The Euler Society Newsletter

Calinger to Deliver Euler Lecture

Ron Calinger, Chancellor of The Euler Society and Professor of History at The Catholic University of America, will deliver The Euler Lecture at the Second Annual Euler Society Meeting at Roger Williams University. The title of his talk is "Euler's Golden Decade in Berlin: The First Half to 1751."

Many of us have on our bookshelves Calinger's collection of readings in the history of mathematics *Classics of Mathematics*. Your editor's copy is wearing out, and when he tried to replace it "the cheap way" by buying a copy on eBay, he learned that there are others with deeper pockets who also admire the work. He has also published a number of articles about Euler. They have appeared in *Annals of Science*, *Historia Mathematica* and *Archive for History of Exact Sciences*, among others.

Ron's doctorate in the History of Mathematics is from the University of Chicago, where he had to defend his dissertation before both the Mathematics and the History Departments.

Some readers will recall that Ron was scheduled to talk at the First Annual Euler Society, but was unable to attend. Those of us who have heard Ron speak before know to look forward to his talk. The rest of you are in for a treat. He covers a lot of ground without seeming to hurry.

The photo at the right is of Ron speaking at a Pohle Colloquium last October. That talk is in the video archive at www.PohleColloquium.org.

Ron Calinger speaking at Adelphi in October, 2002

Minor Changes to the Euler 2003 Program

A few small changes have been made to the program for Euler 2003, the second annual meeting of The Euler Society.   The meeting will be held August 10 to 13, 2003 at the Conference Center of Roger Williams University in Bristol, Rhode Island. It will begin the evening of Sunday, August 10 with registration and a reception. Fourteen talks and two workshops will keep attendees occupied through noon on Wednesday, August 13. An outline of the slightly revised Program appears at the end of this Newsletter.

People planning to attend should register and make reservations as soon as possible. Instructions on how to do that are in the Announcement at the end of the Newsletter, but before the Program. Contact John Glaus if you still have questions on how to register. He's good at that; that's why we made him Ombudsman.

Euler Beer

Your Editor is something of an eBay fan. From time to time, he searches on the keyword "Euler." Most of the time, all he finds are those "Euler Disk" toys that came out a few years ago. Sometimes there are commemorative postage stamps, either from 1957, the 250th anniversary of The Great One's birth, or from 1983, the 200th anniversary of his death.

One day, though, there was an "Euler Beer sign." Not knowing what it was, he bought it. It is what it sounds like. It is a gold-colored sign, about 12 inches wide, 15 inches long, advertising "Euler Beer, Imported From Germany." It seems to be brewed in Wetzlar. There is a telephone number. Unfortunately, what little research we have been able to do has yielded none of the product itself. We'll continue to keep our eyes open.

Some Clarifications

After he received the June issue of this Newsletter, our Local Arrangements Coordinator Bruce Burdick became anxious that some of us might be misled if we stopped in Rhode Island to ask directions. Our Ombudsman John Glaus, who has visited the Conference Center itself, informs us that, indeed, it is not quite as easy to find as it looks on the map. Bruce sends the following, in hopes that it will clarify the directions a bit.

The main campus of RWU is, as you correctly said, in Bristol, RI. Just south of the campus is a bridge, called the Mount Hope Bridge, not New Hope (which sounds like a Star Wars title). At the other end of the bridge is an island, and its official name is Rhode Island. (Now you may ask, Isn't that the name of the state? and the astonishing answer is, No, the official name of the state is Rhode Island and the Providence Plantations. Because this is a rather unwieldy name it is common to shorten it, much to the confusion of school children everywhere, to Rhode Island.)

This island is divided into three towns. Going north to south, they are Portsmouth, Middletown, and Newport. (These towns are what I learned in the Midwest to call townships, i.e., divisions of a county, but as you know the New England custom is to call such things towns. The county of which they are subdivisions is Newport County.)

So our Conference Center, just 2 minutes drive from the south end of the Mount Hope Bridge, is located in the town of Portsmouth (in Newport County), and is also referred to as our Portsmouth Facility.

To make matters somewhat more confusing, most Rhode Islanders refuse to use the proper name for the island in question---they find it too confusing. Short-term residents tend to call it Newport Island and long-term residents use the name Aquidneck Island, and both groups are quite sure that their own usage is correct.

My grandmother grew up in Bristol, so I asked her what you should call the island on the other side of the Mount Hope Bridge. She recited, without any hesitation, "the island of Rhode Island." (This name does avoid the possibility of confusion with the name of the state, but it is somewhat cumbersome and, on the face of it, redundant.) When I told her that locals were calling it Aquidneck now, she said Aquidneck is just a small part of Portsmouth.

So you may find a local telling you that you are going to Newport or Newport Island when you cross the bridge from Bristol, but this is incorrect and misleading. I would hate to think that some of our colleagues might go to downtown Newport and ask directions to the Roger Williams Conference Center. Since so many things in this state are named after Roger Williams they could be directed virtually anywhere.

