

Peter Paule (b. May 14, 1958)

[60, 733, 1985, 2021, 2, 2, 16]

By Abdul-Ahad Butt

Peter Paule is a mathematician, born on May 14, 1958, from Ried im Innkreis, Austria. In 1976, he enrolled and studied mathematics at the University of Vienna, receiving his Ph.D. in 1983. From 1984 to 1986, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation enabled him to do research at the University of Bayreuth at the Institute for Mathematics. The Johannes Kepler University Linz then offered him a postdoctoral position at the Institute for Symbolic Computing (RISC), from 1986 to 1988. After his community service in 1989, he was finally employed as an assistant professor at the Johannes Kepler University Linz from 1990 to 1996. In 1996, he qualified as a university lecturer in mathematics which he served till 2004.

He served various professorships at universities such as University Marne-la-Vallee, Paris in 1998, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg in 1999, Pennsylvania State University in 2001 and 2003, and University of Waterloo, Ontario in 2002. In 2009, he was appointed as the director of RISC and currently holds that position.

During his studies in Vienna, his Ph.D. advisor Johann Cigler introduced him to aspects of enumerative combinatorics and q -identities. At that time Paule also discovered the papers of George Andrews on the q -hypergeometric series. From Adalbert Kerber, host for the period of his Humboldt fellowship in Bayreuth, Paule learned about group actions and Polya theory. When he joined Bruno Buchberger's group at the Johannes Kepler University Linz in 1986, Paule began to combine his mathematical interests in combinatorics, number theory, and special

functions with computer algebra. Here, the work of Doron Zeilberger has played a significant role. Owing to his interests, Paule naturally ran into the mathematics of Ramanujan ever so often. A recent connection to the work of Ramanujan is his duty as associate editor for the forthcoming *Ramanujan Encyclopedia*.

When Paule saw the Rogers-Ramanujan identities in *An Introduction to the Theory of Numbers* by Hardy and Wright, he was struck by their structural elegance. Moreover, Hardy's remark expressing his doubt about the existence of a really elementary proof got Paule started in working in this area. With that, he went on the editorial board for the *Journal of Symbolic Computation* and *The Ramanujan Journal*. In addition, he is the Managing Editor of *Annals of Combinatorics*.

Paule is a member of the Academia Europea, and in 2013, he was elected as a member of the American Mathematical Society. Outside of Mathematics, Paule enjoys solving all sorts of mathematical problems, hiking, and reading.