# MAA 100/MAA SE 93

By

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## The Journal Came First

- After the Civil War there was increasing concern about mathematics education both in high school and in colleges.
- Additionally specialized associations, conferences, committees and learned societies in many fields, nationally and internationally began appearing.
- In January1894 Benjamin F. Finkel founded *The American Mathematical Monthly: A Journal for Teachers of Mathematics in the Collegiate and Advanced Secondary Fields.*
- The task of physically producing a journal was not easy, especially mathematical typesetting, and it became a family affair, with Finkel carving most of the woodcuts himself while his wife Hannah Cokeley Finkel served as proofreader.



## A Journal in Search of an Organization

- In 1907 Herbert Ellsworth Slaught became editor of the *Monthly*. He was searching for an organization that would support the journal he edited.
- In late 1914 H. E. Slaught appealed to the Council of the AMS to appoint a committee to "consider the general relation of the Society to the promotion of teaching, especially in the collegiate field".
- The AMS Council appointed the requested committee, which voted three-to-two that the AMS should take neither control nor responsibility for publishing the *Monthly* but resolved that
  - "...the Society would entertain toward such an organization only feelings of hearty good will and encouragement."



## The Birth of the MAA

- The organizational meeting was held at Ohio State University on December 30-31, 1915, in conjunction with the annual meetings of Section A of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the Chicago Section of the AMS.
- 104 delegates attended, including ten women. None were from the six Southeastern States that later formed the Southeastern Section.
- They deliberated for three hours and settled everything except the name.
- A committee of three was appointed to select a name from amongst the 18 that were submitted. All three favored the Mathematical Association of America.



## Sections

Within an hour of the adoption of the Association constitution in December, 1915, Ohio and Missouri had filed a petition for a charter. Ohio won the honor by a few minutes over Missouri.

- 1. 1915 OHIO
- 2. 1915 MISSOURI
- 3. 1915 KANSAS
- 4. 1916 IOWA
- 5. 1916 MARYLAND-VIRGINIA-DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
- 6. 1916 INDIANA
- 7. 1916 MINNESOTA
- 8. 1917 KENTUCKY
- 9. 1917 ROCKY MOUNTAIN
- 10. 1917 ILLINOIS
- 11. 1920 TEXAS
- 12. 1922 SOUTHEASTERN



## The Beginning of the Southeastern Section

- Attempts at establishing a section were made in 1916.
- Dean R. P. Stephens of the University of Georgia began the process on March 15, 1916 by sending out letters suggesting that a Southeastern Section be formed.
- An organization meeting was planned for June 1916 but too few could attend.
- A postponement until June 1917 was announced, but then World War I called a halt to all plans until 1921 .
- In the fall of 1921 six men met to plan the organizational meeting for April 1922.



# April 29, 1922

- The meeting was finally held at the Main Building of the Georgia School of Technology in Atlanta, GA.
- 63 people were present including 15 people listed as Founders of the Section.

http://sections.maa.org/southeastern/maase/section/founders.php

- The states in the Southeastern Section were Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.
- 5 papers were presented at this first meeting
- They decided to hold a meeting every year with meetings alternating between a central location and a more distant college.



#### The Twenties

- Regular meetings were held in March or April of each year.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting was held at Agnes Scott College on March 10, 1923 with 85 people registered. Twenty four were members. The first national speaker was MAA Past-president David Eugene Smith
- In 1929 the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting was held April 19-20, 1929. There were no attendance records.
- The highest registration was 100 for the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting in 1928



#### The Thirties

- Meetings were held every year in the thirties during the Depression
- At the 1933 Meeting the banquet cost \$0.50
- The 1935 Meeting at Agnes Scott College was a joint meeting with several other scientific organizations. The banquet speaker was Nobel Prize winner in Physics (1927) Arthur H. Compton. Hotel accommodations cost \$1.50 for singles and \$2.50 for double rooms
- The final meeting of the decade was March 1939 at the Citadel and had 140 people registered with 29 contributed papers.



#### The Forties

- During World War II, 1942-1945, there were no meetings.
- In 1947 the 26<sup>th</sup> annual meeting was held to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Section it was held at University of South Carolina on April 18-19, 1947.
- The last meeting of the decade at University of Alabama had 200 people registered including 106 members with 31 papers presented. The cost of the banquet was \$1.



#### The Fifties

- In 1950, the 29<sup>th</sup> meeting was held at the University of Florida on April 7-8.
  - 250 people were registered
  - 44 contributed papers
  - For the first time there is mention of student presentations. Ten students presented papers and they were from 5 schools in the Section: Agnes Scott College, Rollins College, University of Georgia, University of Florida and Vanderbilt University.



#### The Fifties 1951

- As far as is known, no African Americans attended meetings prior to 1951
- There were many reasons why this was the case
  - Segregation in the Southeastern States
  - Concern by faculty about punitive action by their Boards of Trustees if the faculty member was involved in an "incident"
  - Fear of losing their job



#### The Fifties 1951 continued

- At the 1951 meeting in Nashville hosted by Vanderbilt University and Peabody College for Teachers, four African Americans from Fisk University (also in Nashville) attended the meeting
  - Lee Lorch, Chair of the Mathematics Department
  - Evelyn Boyd
  - Walter Brown
  - H.M. Holloway
- They attended the scientific sessions but could not attend the banquet their reservations were canceled.
- They appealed to the banquet speaker Saunders Mac Lane, President of the MAA, to withdraw from the banquet or openly state his objections to discrimination at the banquet. He declined saying it would be discourteous to the host.



