

BERNHARD HERMANN NEUMANN

CITATION FOR AN HONORARY DEGREE

Mr Chancellor, it is my privilege to present to you for a degree of the University, Emeritus Professor Bernhard Neumann.

Bernhard Neumann was foundation Professor of Mathematics in the Institute of Advanced Studies, developing the Department of Mathematics into one of world standing by the time of his retirement in 1974. His enthusiasm, personality, intellect and energy created an exciting environment and attracted many high quality mathematicians to the ANU and Australia. The graduate program he established was very successful, attracting students of high quality in large numbers, many of whom now hold senior positions in universities in Australia and around the world. He organised the first major international conference in any field of mathematics to be held in Australia (in 1965). This conference raised the international profile of Australian mathematics. He has remained active in retirement. He has maintained his links with the ANU and still plays an active role in the life of the School of Mathematical Sciences.

Bernhard Neumann was one of the pioneers of modern infinite group theory. His interests are not confined to infinite group theory and he has made important contributions to a number of areas of mathematics. His research achievements have been recognised on numerous occasions. He won the Wiskundig Genootschap te Amsterdam Prize in 1949 and the Adams Prize, University of Cambridge, in 1953. He was elected to a Fellowship of the Royal Society in 1959 and to a Fellowship of the Australian Academy of Science in 1964. He was Matthew Flinders Lecturer of the Australian Academy of Science in 1984 and he has been awarded several honorary degrees.

Bernhard Neumann's view of his role as Professor of Mathematics at the ANU was a very broad one: to provide leadership and support for the advancement of research, teaching and applications in mathematics at all levels in Australia. To this end he applied his considerable energies to many ventures that have been of great benefit to mathematics research and teaching in Australia. For these contributions he was appointed Companion of the Order of Australia in the General Division in 1994.

He has played a major role in the Australian Mathematical Society. He was President, 1964-66, and has served as Vice-President on 3 occasions. He established the Bulletin of the Australian Mathematical Society in 1969, serving as its editor for 11 years and being appointed Honorary Editor in recognition of his contribution. His support for postgraduate education has been recognised by the BH Neumann Prize for the best student talk at the Annual Meeting of the Australian Mathematical Society. For his contributions to the Australian Mathematical Society he was made an Honorary Life Member in 1976.

He was a driving force in establishing the Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers and was its Foundation President in 1966. A notable feature of his support for mathematics at all levels has been his support for the Australian Mathematics Competition and the Mathematical Olympiad. In recognition of his support, the Australian Mathematics Trust established the BH Neumann Prizes, awarded for sustained commitment to encouraging mathematics challenge activities. In addition, a certificate named for him is awarded to each student achieving a perfect score in the Australian Mathematics Competition.

His involvement in the International Mathematical Union helped raise the visibility of Australian mathematics internationally. He established the IMU Canberra circular, a quarterly newsletter with a large international circulation.

Mr Chancellor, it is with great pleasure that I present to you Bernhard Hermann Neumann, that you may confer on him the degree of Doctor of Science, *honoris causa*, on the ground of his distinguished creative achievement as a scholar in mathematics.

Professor Frank Jackson
Director, Institute of Advanced Studies and
Chairperson, Board of the Institute of Advanced Studies
The Australian National University

19 April 2001