

FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FIBONACCI
NUMBERS AND THEIR APPLICATIONS
UNIVERSITY OF PATRAS, GREECE
AUGUST 27-31, 1984

A Report by Karel L. de Bouvère

About fifty mathematicians from thirteen different countries gathered in Patras, on the Peloponnesos in Greece, to exchange knowledge and thoughts on various mathematical topics all with the Fibonacci numbers as a common denominator. Professor A. N. Philippou, chairman of both the international and the local organizational committees, expressed it as follows in his remarks at the opening session: "Most will be lecturing on Number Theory, some will talk on Probability, and still others will present their results on ladder networks in Electric Line Theory and aromatic hydrocarbons in Chemistry."

The academic sessions were scheduled, of course, according to the pace of the host country. A morning session from 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. and an afternoon session from 5:00 P.M. to 8:30 P.M., each session interrupted once by a coffee break. All lectures lasted for 45 minutes and all were in the nature of contributed papers—twenty-four in total. The Conference Proceedings will be published.

The relatively small number of participants made the conference a pleasant affair; in no time everyone knew everyone else. The social atmosphere was enhanced still more by outings and parties, not in the least due to the friendly guidance of the Greek colleagues. And clearly, it is hard to beat an environment that appropriately could be called the cradle of mathematics.

At the end of the final session on August 31, Professor Philippou and his committees and staff were given well deserved praise and applause. It was suggested that similar international conferences should be held every three years and that the University of Santa Clara, in California, U.S.A., "home" of *The Fibonacci Quarterly*, should be the host in 1987, followed in 1990 by an appropriate institution in Pisa, Italy, birthplace of Fibonacci.

The conference was jointly sponsored by the Greek Ministry of Culture and Science, the Fibonacci Association, and the University of Patras.

A Very "Nonscientific" Report by Herta T. Freitag

An announcement of the First International Conference on Fibonacci Numbers and Their Applications to be held at the University of Patras, Greece, August 27-31, 1984, reached me in mid-February. I was overjoyed by the thought that the members of the "Fibonacci-oriented" mathematical community would be able to meet each other on an international scale. Although I consider myself but an amateur in this area compared to the remarkable caliber of my esteemed peers who work in this field, I have long been a devoutly "addicted" member, and have looked forward from one issue of *The Fibonacci Quarterly* to the next ever since The Fibonacci Association was founded in 1963.

Countless hours of planning and work must have gone into the organization of the Conference by the International Committee and the Local Committee, both headed by Professor A. N. Philippou, Vice Rector of the University of Patras,

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and Chairman of the entire Conference, which was sponsored by the Greek Ministry of Culture and Science, the Fibonacci Association, and the University of Patras. It saddened me to learn that some of the outstanding leaders in our Fibonacci community, among them Professor G. L. Alexanderson, President of the Fibonacci Association, and Professor Gerald E. Bergum, Editor of our *Journal*, could not attend. We felt their presence even from afar. It would have been beautiful to have Verner E. Hoggatt, Jr., in our midst. I know that his spirit was with us!

The Conference well surpassed my fondest expectations. It was professionally inspirational and personally heartwarming. Names that we have held dear for many years became people. Within moments we became a circle of friends. In a very significant sense we were able to speak the same language regardless of our national backgrounds. Our common interest, indeed enthusiasm, affected this miracle.

To hold this first Conference in Greece, cradle of mathematical thought in antiquity, contributed immeasurably. "The Glory that is Greece"—Greece, the country which is indelibly imbedded in the minds, the hearts, and the souls of all educated persons throughout the world! With their inimitable beauty and charm, the surrounding waters, the mountains, those picturesque cypress trees greatly enhanced the atmosphere of our meeting.

The findings presented in the papers were profound and intricate. It seemed to me they not only deepened our conviction of the importance of the Fibonacci sequences and their ramifications, their ever-increasing relevance and applicability; they also significantly contributed to our understanding of specific aspects in this mathematical area. The conspicuous care in the presentations was admirable. The ensuing comments and questions added yet a further dimension. I shall never forget Professor A. Zachariou's deeply searching deliberations.

The Conference was eminently enriching—a uniquely memorable experience. My heartfelt gratitude is extended to all members of our Fibonacci community who have made this Conference possible and who have contributed to its success. And I am truly moved, and most appreciative, that Professor Alexanderson has given me the opportunity to relate my impressions in our *Journal*.

If I may become personal, I would also like to extend a very special "thank you" to Professor Andreas N. Philippou whose wit and warmth immediately set an unforgettable tone for our Conference. Indeed, his intuitive perception led him—at our first encounter—to "recognize" me without ever having seen me. I would like to thank him for the very special courtesies he has extended to The Fibonacci Association, and for allowing me to address the group in my capacity as one of the representatives of our organization.

I believe I speak for all Fibonacci friends across the oceans if I express the hope that this, our First International Conference on Fibonacci Numbers and Their Applications, was but a prelude for those to come.

