS and Jo-Anne Rockwood of MITACS. The Scientific Program Committee has invited a stellar array of speakers. On the CAIMS side, I want to thank Anne Bourlioux for making our CAIMS Contributed Minisymposia an important part of this Congress and Jacques Bélair for speaking on behalf of CAIMS.

In the past year, Bob Russell has initiated important discussions with MITACS and the Mathematics Institutes that have the potential for very positive benefits to CAIMS. As you know, CAIMS is run entirely by volunteers and has no paid staff. As CAIMS grows and matures, the workload of administrative details is becoming a serious problem for the CAIMS executive. Bob is exploring the possibility of an office with administrative support for CAIMS at MITACS or one of the Math Institutes and he has received an encouraging response. I am not well informed of the details of these negotiations. Another idea of Bob Russell is the establishment of a Junior Researcher Award and/or a Industrial Mathematics Award, that would complement our current Doctoral Dissertation Award and our Research Prize that usually goes to a senior academic researcher. Again, he has explored the possibility of having these Awards jointly sponsored by a Math Institute or MITACS. Bob would like some feedback from this Board on these initiatives, and to this end Paul Muir will lead a discussion later in the Meeting.

For the future I see continued growth of CAIMS, as we continue to strive towards our common goals. CAIMS will be a leading force representing applied and industrial mathematics in Canada. We need to increase our membership, including newly appointed faculty, students, industries and institutions. CAIMS will work for greater cooperation with other organizations, national and international, such as NSERC, CMS, SSC, MITACS, SIAM and ICIAM and the three Canadian mathematics institutes. CAIMS promotes collaboration between mathematicians, both academic and industrial, and will continue to support and encourage students to enter the exciting discipline of applied mathematics.

Bill Langford

CAIMS • SCMAI Past President, 2007-2009