



# H·A·D NEWS

*The Newsletter of the Historical Astronomy Division  
of the American Astronomical Society*

Number 64    ❧    June 2003

## Michael Hoskin

### **Selected to Receive the 2004 LeRoy E. Doggett Prize for Historical Astronomy**

The Historical Astronomy Division of the American Astronomical Society is pleased to announce that Michael Hoskin has been awarded the Fourth LeRoy E. Doggett Prize for Historical Astronomy. The award of the Prize was for his distinguished career and publication record that has significantly influenced the field of the history of astronomy.

With this award, the AAS has invited Michael to give the Doggett Prize Lecture at a plenary session at the AAS meeting in Atlanta, and it has been provisionally scheduled for the morning of Monday, January 5, 2004. For his Lecture, he will speak about "The REAL Caroline Herschel."

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## The Chair's Corner

Tom Williams (trw@rice.edu)

Plans are under way for our annual meeting in Atlanta, Georgia (4–5 January 2004). In addition to a session of invited papers broadly centered on Transits of Venus, there will be the usual session of submitted papers and a business meeting. However, the highlight of the meeting will no doubt be the presentation of the Fourth LeRoy E. Doggett Prize and the Doggett Prize Address. As you know, the Doggett Prize Committee, chaired by past HAD chair Barbara Welther, selected Dr. Michael Hoskin of Cambridge University as the winner of this prize. In accepting the award, Dr. Hoskin expressed not only his great appreciation of the honor, acknowledging the high professional standing of previous winners (Curtis Wilson, Owen Gingerich, and Donald Osterbrock) but also noted the fact that this award, the only such award in our field of the history of astronomy, had truly achieved international status. Dr. Hoskin's Doggett address will be presented to a plenary session of the entire society as an invited paper, a signal honor to both Dr. Hoskin and to HAD. The time of the presentation has not yet been settled; it will be in the morning of either Monday 5 January or of Tuesday 6 January 2004. Therefore, as you make your preliminary plans to attend the meeting in Atlanta, we hope you will provide for the flexibility to remain in the meeting until after the Doggett award and address.

It appears from our membership poll that there is sufficient interest in a joint HAD meeting with the AAS Division of Planetary Science in Cambridge, UK in September 2005 to proceed with plans for such a meeting. Liaison with the DPS Organizing Committee has been established by HAD Committee member Alan Hirshfeld. He and HAD Committee member John Briggs have agreed to act as our organizing committee. They will lay out a schedule for paper sessions and for tours of historically important astronomical sites in the Cambridge area. We will keep you apprised of these plans as they progress, but in the meantime we hope that you will begin to budget both the time and the money required to attend such meeting.

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The Chair's Corner (continued from Page 1)

In a separate article in this issue of the HAD Newsletter, we describe needed revisions to the HAD By Laws which have been reflected in proposed amendments upon which the HAD membership has been asked to vote. I hope each of you will consider these amendments and vote on the matter with the ballot provided. While the changes may seem for the most part unimportant, your HAD committee feels that they are needed and requests your support in reviewing and approving these amendments.

Michael Hoskin (continued from Page 1)

As a leading expert on William Herschel, Hoskin has written broadly on the Herschel family and its achievements. Last spring he published his latest contribution, *The Herschel Partnership: As Viewed by Caroline*. This work, which contains a wide variety of previously untapped archival material, will be the definitive source for Caroline Herschel's biography for many years to come. In a separate volume Hoskin has also edited the two autobiographies that Caroline wrote at different times of her life.

His other recent books demonstrate his broad perspectives in the field. They include *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Astronomy* (1997), *The Cambridge Concise History of Astronomy* (1999), and *Tombs, Temples and Orientations: A new perspective on Mediterranean Prehistory* (2001). The last volume, which summarizes many seasons of fieldwork around the Mediterranean basin, is a significant and original contribution to archaeoastronomy.

Hoskin has long been renowned for both his scholarship and the high standards he has maintained in editing and publishing. In 1970 he founded the *Journal for the History of Astronomy* and has since served as its editor. The *Journal*, which is now in its 34th year, has helped to define the field of historical astronomy and give it a central focus. It was primarily for his lifetime work on *JHA* that he was honored in 2001, when Minor Planet (12223) Hoskin was named after him.

Since 1969 Hoskin has been a Fellow at Churchill College, Cambridge. When he learned that he was to be the fourth recipient of the Doggett Prize, he wrote: "The Prize is indeed a very great honour, and although it is the result of the initiative of the historians of a particular country, it is as yet the only prize in our field and this award to a non-American raises it to international status. I am very grateful to you and your colleagues for this compliment which will provide a highlight to my career."

His lecture will be preceded by the presentation to him of The LeRoy E. Doggett Prize for Historical Astronomy.

