

Heritage Committee: Report to the CASCA Board June 2007

Submitted 2007/05/29 by: Randall C. Brooks, Chair

Heritage Committee Members:

Chair: Randall Brooks (2006-09) Canada Science and Technology Museum
Members: Vic Gaizauskas (2004-07) HIA/NRC
Elizabeth Griffin (2006-09) HIA/NRC
Richard Jarrell (2005-08) York University
Nathalie Martimbeau (2004-07) Harvard University
David Turner (2006-09) Saint Mary's University

Committee Membership:

Nathalie Martimbau and Vic Gaizauskas have agreed, subject to the Board's approval, to continue for another 3-year term, i.e. 2007 to 2010.

Video Taped Interviews:

Two years ago we reported that 3 NRC astronomers had been recorded on video. Those were subsequently digitized courtesy of the Canada Science & Technology Museum and are now held in the Museum's Archives and are available for use. Copyright is shared between CASCA and CSTM.

Continuing this project, Paul Feldman has been instrumental in organizing 3 more interviews to take place during the Kingston Conference. Bob Garrison, René Racine and Amelia Wehlau all readily agreed. We are also planning to interview Bryan Andrew In Ottawa on June 5th.

Archival Resources Project:

In keeping with the CASCA Board's previous directions to the Heritage Committee, an archival resources page is being developed. In addition to the information in the Committee Chair's files, Richard Jarrell had provided info on archival files on Cdn astronomers and their locations. Larry MacNally at the Library & Archives Canada has also provided a list of individuals whose files are preserved there and he has provided a link to assist in identifying resources elsewhere in Canada though I've not had an opportunity to follow that up yet.

Activities by Committee Members:

Not all activity is organized by the Committee as the following note testify.

Elizabeth Griffin give an invited talk last June at the AAS in Calgary, as part of the "Women in Astronomy in Canada" session. "An astronomer had to be deceased to be included, and I could only come up with three notables - Alice Vibert Douglas, Helen Sawyer Hogg and Anne Underhill (I had known the latter a little, and could produce

some anecdotes that were new to the audience). Interestingly, when I was preparing the talk I realised that while all three had come up against discrimination of some kind, it was of a different nature for each."

Elizabeth reports that the DAO is a little closer towards establishing a laboratory that will eventually bring Canada's historic spectra on-line. She also says "And I'm proud to announce that the DAO plate archive is going to be properly sorted over the next year."

A committee member also had an exchange of e-mails with a teacher in Kaslo, BC about the history of astronomy in Canada and the Chair has responded to a small number of queries.

Heritage Web Site:

Thanks to Ros Haynes, the Heritage Resources web pages have been expanded. One project was to replace the PDFs on our web page with ones that are text readable so search engines can find them. New PDFs (Fr. & Eng.) were added for: W.E. Harper's 1917 report on the opening of DAO, and the report authored by Ian Halliday, Georges Michaud, and David Routledge on Astronomy in the 1980s. They join the report in the QE II Observatory and the so-called Rose Report that were also rescanned. A 1923 publication by JJ Plaskett is also ready to go up though the description first requires translation. The original document is in English. A link has added to the list of Obituaries for Don MacRae.

We have concern that historical resources are buried under the Committee Reports resulting in their being under utilized. We are open to suggestions on how that might be rectified.

IYA and Heritage Sessions at CASCA 2009

With 2009 as the International Year of Astronomy, the Heritage Committee wishes to propose a 1/2 - 1 day of historical sessions at the CASCA meeting along with a major speaker for a public talk. We have not determined a format but the sessions may serve as an update to the RASCs 1967 effort which was published as a series of reports in an expanded issue of the JRASC. If the Board were to accept this proposal, then we will proceed to identify possible keynote speakers and develop a Call of Papers to be included with the general Call for Papers for the conference. We are also requesting financial assistance to cover the costs of the keynote speaker.

Appendix: Publications related to the History of Astronomy in Canada or written by Canadians

Anthony Barrett, Johann Bayer and the Relative Magnitudes of α and β Geminorum, JRASC, 100 (2006), pp.156-159.

Martin Beech, "The Cometarium by John Taylor", *Bulletin of the Scientific Instrument Society*, #88 (2006) pp.28-32.

Leo Enright, John A. Brashear and SL Phoebe: The Kingston Connection, *JRASC*, 101 (2007), pp. 63-68.

Mac Evans, The Canadian Space Programme - Past, Present and Future - A History of the development of space policy in Canada. Proceedings of the Concluding Workshop The Extended ESA History Project (ESA SP-609). 13-14 April, 2005, ESA Headquarters, Paris France. Editors: B. Battrick, L. Conroy., p.133, Sept. 2005.

Jean-Philippe Fontanille, Is the Famous Nova of Hipparchus (134 BC) Depicted on a Judaeon Coin?, *JRASC*, 101 (2007), pp. 11-13.

Michele T. Mazzucato, Giovanni Virginio Schiaparelli, *JRASC*, 100 (2006) 114-117.

Philip Mozel, The Woodstock College Observatory - II, *JRASC*, 100 (2006), pp. 123-124.

Wayne Orchiston, James Cook's 1769 transit of Venus expedition to Tahiti, *Transits of Venus: New Views of the Solar System and Galaxy*, Proceedings of IAU Colloquium #196, held 7-11 June, 2004 in Preston, U.K.. Edited by D.W. Kurtz. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.52-66.

E.R. Seaquist, Donald Alexander MacRae B.A., A.M., Ph.D., F.R.S.C. (1916-2006), *Cassiopeia, Winter Solstice* (2006),
www.casca.ca/ecass/issues/2006-ws/features/mcrae/mcrae.htm