

Alan, it is a pleasure to be asked to contribute a few words on this wonderful occasion. It is startling to realize that the Mathematical Reasoning Group is celebrating its thirtieth anniversary (and that I had left Edinburgh before the tenth!)

The important thing about the Mathematical Reasoning Group is that it is a Group. Alan, you always made it seem easy, but it is a most important, and a most difficult, thing to build community. The Mathematical Reasoning Group is and has always been a community of researchers. A community held together by such seemingly insignificant institutions as shared lab space, group projects, blue book notes, monthly dinners, weekly project meetings and of course, afternoon tea. By these methods, and through your generosity, the Mathematical Reasoning group has become a place where communication and collaboration in research is able to thrive, with extremely productive results. It doesn't take long after leaving to come to know that the Mathematical Reasoning Group is a unique community. I've certainly not encountered its like since I left Edinburgh.

In addition to local community, I appreciate and continue to value the introduction that you provided to the global community of Artificial Intelligence and Automated Reasoning researchers. Your introductions to work and to individual researchers in the field were invaluable in making me feel connected to the larger research enterprise.

As an introduction to the community of research, the Mathematical Reasoning Group would be hard to beat (though an introduction that may doom us all to perpetual disappointment in other institutions.) This introduction to research within a vibrant community is a debt that I can never repay to you, Alan, but one which I hope to mitigate by emulating your generosity with my own students and colleagues.

Alan, congratulations on this milestone. With my great gratitude and best wishes.

Dave Barker-Plummer, Stanford University (MRG 1982-88)