On an unrelated note, may I change my title to "European Mathematicians and Scientists on the Streets of Mexico City"?

Best regards,
Bruce

At the Bookstore

The History of Mathematics is something of a Meta-subject. It is not Mathematics, but it is *about* mathematics. *Writing the History of Mathematics: Its Historical Development,* edited by Dauben and Scriba, thus has a Meta-meta-subject. It is an account of the *history* of the History of Mathematics. (I suppose this review then has a Meta-meta-meta-subject, since it is about a history of the History of Mathematics.) The volume is dedicated to Kenneth O. May, one of disproportionately many historians of mathematics who faced the wrath of Joseph McCarthy about fifty years ago.

This excellent and innovative book follows a very traditional format. It has three broad sections: I. Countries, II., Portraits and Biographies, and III. Abbreviations, Bibliography and Index. Because of its broad scope, and despite its length, almost 700 pages, there are times the authors cannot go into all the depth a reader might want. Fortunately, contributors were very generous in supplying references.

There is a good deal of exciting information about the historiography of Euler. For example, there were at least three efforts to publish the collected works of Euler *before* the *Opera Omnia* with which we are all familiar. There were efforts in Belgium in 1838, in St. Petersburg in 1854 and in Berlin in 1903. (The contributors either didn't know of or disregarded the proposal to the Carnegie Foundation that was made about 1900.)

It is entirely unsurprising that Euler arises in the historiographies of Switzerland, Germany and Russia. There is some overlap in the material, but this is to be expected when there are some two-dozen contributors.

Overall, this is quite an interesting book, even if more than 90% of it isn't about Euler. It makes a good complement to the Joe Dauben's massive CD, *The History of Mathematics from Antiquity to the Present: A Selective Annotated Bibliography* (American Mathematical Society, 2000) Perhaps we'll review that in some future issue. Of that, we'll only say that we wonder why they decided to describe it as *Selective* rather than *Comprehensive*.

Writing the History of Mathematics: Its Historical Development edited by Joseph W. Dauben and Christoph J. Scriba, Birkhäuser, Boston, Basel and Berlin, 2002. ISBN 3-7643-6167-0.

Upcoming Events

Euler 2003 – Countdown to the Tercentenary

The Euler Society's next big event is scheduled for Roger Williams University in Newport, Rhode Island, August 10-13, 2003. Activities will begin with a reception the evening of Sunday, August 10.

Roger Williams is actually in Bristol, but we're meeting at their conference center on the other side of the New Hope Bridge in Newport. See the announcement at the end of the Newsletter about how to register. Abstracts, or at least solemn promises to send abstracts, were due May 1. The program is at the end of this Newsletter.

Euler in Phoenix

Bill Dunham and Ed Sandifer will be running a Minicourse on Euler at the Phoenix Combined Mathematics Meetings of the MAA, AMS, AWM, and others next January. The Minicourses are the ones that meet twice during the meetings for two hours at a time. Bill Dunham wrote *Journey Through Genius* and *Euler: The Master of Us All*. Ed Sandifer is known to some as the Editor of this Newsletter. The MAA usually charges a little extra, something like $35, to attend a Minicourse.

Mathematical Instruments in Phoenix

The Phoenix meetings (see above) will also feature a Short Course on mathematical instruments, titled "The Material Culture of Mathematics." Short Courses are the ones that meet all day for two days before the main meetings begin. The session "Mathematics in the Ancient World" at the Baltimore meetings was a Short Course. The Short Course is being organized by Amy Shell-Gellasch and Glen van Brummelen. Short Courses usually cost a bit more than MiniCourses, something on the order of $100.

Proceedings

The Proceedings of Euler 2002 are almost ready, and should be available at the Rhode Island meeting.

Rumors

We have heard that Euler may soon be a regular feature at MAA Online. Frank Morgan has stopped writing his *Math Chats* column, leaving a spot for a new column. One of the candidates to fill that space might be a monthly column, tentatively titled *How Euler Did It*. It might not happen, but it wouldn't hurt to check MAA Online (www.maa.org) every few weeks, just in case.

Call for contributions

The Newsletter will gladly include short contributions about Euler, his life, works and influence, and we will provide links to longer contributions. Contact the Editor at esandifer@earthlink.net.

The Mission

The Mission of **The Euler Society** is threefold: It encourages scholarly contributions examining the life, research, and influence of Leonhard Euler. In part, these will be set within his times, that is, within the Enlightenment, the rise to European power status of Russia and Prussia, and the growth of royal science academies. **The Euler Society** will also explore current studies in the mathematical sciences that build upon his thought. And it will promote translations into English of selections from his writings, including correspondence and notebooks, in leading up to the tercentenary of his birth in 2007.

