Editorial in the Special Issue "Designs and Codes - A Memorial Tribute to Ed Assmus"

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Guest Editorial

On Wednesday, March 18, 1998, Ed Assmus died suddenly and entirely unexpectedly during the Oberwolfach conference on “Designs and Codes” organised by us. Only the previous afternoon, he had presented a beautiful lecture concerned with the coding theory of nets; the corresponding paper was already submitted to what was then intended to be the Proceedings of our meeting. The sad fact of Ed’s death made us change this volume into a memorial tribute. It now contains also a few contributions from colleagues who did not attend the meeting but were close to Ed. The volume begins with an obituary written by the two closest collaborators of Ed’s, namely Jenny Key and Skip Mattson. This is followed by the memorial speech delivered by Rob Calderbank on Thursday afternoon (the final event of the meeting which was cut short due to the shock and feeling of loss everybody experienced) and by Ed’s final paper which was already mentioned. After this, the contributed papers start. In fact we got such an overwhelming response to our call for papers that this volume will be followed by a second one; we are glad to be able to present such a substantial tribute to Ed’s memory.

Ed Assmus’s importance to Coding Theory, Design Theory and, in particular, the interplay of both areas cannot be overestimated, as everybody working in these areas knows. For a more detailed assessment, we refer to the memorial speech and the obituary. As editors of Designs, Codes and Cryptography, we would also like to stress the great service that Ed has done to this journal as a very active and diligent member of the editorial board; he is simply irreplaceable. On a personal level, we and many colleagues have lost an esteemed and beloved friend who combined outstanding scientific achievements with a personal modesty and an easy-going, friendly personality which makes him all the more missed. It is some consolation that he died at a place he loved very much, indeed, enjoying the full possession of his powers and surrounded by many of his friends

Dieter Jungnickel
Jack van Lint

Edward F. Assmus, Jr. (1931–1998)