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Set Theory and its Applications

Proceedings of a Conference
held at York University, Ontario, Canada,
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Preface

The Set Theory and its Applications Conference at York University was held in Toronto, Canada during the two weeks of August 10–21, 1987. It was attended by 80 mathematicians from 12 different countries.

Financial support for this conference was provided by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council under the auspices of the Canadian Mathematical Society and by York University through both the President's Office and the Office of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts. The organizers would like to express their thanks for this financial support without which the conference would not have been possible.

The conference featured both contributed talks and a series of invited lectures on topics central to the study of set theory and its applications, particularly to general topology. The organizers would like to thank the invited speakers James Baumgartner, Arnold Miller, Andreas Blass, Neil Hindman, Stevo Todorčević, Ronald Jensen, Hugh Woodin, Jan van Mill, Boban Velickovic, Menachem Magidor, A. V. Arhangel'skii and Mary Ellen Rudin for a series of highly informative and stimulating lectures. We would also like to thank the many speakers who contributed lectures to the conference, in many cases announcing new and important results for the first time.

The organizers would like to thank the staff of the Mathematics Department of York University for their help in the organization of the conference. We would like, in particular, to thank Joan Young for her knowledgeable assistance.

All of the articles in this volume have been refereed. We would like to thank the referees for their many helpful comments which have greatly improved the quality of the articles which make up this volume. We would also like to thank Eadie Henry for her tireless work in the preparation of one manuscript from handwritten original draft through several series of revisions to a well-written and clearly presented final copy.

This volume of Springer Lecture Notes in Mathematics constitutes the proceedings of this conference. We would like to thank the editors for accepting the proceedings.

Alan Dow
Donald Pelletier
Juris Steprāns
Stephen Watson

Dedication

Two weeks before the conference began, we received the sad news that Eric van Douwen had died. We had been musing about the conference for more than two years and even from the beginning we had decided that Eric would be invited and that he would give a series of lectures. We were curious about what topics he would choose because we knew that when Eric lectured, people paid attention to his ideas and mathematics would advance a little bit in his direction. We knew we would see a solution to some well-known problem, a completely original proof for some well-known result, and we knew that we would all aim a little bit higher. We also simply looked forward to seeing Eric again. Eric wrote over seventy papers in sixteen years but we always felt that the greater part of what he knew had never been written down. We wanted to talk to him and listen to him until we tired from sheer stimulation. General topologists form a community and Eric Karel van Douwen was an elder who possessed the knowledge of its oral traditions, but was denied the opportunity to pass it down. The loss to us was devastating, for we lost not only a mathematician but a friend.

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