

Preface

The Block-Elmegreen conference (May 2014) celebrates the careers of David Block and Bruce Elmegreen. This year 2014 marks the 60th birthday year of David and the one millionth (base 2) birthday of Bruce. The island of Mahe in the Seychelles archipelago was selected for the meeting. About 50 astronomers from around the planet, many of whom are close collaborators and friends of David and Bruce, attended the conference and presented papers.

The venue for the conference was the Constance Ephelia Hotel. Its facilities are truly unsurpassed, from the conference venue itself to the exquisitely furnished suites and the five restaurants, each with a different theme, from Mediterranean to Chinese. The Gala Dinner was held on the beach at Port Launay. It is a pleasure to thank the entire staff at Constance Ephelia, especially Matthias, Harry and Lindy. We were privileged to have Dr. N. Shah, Chief Executive of Nature Seychelles, to speak to us one evening on conservation in the Seychelles.

The weather prospects for the week of the Conference did not look promising. Predicted was much rain—unusual for the month of May. The weather turned out to be perfect. It rained very hard in the midnight hours, but the mornings were truly beautiful. As Frank Shu once emphasized: “Make all the measurements you can, still no one can predict the weather seven days from now.”

David’s after-dinner talk on Hubble-Reynolds was attended by astronomers and their partners and appears first in this volume, as did the evening talk in the proceedings of the 2010 Namibia conference. David’s talk generated much interest and much discussion during the week! The volume then presents the scientific papers in the same order as they were given at the conference. About 80 % of delegates provided written versions of their talks. A complete list of participants appears toward the end of this volume.

Our thanks go to the Munro family (David, Lil, Sophie, Grace and Tom) for their friendship and encouragement, and to NAMPAK for their corporate sponsorship. We are grateful to Marie-Lou Simaan at Mars Travel in Johannesburg for facilitating the Constance Ephelia Hotel arrangements.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the support of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg throughout the organisation of the conference. We are grateful to the Vice-Chancellor Professor A. Habib, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research Professor Z. Vilakazi and the Dean of the Faculty of Science Professor H. Marques for

their support and for their warm hospitality while we were editing the proceedings in Johannesburg. Our special thanks go to Professor Ebrahim Momoniat, Head of the School of Computational and Applied Mathematics at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg for his encouragement and for granting David the time to focus properly on the logistics for our conference.

We trust that the photographs of conference delegates, and of the conference environs, will bring back happy memories. These photographs (chosen at random) have been placed by the publisher just before the reference lists; they are not linked to the actual author(s) themselves.

Finally I would like to thank the Scientific Organizing Committee, the Local Organizing Committee, the chair persons and all delegates for making this conference so very memorable. Never before has an astronomy group of this size met in the Seychelles archipelago to celebrate the careers of two leading international researchers, David and Bruce!

Johannesburg, South Africa

Ken Freeman, Chair, SOC





Editor Ken Freeman (centre) visited South Africa in June-July 2014, where he was hosted by Professor Adam Habib (right), Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. At left is David Block. Photo: Fidos Kleovoulou.

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Elmegreen

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