

The Seventeenth Conference

The 17th International Conference on Fibonacci Numbers and their Applications was held June 26th to July 2nd, 2016, on the northern campus of the University of Caen-Normandie, situated in the city of Caen in Normandy, France. Including accompanying persons, it hosted about 95 participants from some fifteen countries. The US was the most represented and then France, Hungary, Turkey, Japan, Poland, Thailand, England, Greece, South Africa, Roumania, India, Croatia, Mexico, Canada, Germany, Morocco, and Italy. Several regular participants to these conferences were not able to join due to last-minute health issues, while several new participants could not make it mostly because of visa problems. However, a few among them were able to have their projected talk given by someone else at the conference. As usual with these every-two-year conferences which, since 1984, have been alternating between the eastern and the western sides of the Atlantic Ocean, this conference was all-at-once a congenial, scientific, social and cultural event.

The scientific program had 58 contributed 15-to-20-minute talks, the one-hour Édouard Lucas Memorial Talk given by Jean-Paul Allouche titled ‘Variations on the Binary Fibonacci Sequence,’ two one-hour problem sessions directed by Clark Kimberling and, as at the previous conference in Rochester, it included three exceptional presentations. These were given by Andreas Hinz, Ron Knott, and Arthur Benjamin, and were opened to the public on Tuesday afternoon. Thus, local young people, teachers, and students, in addition to the conference participants joyfully attended them. Andreas, from Munich, a mathematical expert on the Tower-of-Hanoi game, decided to give his general-public talk in French. Since the Tower of Hanoi has been used by psychologists to test cognitive abilities, Andreas needed a volunteer. Paul Young did volunteer, did well!, and was all-too-happy to showcase one more Euro2016 soccer-cup team T-shirt of his choice. Ron actually delivered two talks both full of surprises, one on occurrences of the Fibonacci numbers and the Golden ratio in Nature, and particularly in fruits and vegetables we eat, and the other, on outstanding mathematical properties of the number 2016. Arthur, gave one of his unique and well-expected shows of magic and mathematics, while providing some reasonable insight on how his brain does rapid calculation and digit memorization.

On Friday early afternoon the very first two Paul Bruckman recipients

were revealed and publicly congratulated. Their 1000-dollar prizes come from a grant funded by George A. Hisert of Berkeley, California, honoring the memory of our Fibonacci colleague Paul Bruckman. Márton Szikszai, from Hungary, won the prize for his joint paper with Lajos Hajdu titled ‘Common factors in series of consecutive terms of associated Lucas and Lehmer sequences,’ which appeared in 2015 in the *Fibonacci Quarterly*. Gawron Maciej, from Poland, won for his talk: ‘Arithmetic properties of the convolutions of the Prouhet-Thue-Morse sequence,’ given during the conference.

Christian Ballot was the main local host and organizer. He was greatly helped by his two competent colleagues Vincent Bosser and Denis Simon who stayed all week long. Two people working in the mathematics secretarial department, Anita Foro and Sonia Esnault, were also instrumental in preparing the event. The ‘Teurgoule’¹ break before the Tuesday-evening public talks, for instance, was much in Sonia’s hands. We would like to single out for thanks Madame Valérie Rapeau, who works as a public-relation director for the city of Caen, and was helpful in setting up the Wine-and-Cheese reception and the lending of the 14th century Ducal Palace for the Wednesday degustation. Registration fees, which also included all week events and five improved on-campus lunch meals, amounted to 115 euros. This meant we sought a number of sponsors. And we did get sponsoring from five of them: the city of Caen, the university of Caen, the LMNO (Nicolas Oresme Mathematics Laboratory), the European Research Council grant of our local colleague Jérôme Poineau, and the GDR STN, a French national research group for number theory. We thank them all. We also thank the CROUS (Regional center in charge of student lodging, restauration and social help) which helped enable about thirty participants to dwell on-campus for a cost of about 110 euros for the week.

A wine and cheese reception was held on the Monday evening in one of the historic rooms of the City Hall, where monks once used to dine, and in the adjacent cloister of the Abbaye-aux-Hommes, where we could freely roam (or meditate). Elsa Franck (a professor of ancient music at the Caen Academy), Jérémie Papasergio, who plays with the Caen orchestra, and their three children Danican, Manon, and Daphné, entertained the party with their beautiful Renaissance-instruments family playing. They had just returned from playing in Russia on the eve! Wednesday afternoon was reserved for three two-hour parallel guided tours: two groups walked the city to see local

¹a Norman delicacy meaning ‘mouth-twister’ in Norman dialect

medieval monuments and history, the third visited the Abbaye-aux-Hommes and the City Hall. This was followed by a degustation of Norman products in the 14th century Palais Ducal, with the participation of the Boîte à Calva². The conference banquet took place on Thursday night in the country side some 15kms south of Caen at the inn 'l'Auberge du Pont du Coudray,' next to the Orne river. The optional Saturday day-trip had us go through five places: la Pointe du Hoc, the Omaha American cemetery (with a guided introduction), Port-en-Bessin, an authentic fisherman port where lunch time was spent, the Arromanches circular cinema, where a 360-degree, 20-minute movie of D-Day landing images was projected, and the medieval city of Bayeux, which had its annual medieval street festival going on.

²Calva is a local apple liquor which gave its name to the department of Calvados, of which the city of Caen is the administrative headquarters.