

# Opening Speech

27 August, 2010

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Dear friends,

I am very glad that we can continue our tradition — it is the Eighth Magnetic Stars Conference that takes place at our observatory. Our colleagues here at the observatory are already used to the fact that once in every 3–4 years in late summer we greet the researchers of stellar magnetism from all over the world.

We usually dedicate the conference to an important event. For example, in 1996 a conference was dedicated to the centennial anniversary of the discovery of the Zeeman effect, in 2003 — to the 75th anniversary of the first director of the SAO Ivan Mikheevich Kopylov, a well-known spectroscopist who has made a huge contribution to the study of magnetic CP stars. The previous conference in 2006 was devoted to the 40th anniversary of our observatory.

The organising committee decided to devote the present conference to two events: the 50th anniversary of the beginning of project work on the 6–m BTA telescope, and the 70th anniversary of a great friend of our observatory John Landstreet.

A decision to build the world’s largest 6–m telescope was taken by the USSR Government in 1960. It was perhaps the best years for science in our country: large and ambitious projects were implemented, such as the launch of the first satellite in 1957, the first manned space flight by Yuri Gagarin in 1961. The project of the largest telescope was one of them.

I shall not persist with the history of construction, I shall only ponder on what is directly connected with the topic of our conference. Half a century ago, our fellow astronomers, who at that time compiled the scientific rationale for the need to construct the 6–m telescope, among other important areas identified the study of stellar magnetism. And 15 years later, when the first observations have begun, we had already created the group called “Magnetic Stars” under the direction of Yu. V. Glagolevskij. And now already for 35 years magnetic observations of various objects are carried out at the BTA. Tremendous amounts of observational data are collected — many tens of thousands of spectra. I can only roughly estimate the magnetic CP stars — here our contribution amounts to approximately one third (1/3) (both in the number of detected magnetic stars, and the number of first constructed magnetic curves).

With great pleasure, on behalf of the organizing committee I would like to congratulate John Landstreet with his anniversary. Babcock, Preston and Landstreet are the three Mohicans of the study of stellar magnetism. John has built the Balmer line magnetometer with which he discovered magnetic fields in white dwarfs and stars with anomalous helium lines. He discovered magnetic fields in many tens of CP stars, particularly in fast rotators. Among the magnetic stars that John has detected, there are unique objects — for example, the favorite star in our Observatory — the star HD 37776. During the past 15 years, he continued his observations with the new multichannel detectors. New data, which are more complicated to interpret, requiring modeling at a higher level were obtained. John has built many models of magnetic stars, made important contributions to our knowledge of the magnetic star evolution.

On the personal level, John is a great friend of our astronomers. He has helped us a lot. His aid was especially valuable for us during the difficult epoch of the 90s, the years of political and economic transformations in Russia, when the science was practically not supported by the state. John continuously takes part in our meetings. His presence certainly enhances the status of our event. We welcome John Landstreet at our observatory, we wish him good health and many years

of fruitful and successful work.

I will not introduce all the participants of our conference now. Most of you already know each other well. I am very glad to see that there are many young astronomers present here. This means that the study of stellar magnetism has good prospects and we will obtain new knowledge in our favorite area of science.

Let me conclude my opening speech here. The organising committee will try to make your stay here as comfortable as possible. Of course, we are far from the modern urban civilization, yet it is gradually coming here — now the observatory even has an ATM installed. But we still have very clean air and pure mountain water.

I can only announce that the Eight Magnetic Star Conference at the SAO RAS is open!