

PREFACE

THE SUN HAS FASCINATED ME for many years. This is perhaps not so strange since I walked my first steps at the solar observatory at Harestua, just north of Oslo. My dad worked there then. During my studies at the University in Oslo I was introduced to Professor Olav Kjeldseth-Moe, who inspired me to do my Masters and Ph.D. thesis on the Sun. He and several of my old colleagues have been an important part of my activities as a solar physicist. They also inspired me to spend time doing public outreach. And so it was my interest for sharing knowledge about the mysteries of the Sun that led to my writing this book.

This book presents the properties of the Sun, how it has fascinated humans for thousands of years, and how it affects our technological society. My hope is that this book will inspire an increased interest in the Sun and for natural science in general. The Sun is a perfect entrance to natural science, since it affects the Earth and humans in so many ways. Solar physics interacts with many other scientific fields, such as physics, chemistry, biology, and meteorology to mention a few.

The book is paired with material on the web containing a large number of animations and video material that will provide additional information. A PowerPoint presentation of the book is also included as a useful resource for teachers.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this book, in particular Andøya Rocket Range (ARR), who published the Norwegian edition. Special thanks to my colleagues Olav Kjeldseth-Moe (University of Oslo), Oddbjørn Engvold (University of Oslo), Bernhard Fleck (ESA) and in particular Steele Hill (NASA) for many useful discussions and suggestions. I would also like to thank Trond Abrahamsen (ARR) for the beautiful and original artwork.

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The author took his first steps at the solar observatory at Harestua (K. Brekke).

Our Explosive Sun

A Visual Feast of Our Source of Light and Life

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