

## In Memoriam Stanislav Štefl

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On 11 June 2014, ALMA and ESO astronomer Stanislav (Stan) Štefl died in a car accident in Santiago. He was 58 years old.

Stan was born in Počátky (Czechoslovakia) and received his PhD from the Charles University in Prague in 1987. He then held a staff position at the Ondřejov Observatory. From 1991 to 1993, Stan worked at ESO Headquarters as a research associate and, from 2004 until 2012, he was a Very Large Telescope Interferometer (VLTI) support astronomer at Paranal Observatory. For the past year and a half, Stan had been on secondment to the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA), working in Santiago and at Chajnantor.

Stan's premier fields of research were the formation and evolution of rapidly rotating B-type stars that eject matter into a circumstellar disc. He was the first to notice and demonstrate that during the out-



bursts of Be stars their pulsational power spectrum changes. Stan initiated the integration of dynamic models of Be star discs with detailed radiative transfer calculations. He was chair of the International Astronomical Union Working Group on Active B Stars from 1999 to 2003. Throughout his career Stan kept expanding his observational expertise in an impressive way: from the ultraviolet work

of his thesis to radio wavelengths, from photometry to spectro-interferometry, from photographic plates via electronic imagers to radio receivers.

His modesty and fine Czech humour were Stan's personal trademarks. In the same unpretentious way, he served the ESO community as VLTI and ALMA support astronomer and on the organising committees of two ESO workshops and on many internal committees.

Stan was a passionate and skilled mountaineer: he climbed Aconcagua (but had to halt 200 metres below the summit on account of bad weather), Chimborazo, Kilimanjaro, and many more mountains in Chile and around the world. A few months ago, he also undertook a sailing expedition with friends to Antarctica.

Stan will be remembered as a hard-working and very cooperative colleague, as a passionate scientist, and as a man of rare human qualities. He, his wife Magdalena and their daughter Marketa were about to move to Ondřejov, where Stan was to lead the ALMA Regional Centre node, when his life ended so abruptly. Our thoughts are with them.

## Fellows at ESO

Neale Gibson

It was quite late into my undergraduate degree that I considered pursuing astronomy as a career. As a child I remember staring at pictures in astronomy books, in particular being fascinated by the gas giants in the Solar System. Whilst astronomy may have inspired my interest in science, it was many years before I realised it was something you could actually do for a living!

I grew up in Carryduff, a small town near Belfast in the north of Ireland. Throughout



Neale Gibson