Contributor Profiles: K.R.S. Sastry

Shankaranarayana Sastry grew up in a joint family environment in Dodballapur in the state of Karnataka, India. His uncle wanted him to become an astrologer partly because their ancestors were members of the *Panchanga* committee. This membership was by invitation of the palace of the (then) Maharaja of Mysore. The duties of members included the preparation of *Panchanga*, the Hindu calendar of sacred events, which contains the daily descriptions of positions of the heavenly objects for the following year. In addition they were expected to predict their likely effects on India in general and the (then) Kingdom of Mysore in particular, and to suggest possible precautions and remedies.

His father, a teacher of languages, wanted him to become a Sanskrit Scholar, which (incidentally) is a necessary condition to be a worthy successor to his forefathers. However, Sastry was not interested in either of these professions. Intuitively, he felt that his interests lay elsewhere. He went on to earn his B.Sc. (Hons.) and M.Sc. degrees in mathematics from the University of Mysore.

From his school days, Sastry was interested in mathematics. The reason for this interest, strangely enough, was not to acquire more mathematical knowledge for himself, but rather to assist his weaker classmates (without compensation—a family tradition).

He taught mathematics in India for some time, and thereafter mostly in Ethiopia. If a student approached him with a mathematical problem, he used to "force" its solution from the student's mind. The Ethiopian government selected him teacher of the year for 1971, and that provided him with an opportunity to meet with the late Emperor Haile Selassie. Whenever he identified a mathematically talented student, he encouraged the student to solve a problem in more than one way. He believes that $n+1$ solutions of a problem are better than n solutions, because each solution illuminates a different aspect of the problem. He has demonstrated this truth on a number of occasions—in recent years, by presenting a number of descriptions of Heron triangles and Brahmagupta quadrilaterals.

On a lighter note, a former Editor-in-Chief of ***Crux Mathematicorum***, Bill Sands, tells how the Ethiopians used to relate Sastry's mother tongue *Kannada* to CRUX's motherland *Canada* [1995 : 305].

Sastry is now retired and resides in a home for seniors in Bangalore, India. In this issue, Sastry has supplied us with a new problem in the Problems Section, #3101, and a new Mayhem problem, M228. In adition, solutions to two of his proposals to Mayhem are solved in this issue.