



CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA SEPTEMBER 24–27, 2006

After attending the 8th National Conference of the Australian Society of Rheology in 1998, Prof Paul Slatter (Director of the Flow Process Research Centre in Cape Town) came away with two lasting impressions:

- The breadth of the discipline

- The enthusiastic participation of industry

Slatter was convinced that South Africans should follow this fine example, and so the SASOR dream was born. He realised how much could be learned by bringing the existing isolated pockets of activity together. An informal grouping nurtured this idea, and gradually gave substance to it. By mid 2004, it was deemed that a critical mass of activities and interested parties had developed, and the first conference date was set for 24–27 September 2006, to coincide with the first SASOR AGM.

The SASOR dream has now come true! The venue for the SASOR 2006 Conference was on the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) campus, nestled at the foot of Table Mountain. After a welcome cocktail on Sunday evening (September 24th), Prof Slatter (SASOR President) opened the proceedings and introduced the first plenary speaker, Prof Ken Walters (University of Wales, Aberystwyth), speaking to a subject close to his heart - "A Rheological Ocean Of Truth". This was followed by another fine plenary presentation by Prof Alex Malkin (Russian Academy of Sciences) on "Rheology And Flow Of Rheokinetic Liquids". The main discussion theme centred on the need for continuum mechanics approach to be integrated with the microstructural and/or molecular details. The first day ended with the world premier of a short multimedia presentation on "Extravagant Viscoelastic Effects" by the Institute of Non-Newtonian Fluid Mechanics (Aberystwyth).

Day two started with the Plenary from Prof Erich Windhab (ETH, Zurich) titled "From Single Drop Deformation To Complex Emulsion Rheology And Emulsification Process Design". This was followed by Prof Irina Masalova's (CPUT) keynote on the "Rheology Of Super-Concentrated Emulsions". The presentations from industry provided a refreshing counterpoint to the intense intellectual debate – especially Dr Mike Taylor's (African Explosives Limited) paper on "Rheology in the application of emulsion explosives". To some significant extent, these presentations

answered the discussion of the first day, and showed how continuum mechanics could be integrated with molecular details thereby leading to improved insights. Day two finished with the first SASOR AGM. Day three started with Prof Raj Chhabra's (Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur) plenary on "Rheology In Engineering Applications – Particles And Bubbles", followed by Slatter's keynote on "Transitional Pipe Flow: The High Bingham Number Frontier". The conference ended with a number of interesting and diverse engineering applications.

There were altogether forty-eight delegates from ten countries present (Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, Germany, India, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and South Africa) and a total of 27 presentations made at the conference. Session topics ranged from fundamental phenomena and modelling, to polymer processing and pumped pipeline applications. There was a great diversity of presentation topics, ranging from simple model flows (such as past a sphere and a drop) all the way up to pipeline transportation of emulsions and suspensions and their rheometry, pump manufacture and CFD. Thanks to all participants, there was a wonderful atmosphere of lively discussion, free exchange of ideas, and intense debate right up to the last minute of the conference. And of course, there was no end to the discussions which continued through to the calendar of quite spectacular social events:

- A sunset cruise around Table Bay
- The banquet in the Castle, above the Dolphin Pool
- A luncheon and wine tasting overlooking the vineyards of the historic Groot Constantia wine estate.

A miniature traffic light was constructed for use by the session chair - but this was seldom used as most presenters stuck to their time allocation! All delegates received a printed copy of the proceedings and a CD containing the PowerPoint presentations of each speaker. About half of the delegates remained on for the two-day course on the Rheology and Engineering Applications of Multi-Component Materials (28–29 September 2006) presented by Profs Malkin and Chhabra.

Delegates were unanimous in pronouncing the conference a success, and so heartiest congratulations are due to the hard-working mem-

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Group Photo of the delegates to the First Conference of the Southern African Society of Rheology, (SASOR), 24–27 September, 2006, Cape Town.

bers of the organising and technical committees. The relevance of the conference and course can be gauged by the enthusiastic response from local industry, particularly by their willingness to sponsor the event: Advanced Laboratory Supplies, LASEC SA, Monitoring and Control Labora-

tories, African Explosives Limited, Anglo Platinum, and Flow Process Research Centre. Despite the success of the first SASOR conference, there remains a vast untapped industrial sector in Southern Africa, so SASOR's work is cut out for it in the years ahead. If the success of the debut conference of this new-born society is anything to go by, this society has a bright future ahead of it, and will be going places. Look out for the next exciting meeting of this new and vibrant society of rheology!

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