

REPORT ON THE NINTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FIBONACCI NUMBERS AND THEIR APPLICATIONS

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The Ninth International Conference on Fibonacci Numbers and Their Applications was held in Luxembourg 17-22 July 2000. It was the first conference without our dear Herta Freitag, who died on 25 January 2000. Herta graced every one of our previous eight conferences with her warm and friendly presence, and enlivened our sessions with her own contributions, all presented in her unique masterly fashion. In those eight conferences she was author or coauthor of sixteen papers, at least one at every conference, finishing on a high note at her last conference in Rochester with three papers. This previous and very special lady, whose humility was so natural that we took it for granted, loved mathematics and her fellow human beings, and brought out the best in us all. She was just as fascinated with those she met for the first time as those she had known longer, and her magical influence will remain with all who met her until the end of their days. Herta was already 75 years of age when she came to our first conference in Patras, Greece, accompanied by Debbie Harrell. We will always remember with gratitude that either Debbie or Adair Robertson, and usually both of them, came with Herta to every conference. No Ruth was more faithful to her Naomi than Debbie and Adair were to Herta, and these three friends shared many happy times together.

It has often been said that these conferences keep getting better and better, and this monotonic property continued to hold for the Ninth Conference. The overall quality of the papers has surely improved, and there were several really outstanding papers at this conference. As at previous conferences, the greatest representation was from the USA, which contributed 18 to number of those attending. There were four from Japan, three each from Germany and Hungary, two each from Australia, England, and Luxembourg, and one each from Austria, Brazil, Brunei, Canada, Cyprus, Finland, France, Italy, Latvia, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Russia, Scotland, and Ukraine.

At our welcoming reception, we sampled some fine wines of Luxembourg, graciously provided by our main host, Professor Joseph Lahr. On the Tuesday evening we enjoyed a reception at the beautiful town hall of Luxembourg as guests of the Mayor, Mr. Paul Helminger. This was followed by a most interesting guided walking tour of the city. Our Wednesday afternoon and evening excursion took us on a journey through the Luxembourg countryside to the Castle of Vianden, followed by a visit to the nearby hydro-electric power station and a splendid meal at the Hotel Victor Hugo, generously provided by the "Société Electrique de l'Our" and its Director, Mr. Hubert Weis. The magnificent conference banquet, which was entirely sponsored by Madame Erna Hennicot-Schoebges, Minister for Culture, Higher Education and Research, was held in the stylish and elegant Castle of Bourglinster. After dinner, we had the especial pleasure of hearing an outstanding pianist, Matylda, daughter of our much respected colleague Andrzej Rotkiewicz, play pieces by Chopin and Magin. Following the conference, there was a fine excursion to the German towns of Trier and Berncastel along the river Moselle, including a visit to the library of the mathematician and theologian Nikolaus Cusanus.

We are most deeply indebted to Dr. Prosper Schroeder and members of the Institut Superieur de Technologie of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and, in particular, to Professors Joseph Lahr and Massimo Malvetti, and to Mrs. Josiane Meissner. This was indeed a smooth-running conference, thanks to the organizers, the local support and, as at several previous conferences, the cheerful and efficient work of "our own" Shirley Bergum and Patricia Solsaa.

Since our last conference, Cal Long has demitted office as President of the Fibonacci Association, to be succeeded by Fred Howard. Our Association is indeed very fortunate: one could not reasonably have expected a Washington to be followed by a Jefferson. God willing, we look forward to accompanying Fred to Flagstaff, Arizona, for our Tenth Conference in 2002, and to being welcomed there by Cal.

