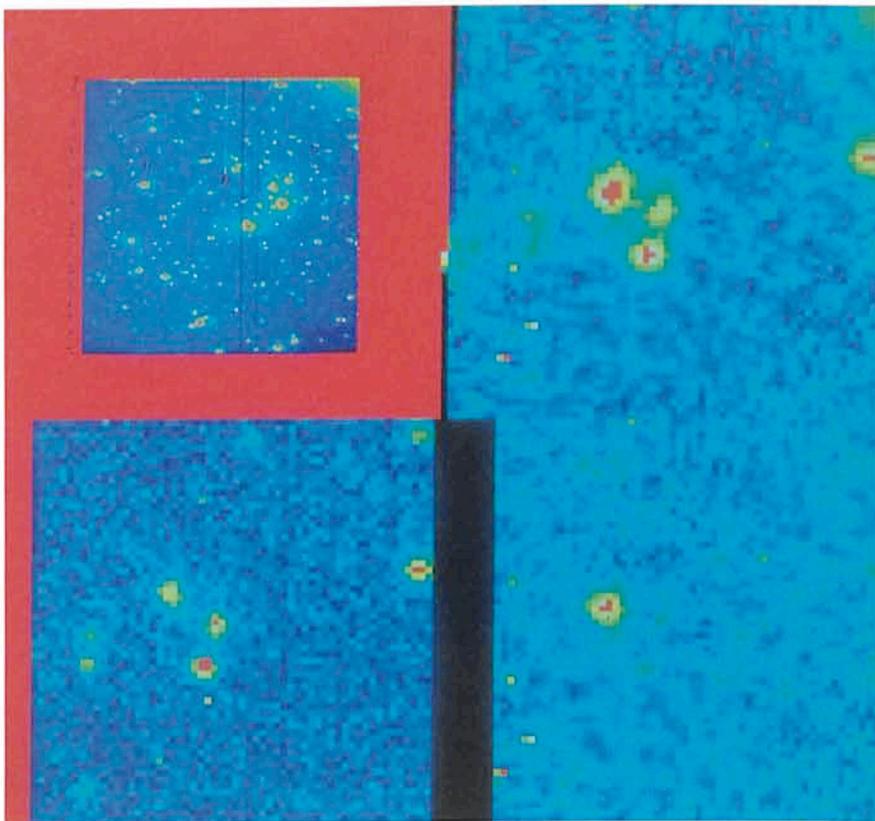


## A Supernova in AC 118 ( $z = 0.31$ )

The search for distant supernovae on the Danish 1.54-m has been described in the *Messenger*, 47, 46. In February 1988, L. Hansen detected a faint event ( $V \approx 23.3$ ) in a cluster J1836.14 RC of redshift  $z = 0.28$ . Now a much brighter event has been found by H.U. Nørgaard-Nielsen on August 8–9, 1988, in an inconspicuous galaxy in the galaxy cluster AC 118 (redshift  $z = 0.31$ ).

In the figure, the image of August 8–9 is compared to an earlier one obtained in 1986. The upper left frame shows the compressed 1986 image of AC 118, and below is an enlargement of part of the image near the eastern rim. The upper right shows the same area for the August 8–9 image. The NE object of the three near the centre has brightened considerably. The lower right shows the difference between the two images, and the event stands out clearly. The supernova is displaced by  $0''.5$  E and  $0''.7$  S compared to the quiescent galaxy. The magnitude is  $V \approx 22.3$ . The event is interpreted as a type I supernova. Subsequent observations have shown a gradual decrease in brightness.



### Latest News: SEST Observes SN 1987A!

Just before this *Messenger* issue went to press, R. Chini, A. Götz, C. G. T. Haslam, E. Kreysa, and P. G. Mezger, Max-Planck-Institut für Radioastronomie, Bonn, announced the detection of SN 1987A with the SEST on Sept. 7–9 at 1.3 mm, equipped with a MPIFR bolometer. At the optical position they found an average flux density of  $29 \pm 4$  mJy, integrated over a beam of about 30 arcsec. Possible contamination by underlying emission from the LMC was excluded by observing two adjacent positions 30 arcsec north and south of SN 1987A where no signal was found above a limit of 4 mJy.

## My Visit to La Silla

The Director General of ESO, Harry van der Laan, invited me to La Silla as consultant during the realuminization and the optical trimming of the ESO Schmidt telescope. I was very happy with this invitation because it gave me an opportunity not only to spend some time at the Schmidt, but also to meet with many friends in Chile. At La Silla I had the good luck to meet Richard West who suggested to me to write a short contribution for the *Messenger* about my stay in Chile which I have done with pleasure.

At the airport Tobalaba in Santiago, leaving for the mountain, I met already some of my old colleagues, Daniel Hofstadt and his wife Sonja, Wolfgang and Suze Eckert, Erich Schumann, Labrin, Leon and the French astronomer Mr. Spite. Travelling from the Pelicano airport to La Silla in a comfortable car, my thoughts went back to 1964 when the trip from Pelicano to La Silla took us five and a half hours on horseback.

The skyline of La Silla has considerably changed with the installation of the SEST and the NTT building. It looks rather funny to see the tremendous NTT construction rotating! I missed the Swiss telescope and discovered it later close to my dormitory. I think the Swiss astronomers must enjoy its closeness to the hotel.

It was very nice to work again with Hans Schuster, Guido and Oscar Pizarro at the Schmidt telescope. The overhaul, done by the technical staff, went smooth. The only handicap was the weather. It took rather long to collect the necessary plates for the different tests. We succeeded in doing a rather good trimming of the telescope. A few results may be of interest.

The collimation error of the mirror is just under 0.2 arcsec. The plate-tilt is not more than 15 arcsec, corresponding to a theoretical image diameter of 0.2 arcsec at a radius of 100 mm assuming perfect focussing at the late centre. A simulated two-hour exposure, exposing

only during the first and the last five minutes, gave a perfect coincidence of the two exposures, proving that there exists no differential fluxure between guider and camera. The telescope elevation at  $-45^\circ$  declination deviates less than 0.3 arcsec from the theoretical refracted pole position. The azimuth deviation is 3.5 arcsec. These values were measured from two pole exposures of 5 minutes with fifty minutes interval.

Furthermore, the objective prism and the supernova search device (*The Messenger* 19, 29, December 1979) were tested.

During my stay at La Silla I went for the first time with Erich Schumann to Coquimbo and La Serena to see how the food purchases are done. I was quite surprised about the impressive amount of food which is weekly transported to the mountain. One hardly realizes how much work is involved before dinner is served.

Finally, I would like to thank everybody who made my stay at La Silla such a pleasant one. A. MULLER

*Editor's note:* André Muller was one of the first astronomers to join the European Southern Observatory and to participate in the site testing at Zeekoegat in South Africa. In June 1964 he became the first superintendent in Chile. Among many other tasks he was responsible for the improvement of the Schmidt telescope. In 1983, at the age of 65 years, he retired from ESO and is now living near Eindhoven in the Netherlands.