

Heritage committee

November, 2008

The current members of the Committee are:

Randall Brooks, (2006-09) Canada Science and Technology Museum

Vic Gaizauskas (2007-10) HIA/NRC

Elizabeth Griffin (2006-09) HIA/NRC

Richard Jarrell (2008-11) York University

Nathalie Martimbeau (2007-10) Harvard University

David Turner (2006-09) Saint Mary's University

3 members, including the chair are due to be renewed or replaced at the Board's meeting in Toronto and a slate will be proposed before that meeting for confirmation.

Since we last reported last May, the Heritage Committee held a well attended Heritage session at the Victoria conference which focused on the history of DAO and some of their astronomical and technical achievements. Highlights were the appearances of Harvey Richardson and, given his unfortunate passing shortly after, Graham Odgers. I'm sure most of you also saw the series of papers in the JRASC based, for the most part, on our session in Victoria. I would really like to acknowledge the very hard work of Heritage Comm. member Elizabeth Griffin and Paul Feldman to organize the session and Elizabeth's subsequent efforts to edit and ensure the manuscripts got to the JRASC's editor.

Vic Gaizauskas' paper on DDO in e-Cassiopeia was a great firsthand account of his years there and working with the many people that studied and worked there and in the U of T's Astronomy Dept. Obviously there has been impassioned discussion over the closure of DDO and efforts to ensure its future as some sort of astronomical and/or educational facility. I can report that, in my curatorial role at the CSTM, I have been involved with the preservation of some of the observational equipment from the DDO. The chosen artefacts were chosen to reflect the work of the Observatory and its staff from the 1950s to recent years.

Last year the Heritage Comm. had proposed a Heritage session at the upcoming Toronto conference to be focused on the DDO. However, we feel this is now not the best time to go forward with a session focused on DDO. The Board's opinion on whether a general heritage session should be organized would be appreciated.

Randall Brooks

Chair, Heritage Committee