

My first visit to Germany

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My first visit to Germany was in 1992. It was for three months as a Visiting Mathematician at University of Kaiserslautern. Professor Schock (Prof. Eberhard Schock) came to Frankfurt to pick me up, driving all the way from Kaiserslauern, about 120 kilometers.

Although my academic communications with Prof. Schock started about 5 years earlier, it was in December 1990 that I first met him. We had organized an International Conference at Goa University, and he was an invited speaker on my invitation. He found that I have started working in a new area of "Inverse and ill-posed problems", and suggested me to read recent papers by him, Engl and others. Also he expressed his wish to invite me to his University for a few months. Thus, the visit was the fructification of that wish.

Professor Schock had told me that I would be living in the International Guest House of the University. However, he found that the room was not available for a week. He could have very well asked me to stay in a hotel, as that was the usual practice. But, he preferred to accommodate me in his own home at Tripstadt, about 20 km from the University. He showed me the kitchen, and also showed me the places where tea, sugar, milk etc. were kept so that I can make tea in his absence. Also, he taught me how to boil eggs using electric egg boiler. I too prepared tea in Indian style and I served him (Mrs. Schock was out of station for a few weeks).

After a week, I shifted to the guest house. I used to have my lunch from the University restaurant, breakfast and dinner from the room itself - there was cooking facility in the room. Knowing that I was a vegetarian (no meat), he used to invite me to his home atleast two days per week (specially on those days when he bought fresh vegetables from the market) and served delicious vegetarian food.

Our academic and personnel interaction continued I visited

Kaiserslautern three more times. In 2003, my family (Sunita, Priya and Sneha) also accompanied me. That time too, he picked us from Frankfurt. He took us many time to his home, and also to many places - for sightseeing.

My personal interaction continues even today after many years of his retirement from the University. The attached photo is on the occasion of his Golden Wedding Anniversary.

With wife Friedborg and three children (Klaus, Thomas and Katherine), Professor Eberhard Schock is a real happy family man - even at the age of 75.

I wish him all the best for many more years of happy and healthy life.