The Euler Society Executive Committee

Chancellor	Ronald Calinger	Catholic University	calinger@cua.edu
President	Robert Bradley	Adelphi University	bradley@adelphi.edu
Vice President	Ruediger Thiele	University of Leipzig	thieler@medizin.uni-leipzig.de
Secretary	Edward Sandifer	Western Connecticut State University	esandifer@earthlink.net
Treasurer	Mary Ann McLoughlin	College of St Rose	mcloughm@strose.edu
Ombudsman (ex officio)	John Glaus	The Euler Society	restinn@midmaine.com

Euler 2003 Conference

COUNTDOWN TO THE TERCENTENARY

SUNDAY, AUGUST 10 – WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 13, 2003
ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY, BRISTOL, RHODE ISLAND

THE 2003 EULER CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD AT THE ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE AND CONFERENCE CENTER. THIS FACILITY IS LOCATED JUST MINUTES FROM HISTORIC BRISTOL AND THE EXCITEMENT OF NEWPORT. DURING E2003 YOU WILL BE ACCOMMODATED IN THE CONFERENCE CENTER'S LUXURY BEDROOMS INCLUDING SATELLITE TV, IN-ROOM COFFEE, INDIVIDUAL CLIMATE CONTROL AND DRY CLEANING SERVICES. THE CENTER ALSO OFFERS AN INDOOR HEATED POOL, SAUNA AND FITNESS CENTER FACILITY.

DIRECTIONS:
ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE AND CONFERENCE CENTER IN PORTSMOUTH, IS LOCATED 1.5 MILES FROM THE UNIVERSITY'S MAIN CAMPUS IN BRISTOL AND ABOUT 12 MILES NORTH OF THE PICTURESQUE NEWPORT BEACHES, QUAINT SHOPPING VILLAGES AND HISTORIC MANSIONS.

RATES:
FOR ALL FOUR DAYS $329.00
INCLUDES: LUXURY ACCOMMODATIONS, BREAKFAST, LUNCH AND MORNING AND AFTERNOON REFRESHMENT BREAKS.

DAY MEETING PACKAGE: $29.00 PER DAY
INCLUDES: BREAKFAST, LUNCH AND MORNING AND AFTERNOON REFRESHMENT BREAKS.

THERE IS A $50.00 REGISTRATION FEE TO BE MADE PAYABLE TO THE EULER SOCIETY

PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS DIRECTLY WITH:
LORIE PROULX
ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY RESIDENCES AND CONFERENCE CENTER: LPROULX@RWU.EDU OR WWW.RWU.EDU

CALL FOR PAPERS:
DEADLINE HAS NOW PASSED.

BLURB:
LAST YEAR'S ATTENDEES CAME FROM KYOTO, OXFORD, WEST POINT, CORNELL, MIAMI, WESTERN CONNECTICUT, NEW MEXICO, SAN DIEGO, MAINE, AND ELSEWHERE. THEY UNANIMOUSLY AGREED THAT THE EULER CONFERENCE WAS THE BEST MEETING THEY HAD EVER ATTENDED. EXPECT NEWPORT TO BE JUST AS GREAT.

Euler 2003 Program

Roger Williams University
August 10-13, 2003

Sunday, August 10
 Evening – registration and reception

Monday, August 11
 Morning
8:30	Talk 1.	Bruce Burdick, Roger Williams University
		Mathematical Streets in Mexico City
9:30	Talk 2.	Dominic Klyve and Lee Stemkoski, Dartmouth College
		The Euler Online Database
11:00	Talk 3.	Ron Calinger, Catholic University of America
		The Euler Lecture
		Euler's Golden Decade in Berlin: The First Half to 1751

 Afternoon
1:30	Talk 4.	Sam Kutler, Saint John's College
		Five Favorite Irrational Numbers - Some differences between ancient and modern mathematics
2:30	Talk 5.	Rob Bradley, Adelphi University
		To Speak of many things: of logs, and roots, and beaks of birds, of spheres and nodding rings
4:00	Talk 6.	Reading from Original Sources in French – E-170 or E-172
6:00		Executive Committee meeting

Tuesday, August 12
 Morning
8:30	Talk 7.	Ed Sandifer, Western Connecticut State University
		Euler's Life-long Plan for Mechanics
9:30	Talk 8.	Fred Rickey, United States Military Academy
		Reading the Introductio
11:00	Talk 9.	Reading from Original Sources in Latin – Selections from the *Introductio*

 Afternoon – Session on Mechanics
1:30	Talk 10.	Roger Godard, Royal Military College of Canada
		Euler's Influence on Condorcet's Views on Meteorology
2:30	Talk 11.	Larry D'Antonio, Ramapo College
		"The fabric of the universe is most perfect": Euler's research on elastic curves
4:00	Talk 12.	Stacy Langton, University of San Diego
		An error of Euler on Rigid Bodies

Wednesday, August 13
 Morning – Session on Euler and His Friends
8:30	Talk 13.	John Glaus, The Euler Society
		Young Leonhard Euler travels to the Venice of the North to illuminate the Russia bear
9:30	Talk 14.	Craig Waff
		The Young and the Productive: The Mathematical Work of the Precocious Clairaut Brothers, 1726-1731
11:00	Talk 15.	Mary Lynn Doan, Victor Valley Community College
		Euler, Mayer and the Longitude Problem

Half hour breaks every day at 10:30 and 3:30