

IAU ARCHIVES WORKING GROUP. TRIENNIAL REPORT (2003–2006)

1 Introduction

The Organizing Committee of the Working Group 2003–2006 consisted of the following members: Brenda Corbin (USA: Chair), Ileana Chinnici (Italy), Suzanne Débarbat (France), Wolfgang R. Dick (Germany), Daniel Green (USA), Wayne Orchiston (Australia) and Adam Perkins (UK).

2 The Years 2003–2005

Earlier reports on the WG's activities appeared in the *Journal of Astronomical History and Heritage*, Volume 7 No. 1 (June 2004), pages 61–63, and in the *ICHA Newsletter*, No. 8 (April 2006) as Section H on pp. 15–16.

An important event in 2005 for the Archives WG was the publication of the excellent collection of papers in *Astronomical Heritages*. The editors, Christiaan Sterken and Hilmar Duerbeck, state in the preface: "These Proceedings contain a selection of presentations and research papers emanating from the meetings of the *Astronomical Archives and Transits of Venus* Working Groups of Commission 41, and from presentations at the last three IAU General Assemblies. Some additional reports related to the topic of this book have also been added." There are 18 papers, 13 relating to archives and 5 on the transits of Venus. Originally published in *The Journal of Astronomical Data*, Vol. 10 Pt. 7 (2004), the papers were reprinted in book form in 2005 (ISBN 9080553867). The WG expresses deep appreciation to the editors for making these papers more widely available via the Journal issue and the book. It is hoped that *Astronomical Heritages* will become a part of every astronomical library's collection. For availability of this volume please contact C. Sterken (csterken@vub.ac.be). Following is a listing of the published papers.

Part I: IAU Archives Meetings:

- Ansari, S.M. Razaullah, "Astronomical archives in India"
Corbin, B.G., "Archives at the U.S. Naval Observatory – recent projects"
Débarbat, S. and Bobis, L., "The French Astronomical Archives Alidade Project"
Dick, W.R., "Documents related to astronomy in German archives"
Herrmann, D.B., "The Sound Archive of Archenhold Observatory – an overview"
Moran, K. and Brück, M.T., "The Crawford Collection at the Royal Observatory Edinburgh"
Nakamura, T., "The Japanese Astronomical Archives Project"
Orchiston, W., "An introduction to the astronomical archives of Australia and New Zealand"
Orchiston, W., "Highlighting the history of nineteenth century Australian astronomy: The Tebbutt Collection in the Mitchell Library, Sydney"
Pigatto, L. Salmaso, M., and Zanini, V., "The Lorenzoni-Tacchini correspondence at Padova Observatory Archives – the "true" history of Italian astronomy of the second half of the nineteenth century"
Simonia, I., "Old Georgian astronomical manuscripts"
Stavinschi, M., and Mioc, V., "Storing astronomical information on the Romanian territory"
Wilkins, G.A., "The archives of the Norman Lockyer Observatory"

Part II: Historical Venus Transits:

- Botez, E., "Maximilian Hell and the northernmost transit of Venus expedition of 1769"
Kopper, M., "Austria's contributions to the observation of the 1874 transit of Venus"
Misch, A., and Sheehan, W., "A remarkable series of plates of the 1882 transit of Venus"
Orchiston, W., "The nineteenth century transits of Venus: an Australian and New Zealand overview"
Sterken, C., Duerbeck, H.W., Cuypers, J., and Langenaken, H., "Jean-Charles Houzeau and the 1882 Belgian transit expeditions"

3 The Years 2005–2006:

Much of the WG's activities involved planning for the WG Archives sessions at the IAU General Assembly in Prague, August 2006. Two sessions of oral papers were presented, several poster papers were shown, and a business meeting was held. Both oral sessions were well-attended, and a lively question and comment period followed each paper as time allowed.

The full abstracts of all papers in each session can be seen in the program of the Commission's activities at the XXVIth IAU General Assembly in Prague (PDF format) at the following link: <http://www.le.ac.uk/has/c41/>

We are grateful to Professor Clive Ruggles for his careful preparation of the Program Booklet which was made available to all IAU GA participants.

The meeting featured two keynote papers:

- "Historical archives in Italian astronomical observatories: the "Specola 2000" Project" by Ileana Chinnici, (INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Palermo G.S. Vaiana), Agnese Mandrino (INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera), and Fabrizio Bönoli (Università di Bologna, Dipartimento di Astronomia). This paper has been published in the *Journal of Astronomical History and Heritage* (Vol. 9, Pt. 2, pp. 200–202, 2006).
"A case of archival theft: the retrieval of the Greenwich Observatory Neptune Papers" by Adam J. Perkins (Curator of Scientific Manuscripts, Department of Manuscripts and University Archives, University Library, West Road, Cambridge CB3 9DR, United Kingdom). This paper will appear in the *Journal for the History of Astronomy*.

4 Prague GA Business Meeting

At the business meeting in Prague, Dr Ileana Chinnici was selected as Chair for the next triennium. Dr Wolfgang Dick indicated that he was not able to serve for another term and the WG thanked him for his many contributions to the WG and to C41 in general. The WG welcomed Dr Irakli Simonia to the WG Committee for the next triennium. The members for 2006–2009 are: Ileana Chinnici (Italy: Chair), Brenda Corbin (USA), Suzanne Débarbat (France), Daniel Green (USA), Wayne Orchiston (Australia), Adam Perkins (UK), and Irakli Simonia (Georgia). The Chair wishes to thank all WG members for their contributions and cooperation during 2003–2006.

Brenda G. Corbin, Chair, 2003–2006