

ESO Astronomers Emeriti — Sandro D’Odorico and Alan Moorwood

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In May and June 2010, Sandro D’Odorico and Alan Moorwood, both driving forces behind many ESO instruments and very active in research, retired after three decades at ESO. The ESO Director General, Tim de Zeeuw, elevated both to the newly inaugurated position of ESO Astronomer Emeritus. Celebrations on their transition to these esteemed positions were held and are briefly described.

Sandro D’Odorico

Sandro joined ESO as a fellow in 1980, becoming a staff member in 1981. He has been an inspiring force behind many instruments, including CASPEC, EMMI, UVES and, most recently, X-shooter, and has guided optical detector development for many years. Sandro stands out not just because of his zeal for instrumentation, but his passion for using those instruments for the research in which he was most interested — namely active galactic nuclei, and quasi-stellar object (QSO) absorption lines studies in particular. Despite a very active career in instrumentation he has kept up a strong research career with many dedicated collaborators. He was persuaded to allow a meeting in his honour, which was organised by Francesca Primas and Luca Pasquini and was held over two days (31 May–1 June 2010) at ESO Headquarters.

The meeting was themed to interweave Sandro’s achievements in both instrumentation and astronomical science. Talks were given by the majority of the participants, who had collaborated in one way or another with Sandro. Long-term collaborators, such as Adriano Fontana, Emanuele Glallongo, Stefano Cristiani and Paolo Molaro, talked about how scientific questions triggered ideas for new instruments; others had used the instruments that Sandro had led, including Bruno Leibundgut, who described



Figure 1. Sandro D’Odorico sharing the amusement over his optical instrument sculpture with Mark Casali at his retirement party.

the early reduction of EMMI spectroscopy. A highlight of the meeting was the talks given by some of those who are usually behind the scenes, spending most of their time on ray tracing and in the optics laboratory. Bernard Delabre described the optical design of the many ESO instruments in which he has been involved during the time that Sandro has been at ESO, Gerardo Avila expounded on working with fibres, showing some examples of the hardware, and Olaf Iwert covered the exciting years of CCD development at ESO. In the field of QSO absorption lines there was a full morning session of talks, including one by Wal Sargent describing spectroscopy of $z \sim 6$ targets with the Keck instrument HIRES, and one by Max Pettini on detecting outflows from high- z galaxies with high resolution spectroscopy. Two threads running through many of the talks were personal memories and football — with many speakers showing photographs of non-professional football teams in which Sandro had played. Two of his closest collaborators at ESO, Hans Dekker and Jean-Louis Lizon, were in Chile during the meeting and contributed many stories and memories over the video link. Noteworthy was the presence of Sandro’s daughter, Valentina D’Odorico, also a professional astronomer, and Francesco Bertola, who supervised Sandro’s

Master’s thesis. In the closing ceremony Sandro was presented with a present by Tim de Zeeuw (see the photo on the Astronomical News section page) and a “sculpture” made by Jean-Louis Lizon from spare X-shooter parts (see Figure 1).

Alan Moorwood

Alan was the longest serving astronomer at ESO — until May 2010, that is. He joined in 1978, when ESO was still based in Geneva, and throughout his career he has specialised in infrared instrumentation. He was an early pioneer of infrared (IR) spectroscopy, starting from the days when IR detectors had only one pixel. A chronicle of the IR instruments, among them IRSPEC, IRAC and IRAC2, ISAAC, SOFI and CRIRES, to which he has been a central contributor is given in the *Messenger* article on personal recollections (Moorwood, 2009). Alan was Head of Instrumentation from 2004, and for the last two years, Head of the Directorate of Programmes, and so had a steering influence on the design work for the E-ELT and its instrumentation.

A retirement party, or Emeritus welcoming party (!), was held for Alan on 18 June 2010 at ESO Headquarters. There were warm appreciations by Gert Finger,



Figure 2. Alan Moorwood enjoying the intricacies of his IR instrument sculpture with Mark Casali at his retirement party.

who has developed the state-of-the-art in infrared detectors under Alan's leadership and by Jean-Louis Lizon, who has assembled or maintained much of the VLT instrumentation. Roberto Gilmozzi, the current Head of the Telescope Division, recounted time spent with Alan at the VLT in the very early times, when ISAAC was being commissioned. Mark Casali, the current Head of Instrumentation, presented Alan with another of Jean-Louis Lizon's sculptures, based on parts from different IR instruments (see Figure 2). This sculpture was interactive and a set of hex-keys was provided to release one of the stuck mechanisms! Alan, whose memory is renowned in ESO, recounted extensively many experiences on and off the telescopes (see the photo on the Astronomical News section page).

References

Moorwood, A. 2009, *The Messenger*, 136, 8

New Staff at ESO

Adrian Russell

I am originally from Sheffield in England, and sadly still find myself supporting Sheffield United football club despite the fact that they never win! When I am not working I am also a keen photographer. My wife Lilie and I have two girls Elizabeth (8) and Victoria (5); they will both start at the Munich European School in September and are looking forward to learning to speak German.

Having started life as an electronics engineer, I rapidly became hooked on astronomy and did my PhD at the University of Cambridge (at the Mullard Radio Astronomy Observatory, MRAO), working on mm-wave heterodyne instrumentation

and molecular line studies of outflows in star formation regions.

In 1987 I joined the Royal Observatory Edinburgh (ROE) and my wife and I went on a three-year tour of duty in Hawaii, where I was a support scientist on the newly commissioned James Clerk Maxwell Telescope (JCMT). During this time I supported many of the instruments on the telescope. In 1990 we moved to Garching and I spent a two-year sabbatical with Reinhard Genzel's group at the Max-Planck-Institut für extraterrestrische Physik where I worked on very high frequency sub-mm instrumentation for the JCMT. In 1992 I returned to the ROE and became the Head of the JCMT Instrumentation Programme. This involved



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