

AAS HISTORICAL ASTRONOMY DIVISION
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2015

Marc Rothenberg, Chair

Membership

HAD had 296 active members (including 26 affiliate members) at the end of the 2015 calendar year. Of that total, 83 had emeritus status and 8 were Junior members. We have one AAS Patron (Irene Osterbrock).

Officers

The officers for 2015 were Marc Rothenberg (National Science Foundation), Chair; Patrick Seitzer (University of Michigan), Vice Chair; and Jay Holberg (University of Arizona), Secretary-Treasurer. The HAD Committee members-at-large were Brenda Corbin (U.S. Naval Observatory) and Linda French (Illinois Wesleyan University). Jay Pasachoff (Williams College) served on the committee as Past Chair.

Finances

As of 2015 December 31, balances for the three HAD accounts were as follows:

General Account: \$17,553.73

Leroy E. Doggett Prize Fund: \$34,767.75

Donald E. Osterbrock Book Prize Fund: \$21,121.44

Meetings

At the January AAS meeting in Seattle there were two special sessions (*Astronomy and the First World War* and *Ideas of Evolution Inside and Outside of Astronomy During the Long 19th Century*, and), two regular HAD sessions, and one poster session. The two special sessions comprised a total of ten oral presentations, while there were eleven (including Barbara Becker's Osterbrock Prize talk) in the two regular sessions. There was just a single contribution in the poster session.

David DeVorkin organized a panel discussion, *Preserving the Material Legacy of the American Observatory Movement*, in which panelists from four of the great observatories founded over a century ago (Lick, Lowell, Mt. Wilson, and Yerkes) described efforts to maintain the historical relevance of their institutions, followed by lively discussion. Joe Tenn conducted a brief meeting of individuals interested in the AstroGen project, which now has over 5500 entries.

At the HAD business meeting the new HAD Committee was installed. On Monday evening members enjoyed the eight annual HAD Minibanquet at a local restaurant.

In January 2016 the Historical Astronomy Division will meet in Kissimmee, Florida in conjunction with the 227th meeting of the American Astronomical Society. In addition, a HAD session is planned for the October meeting of the Division of Planetary Sciences in October.

Publications

The newsletter of the Historical Astronomy Division, *HAD News*, is ordinarily published online in April and October of each year. Circumstances prevented publication of an April issue in 2015, but the October 2015 issue (#86) was prepared under the supervision of Division thanks to the efforts of Division Chair Marc Rothenberg.

Prizes

HAD has two endowed prizes. The Leroy E. Doggett Prize is given in even years to recognize lifetime achievement. The Donald E. Osterbrock Book Prize, given in odd years, recognizes the best book published in the history of astronomy during a three-year period. The recipient of the 2015 Osterbrock Prize was Barbara J. Becker, for *Unravelling Starlight: William and Margaret Huggins and the Rise of the New Astronomy* (Cambridge University Press, 2011). The HAD Prize Committee has selected Albert Van Helden as the tenth recipient of the LeRoy E. Doggett Prize for Historical Astronomy; he will be recognized at the January 2016 AAS meeting.

Obituary Committee

The Historical Astronomy Division is responsible for the preparation of memorials to deceased members of the American Astronomical Society. Recently member deaths are promulgated on the AAS electronic newsletter. Obituaries are available on the HAD website and are deposited in the archives of the American Institute of Physics. For further information, please see the report of the Obituary Committee, supervised by HAD Vice Chair Patrick Seitzer.

AstroGen

Although the Astronomy Genealogy Project, spearheaded by Joseph Tenn, is not an official activity of HAD, it is an effort which HAD believes is quite valuable. AstroGen will list as many as possible of the world's astronomers with their academic parents (thesis advisors); currently there are over 5500 entries..

Submitted 2016 April 29 by Marc Rothenberg, Chair, AAS Historical Astronomy Division
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