

PREFACE

This book of Conference Proceedings has been prepared as the result of the decision taken at the Annual General Meeting of the Fifteenth MERGA Conference, held at the Hawkaid Conference Centre, University of Western Sydney, 4-8 July, 1992, to print Proceedings of future conferences. Because this decision was only made at the Conference, this particular set of proceedings has been prepared after the event with a minimum of refereeing and editing. It is anticipated that in future, an appropriate editor and procedure will be put in place as part of the Conference planning, thus enabling the Editor to undertake more stringent refereeing and editing procedures.

The Conference itself attracted a record number of participants and a significant number of papers. The theme, "Space - the first and final frontier" was the reference point about which many participants based their contributions to the Conference. It welded successfully the predominant strands of mathematics education research with the historical and cultural setting, astronomy and Aboriginal culture.

The Conference is characterised by a number of significant events. Besides the valuable input of keynote speakers from England and Australia, poster sessions were built into the program. This is an area in which it is recommended that there be considerable development in the future. The review, edited by Atweh and Watson, *Research in mathematics education in Australasia, 1988-1991* was successfully launched.

For the first time, a full scale independent evaluation of a MERGA conference was carried out. This evaluation reported high praise for the conference program and the quality of the papers and presentations. While there were areas in which there needed to be improvements, the Planning Committee were satisfied with the result. The Committee was more than satisfied with the level of support given by participants and others involved in the organisation.

Beth Southwell
Bob Perry
Kay Owens

AIMS

The aims of the Mathematics Education Research Group of Australasia (MERGA) are:

To encourage and promote quality research in all areas related to the teaching and learning of mathematics at all levels, particularly in Australasia.

To provide permanent means for sharing of research results and concerns among all members through regular publications and conferences.

To seek means of implementing research findings at all decision levels to the teaching of mathematics and the preparation of mathematics teachers.

To maintain liaison with other organisations with similar interests in mathematics education or educational research.