

Correspondence

DEAR EDITOR,

Tony Gardiner and Chris Tew contributed a very interesting biography of Frank Budden as a recent *Matter for Debate* [1].

I started teaching at University in 2000 and, for many years, I developed a growing conviction that complex numbers should take a more prominent role. I discussed this with colleagues, including Bob Burn who suggested that Frank Budden had expressed similar views in his book [2]. I managed to get a copy from an internet second-hand book seller and the volume delivered was an ex-library copy from Salisbury City Library, with borrower stamps running from the 1970s until the mid 1990s. I grew up in Salisbury, leaving for university in 1992. The volume I now have was precisely the volume I must, at some point, have borrowed from Salisbury City Library while I was at School. Salisbury library had a very small number of mathematics and science books, and I borrowed nearly all of them. In any case, on reacquaintance I distinctly remember the diagrams, especially those like Figure 25, [2].

We are all influenced in subtle and diverse ways, and I must have picked up a conviction that complex numbers should take a more prominent role in part from reading this book at a particularly formative time in my school education. I now have many of Budden's other books and I commend them. In particular, his book *The fascination of groups* is masterful.

References

1. A. D. Gardiner and C Tew, *Matter for Debate, What makes a good maths teacher?* *Math. Gaz.*, **107** (July 2023) pp. 286-300.
2. F. J. Budden, *Complex numbers and their applications*, Longmans (1968).
3. F. J. Budden, *The fascination of groups*, CUP (1972).

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CHRIS SANGWIN

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School of Mathematics,

on behalf of The Mathematical Association

University of Edinburgh EH9 3FD

e-mail: C.J.Sangwin@ed.ac.uk

DEAR EDITOR,

Readers will undoubtedly have heard of Sir Michael Atiyah. He was born in London on 22nd April 1929 and died in Edinburgh on 11th January 2019. His obituary appeared in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography in April 2023. It is possible that you may be able to view it online via your institution or, as I did, via your local library or by some other means.

He was the President from Easter 1981 to Easter 1982 and his *Gazette* obituary, written by Geoffrey Howson appeared in the July 2019 issue. In addition there is another obituary on the MacTutor website:

<https://mathshistory.st-andrews.ac.uk/Biographies/Atiyah/>

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BILL RICHARDSON

Published by Cambridge University Press

Kintail, Longmorn, Elgin IV30 8RJ

on behalf of The Mathematical Association

e-mail: wpr3145@gmail.com