

Harold Krumm

(1912–2001)

With the passing of Harold Krumm the Astronomical Society of Southern Africa has lost one of its stalwarts.

Harold joined the Society in the 1932–33 season and served it in one way or another for over fifty years. Together with W.P. Hirst and Prof R.H. Stoy, he was one of the founding editors of *MNASSA*. He was Honorary Treasurer in 1942–50, President in 1950–1951 and Honorary Secretary in 1983–1991. He received the Society's Long Service Award in 1993.

Harold Krumm was born in Cape Town on 14th July 1912, one of two sons of a German father and an English mother. He attended St George's Grammar School and later the University of Cape Town, where he obtained a B.Sc. degree in chemistry and geology.

His first job in January 1936 was as a chemist in the old Government Laboratory. Eighteen months later he was transferred to the Sea Fisheries research boat, the *Aficana I*. As part of the research team he studied the confluence of the Benguela, Agulhas and South Polar currents, taking hundreds of sea water samples from Saldanha Bay to beyond Cape Agulhas.

In 1938 he accepted a position with the Shell laboratory and in 1943 he joined the African Metal Corporation (AMCOR), now known as SAMANCOR, who extracted rock phosphate locally. Its factory was then in Bellville. Meanwhile his household circumstances changed with the death of his father in 1939. He realised that his mother was completely dependent on him and he decided to remain a bachelor. After many years of poor health, she died in 1961.

In May 1965 the factory was moved to Langebaanweg to avoid spoilage of the raw material by rain when in transit. Harold was made General Manager of the Langebaanweg installation. On 1 May 1965, before setting out for Langebaanweg, he married Sussie Naude (born Snoek), who he had known as a friend and neighbour since 1924. After the marriage they settled in Langberg, the house hidden away on the rocks along the coast - the house with the view stretching from Saldanha Bay to Churchhaven.

He was Vice-Chairman of the Cape Chamber of Commerce until he went to Langebaan, after which he became the Chairman of the country branch.

In 1943 he became a member, and in 1954 a Fellow, of the Royal Institute of Chemistry in London, and was later named as a chartered chemist. He was also between 1952 and 1965 joint Honorary General Secretary of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science with Arthur Bleksley (another former ASSA member) in the Transvaal.

On the home front, in 1967 Harold was chosen as the Chairman of the Langebaan Local Council, a position he retained until 1974 when the village changed to a municipality and he became the first Mayor of Langebaan. From then onwards, Harold was either Mayor or Deputy Mayor until 1995. On his retirement from active politics, Harold was made an Honorary Citizen of Langebaan. A library and a street there bear his name.

Harold was for many years a lay preacher in the Congregational church and was often asked to preach in the Methodist, Presbyterian and Anglican churches. He also preached on

two occasions in the NGK, Langebaan. When asked what was the secret of their evidently happy and satisfying life together, the same spontaneous answer came from Harold and Sussie: "Mutual respect and tolerance and the realisation that Christian belief is the most important aspect of a person's existence".

Harold was a member of the Owl Club in Cape Town, the Royal Society of South Africa, the SA Chemical Institute, the Ship Society, the SA Association for the Advancement of Science and the Soil Society of SA, as well as the Royal Astronomical Society and, of course, our own Society, in which he played for so many years a

prominent part. He had many hobbies: to pursue astronomy he had an observatory in his garden, he kept rainfall records for the Weather Bureau and he participated in archaeological excavations at the phosphate mine.

He was known and liked by all in Langebaan, who remember his hat and his pipe and his notorious purple Volvo.

He died on 8 February 2001. The ASSA was represented at the funeral service in the Langebaan NGK by Cliff Turk and the undersigned.

(I.S. Glass)