The Daily Group Theorist

Roger Lyndon issue 7th August 1997 **No. 11**

Talks Today

Chair C F Miller III:

09:00 Miller : Asphericity and decision problems

10:00 Coffee

10:40 Guba: On the Dehn function of R Thompson's group

11:40 Schupp: The Bar Problem – A Simple Tiling Problem which is NP-Complete on the Euclidean Tessellation by Squares but which is Polynomial Time on the Hyperbolic Tessellations defined by Surface Groups of Higher Genus.

12:40 Lunch

14:00 Hsu (University Hall): Non-positively curved squared complexes and squares of finite groups

14:00 Hermiller (Parallel 1): Isoperimetric functions and solvable groups

14:30 Wise (University Hall): The residual finiteness of negatively curved polygons of finite groups

14:30 Rosenberger (University Hall): Conjugacy pinched and cyclically pinched one-relator groups

15:00 Shpilrain (University Hall): Automorphisms of one relator groups

15:30 Tea

16:00 Pride: The geometry of group extensions

17:00 Ol'shanskii: On subgroup distorsion.

MAGNUS Software Package

We have at last arrived at a stage where we feel that we can encourage mathematicians to explore our software package MAGNUS. This package has a friendly graphical user interface, which requires no prior experience with computers.

MAGNUS has been designed to make it easy to carry out computations and perform experiments with infinite groups. Please go to our home page for more information about MAGNUS and the other services that we offer - in particular our email reprint service and our list of open problems in abstract group theory.

The address of our home page is:

`http://zebra.sci.ccny.` (to be continued)

`cuny.edu/web/html/magnushome.html`

If you page down you will find a link to the software package and precise information about how to get the package and which operating systems we have ported it to.

We would appreciate it if you would send your comments and suggestions to:

`comment@zebra.sci.ccny.cuny.edu`

Please send bug reports to:

`bug@zebra.sci.ccny.cuny.edu`

We are still in the process of making MAGNUS work better. Please remember that most questions about infinite groups are algorithmically undecidable and that very often huge amounts of information are produced. We are working on ways of making this kind of information more and on improving our algorithms.

Gilbert Baumslag

Group Theorists in extremely moderate peril

The bus trip lost a vehicle yesterday when a warning light came on as we entered Wells. Engineers called to the scene found that a brake cable had frayed (there was a back-up!). A new coach was sent for and met us again at Cheddar Gorge.

The Winner

The unchallenged winner of the August 4 Literary Quiz is **Alexander Hulpke**, who identified 8.5 of the 10 masterpieces. The editors of the *GTLS* wish to congratulate Alexander Hulpke on his amazing achievement. Reliable sources have reported to us that Alexander used every possible means in his race for fame. These means included the local library, powerful search engines (the internet), as well as extensive conferring (starting the morning of August 5 and ending just minutes before the August 6 11:07 deadline).

In view of this it is somewhat surprising that text no. 8 in the quiz has not been identified. Does this mean that nobody in Bath, or indeed in global village (the internet), has heard of **Heinrich Von Kleist**? We are astonished.

1 The Solution

1. David Lodge: *Small World* (1984)
2. Samuel Becket: *Murphy* (1938)
3. Fyodor Dostoyevsky: *The Devils* (1871)
4. Zariski & Samuel: *Commutative Algebra* (1960)
5. T.S. Eliot: *The Waste Land* (1922)
6. Aner Shalev: *Overtures* (1996)
7. Graham Greene: *Doctor Fischer of Geneva or the Bomb Party* (1980)
8. Heinrich Von Kleist: *The Duel* (1811)
9. John Barth: *The End of the Road*
10. Mann (Avinoam, not Thomas): *A Wine Song* (1990)

It is regretable that in Alexander Hulpke's solution Avinoam's poem is referred to as *The Durham Elegies*. While these lines are being written some pressure is exerted on Avinoam to change the title of his poem appropriately.

The Prize

It is about time to reveal the prizes in this competition, which are naturally of a literary flavour. No money, no drinks, not even mars bars, sorry. What we can offer instead is free space in the Daily Group Theorist (obviously the best starting point for young and aspiring writers).

We hereby award Alexander Hulpke 8.5 square inches in the August 8 issue of the Daily Group Theorist (to be upgraded to 9 square inches in case Avinoam changes the title of his poem accordingly). Alexander can use these square inches however his muse suggests. We guarantee freedom of speech, freedom of worship, human rights, no censorship, etc. Unfortunately one of the *GTLS* editors will not be able to enjoy Hulpke's masterpiece, since he is leaving Bath today. AS + OT

Shopping shuttle

The last shopping shuttle will run tonight from 18:15-20:00.

Group Pub Forum

This plug is repeated on a day when the library is open and conferees therefore have electronic access to their accounts.

Last week-end the group theory mailing list

group-pub-forum@maths.bath.ac.uk

received its 300th subscriber. Email posted to this mailing list is forwarded to the subscribers who are distributed across 38 nations (at present). To join the mailing list, send your email and name to

group-landlord@maths.bath.ac.uk

There is also a web site which keeps a record of problems posed, answers given, conference arrangements, job opportunities and so on. The URL is

http://www.bath.ac.uk/~masgcs/gpf.html

EDITOR OF THE DAY: GCS