

## IAU TRANSITS OF VENUS WORKING GROUP. TRIENNIAL REPORT (2003–2006)

Since the last General Assembly the Transit of Venus Working Group has published Progress Reports # 3 and # 4 in the *Journal of Astronomical History and Heritage*, Volume 7 (June, 2004), pp. 50-52, and Volume 8 (June, 2005), pp. 70-71. Reports # 1 and # 2 were published in the same journal, Volume 5 (December, 2002), pp. 185-188 and Volume 6 (June, 2003), p. 64. Readers are referred to these publications for details of the activities of the Working Group.

The most important event since the last General Assembly was the occurrence of the transit itself on 8 June 2004. Gordon Bromage and D.W. Kurtz organized IAU Colloquium 196 centered around this event. The meeting was held at the University of Central Lancashire, Preston, UK, near the site where Jeremiah Horrocks first observed a transit of Venus in 1639. To the delight of all present, on the day of the rare event almost the entire transit was observed from the tiny Lancashire village of Much Hoole, where Horrocks lived, and several other locations. Members of Commission 41 who presented historical papers

included Allan Chapman, Suzanne Débarbat, Wayne Orchiston, Luisa Pigatto, Steven Dick, Brian Warner and Mary T. Brück. There was also an excellent set of scientific papers. The Proceedings were published as *Transits of Venus: New Views of the Solar System and Galaxy*, ed. D W. Kurtz (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Historical markers continue to be erected to commemorate sites where transit of Venus observations were made. In addition to those listed in WG Report # 3, among the latest are two markers in San Antonio, Texas, one at Bullis House Inn commemorating the Belgian transit expedition, and another at Fort Sam Houston commemorating the American transit of Venus expedition, both in 1882.

The Transit of Venus Working Group is organizing reports on the transit of Venus observations at the Prague General Assembly in 2006.

**Steven J. Dick (Chairman)**