#### The Fifties 1951 continued

- In April 1951, the Fisk faculty wrote a letter to the Board of Governors of the MAA and the Executive Council of the AMS requesting that the organizations place into their bylaws statements that would protect the rights of all members to participate fully in the affairs of the organizations without regard to race, creed or color.
- The Board did not attempt to change the bylaws but it did pass a resolution at is meeting of September 3, 1951 affirming its intention to conduct the affairs of the Association without discrimination.
- The resolution was published in the Monthly in November 1951.



#### The Fifties continued

- As part of the resolution the President of the MAA communicated with section officers that he had determined that "it is possible... to conduct the scientific business and social affairs of the association without discrimination as to race, creed or color."
- It is not clear what the response of the Southeastern Section was to the request of the President because African Americans apparently did not attend Section meetings in the rest of the fifties.
- The 38<sup>th</sup> meeting was held in 1959 at East Tennessee State College. There were 210 people registered and 45 contributed papers.



#### The Sixties

- At the 1960 meeting a delegation from Atlanta University were told that their room reservations would not be honored for the non-white delegates. The participants were
  - Abdulalim A. Shabazz (then Lonnie Cross) an African American and Chair of the Department of Mathematics
  - S. C. Saxena, an East Indian
  - William E. Brodie, an African American graduate student
  - James D. Vineyard a white graduate student
- They were told the hotel had made this clear to the officials of the Section at the time arrangements were made.
- After a discussion with the Secretary-Treasurer and the Chair of the host institution the AU group left in protest.



## The Sixties Continued

- African-American mathematicians attended Section meeting in the late 1960's but it took many years before they fully participated as speakers and organizers.
- In 1964 the cost of the banquet was \$3.75
- After the 1967 meeting 34 members from Florida voted to form the Florida Section. The Board of Governors approved this in August and on September 1, 1967 members from Florida, Puerto Rico and the Panama Canal Zone officially became a new Section.
- There were 265 registered participants at the 1969 meeting at Winthrop College. The registration fee was \$1.



#### The Seventies

- March 26-27, 1971 was the fiftieth annual meeting at the University of Alabama
- 1972: The first Section Lecturer C. H. Edwards of the University of Georgia.
- The seventies saw a few African-Americans attending Section Meetings
- Professor David L. Hunter, chair of the Mathematics Department at Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, was an active participant and served as Vice-Chair of the Section from 1972-1974. He was the first African-American to serve in the Section.
- In 1979, the section meeting was held at the University of Chattanooga with 312 people registered including 60 students. There were 30 contributed papers.



# The Eighties

- In1980 the Section Newsletter began with DeWayne S. Numann as the new Section Newsletter Editor.
- At the 1983 meeting the tradition of a session for the Department Chairman and a session for the MAA Departmental Representatives begin.
- 1988: The first Short Course was taught and the first TA Rush was held.
- 1988: The position of State Director was created.
- In 1989 at the University of Tennessee meeting there were 361 participants including 63 students. This increase was attributed to the second TA Rush.



#### The Nineties

- 1990 First Distinguished Service Award given to Trevor Evans of Emory University.
- 1991 Leslie Gaylord of Agnes Scott, the last of the founders of the Section dies.
- 1992 First Distinguished Teaching Award given to Anne Hudson of Armstrong Atlantic State University.
- 1996 Program Chair becomes an Officer previously handled by the Secretary-Treasurer.
- 1996 First class of the Section Project NExT meets at the meeting at University of Alabama Huntsville in April.



#### The 2000's

- 2002 Joint meeting with the Southeastern Section of the AMS at Georgia Tech.
- 2003 Joint meeting with Southeastern Atlantic Section of SIAM.
- 2003 first meeting to have Math Jeopardy (12 teams, College of Charleston came in first).
- 2003 also first time student presentations and posters were judged and given awards.
- 2005 John Neff Section Archives established at Georgia Institute of Technology.
- 2005 Thursday night student activities begin with a Math Murder Mystery.
- 2009 First Distinguished Teaching Award for Beginning Faculty given to Patrick Bahls of UNC Asheville.
- The 2009 meeting at Belmont University had 390 people attending including 174 undergraduates and 17 graduate students.



#### The 2010's

- 2010 meeting at Elon University had 552 people attending, including more than 50 student presentations.
- 2011 is the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Section at The University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa. With 456 attendees including 248 students this was the first meeting where students represented more than half of the participants.
- 2012 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the Section. The meeting at Clayton State began a tradition of a Friday morning Distinguished Lecture for Students and Friday morning general sessions.



#### Interview Question

When asked, "How has the section remained the same since you have been a member?"

Everyone mentions how great the people in the Section are.



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#### We Welcome Your Contributions

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