(Almost all of the preceding material was prepared by Barbara Welther, PastChair of the HAD)

Donations needed for LeRoy Doggett Prize Endowment Fund

The original gift to the LeRoy E. Doggett Prize Endowment has grown slowly over the six years since it was given. Small member donations have helped in that regard, but conservative investment of the funds has not provided the growth that might have been expected. Each time the Doggett prize has been awarded, the Doggett Prize Committee and the HAD Committee have been forced to consider withdrawal of the principal in order to support the prize and travel expenses for the winner, or alternatively to take the necessary funds from the HAD fund instead. The necessity for this choice is unfortunate, but it can only be cured by modest growth in the endowment.

HAD members are therefore encouraged to make a donation to the LeRoy E. Doggett Prize Endowment Fund. An anonymous donor has offered to match gifts to the Endowment between now and January 1, 2004. Thus, your donation will be worth twice what it costs you, and in addition you will be eligible for a tax deduction.

Please consider making your donation at an early date. Checks should be made payable to the AAS LeRoy E. Doggett Endowment and mailed to:

HAD Secretary/Treasurer Ronald Brashear
c/o Smithsonian Institution Dibner Library
PO Box 37012
MRC672, NMAH1041
Washington DC, 20013-0712

Future HAD Meetings

Mark your calendars for the following HAD meetings, and consider not only participating by attending, but also submitting papers:

January 4-5, 2004—Atlanta, Georgia

The Transits of Venus has been selected as a historical theme for this meeting.

January 9-10, 2005—San Diego, California

The theme in this meeting will be related to the Centennial of the Carnegie Institution of Washington's establishment of the Mount Wilson Observatory. The meeting will also mark the 25th anniversary of HAD.

September 6-10, 2005—Cambridge, England

A joint meeting with the AAS Division of Planetary Sciences is being planned.

## Proposed HAD By-Laws Amendments

At the HAD Business Meeting in Seattle, a brief discussion of the HAD By-Laws revealed the possible need to amend that document. The need for amendment was first surfaced by a request from the AAS Publications Office that HAD revise its election procedure so that new officers for HAD chosen in each election could be recorded properly in the AAS Annual Directory. With our current election process, the AAS Directory is incorrect at least half the time. The publication schedule for the Directory is such that HAD election results must be provided to the AAS Directory editor on or before 1 August in election years.

In the course of the Seattle discussion, it was suggested that if an amendment was to be considered for election purposes, we should also tidy up the by-laws on gender references. Finally, it was mentioned that other AAS divisions have found it necessary to add a provision to their by-laws allowing temporary suspension of specific sections of the by laws under specific circumstances and with specific limitations. After the meeting, it also came to light that other divisions have found it useful to adopt slightly more flexible nominating procedures for their elections. Our current nominating committee (Barbara Welther, Barbara Becker, and Peter Boyce) recommended that this revised procedure be adopted by HAD.

It was agreed at the Seattle meeting that the HAD Committee would undertake the preparation of the necessary amendments and bring a proposal to the general membership of HAD for approval. The amended by-laws were prepared and, as required within those by-laws, presented to the AAS Council at their meeting in Nashville, Tennessee on 7 June 2003. The AAS Council agreed that the HAD committee should submit the by-laws amendments to the HAD general membership for approval.

In this HAD Newsletter are 1) a summary of the changes to the HAD By-Laws, and 2) a ballot on which you are asked to vote for or against the amendments that are embodied in the additions, deletions, and changes to those by-laws. The purpose of this article is to summarize, as succinctly as possible, the nature of the amendments that are hereby proposed.

1. We wish to modify our election procedure in two ways:
  - a. By moving the entire election process to dates five months earlier than provided for in the existing by laws to allow completion of our election process in time to meet the publication calendar for each year's AAS Directory.
  - b. By adopting a revised nominating process such that the general membership has an opportunity to nominate candidates for each open position in each election, but also to permit the Nominating Committee to nominate only one candidate for each open position. This procedure has been adopted successfully by at least one other AAS division (HEAD) and they have found it quite acceptable and workable.
2. We wish to de-gender the language in our By-Laws and by removing gendered titles such as Chairman and replacing them with gender neutral titles such as Chair.
3. We wish to add a provision for temporary suspension of a limited section of the By-Laws when necessary for the conduct

of business between regular meetings of the Division. The language proposed in Article IX Paragraph 4 is essentially that already approved for at least one other AAS Division (DPS). The suspension clause is a simple way to authorize the Committee to deal with inadvertent or unforeseen situations as they arise. One example we might cite of such a situation is that the Secretary is prohibited by the current by-laws from notifying successful candidates in an election far enough ahead of time so they can arrange to be in the next meeting to assume their responsibilities. That problem will be eliminated if the elections process is amended as proposed.

4. We wish to regularize a few minor inconsistencies in references to meetings, as business meetings, regular business meetings and regular meetings, etc.

For your convenience, a copy in MS-Word format of the revised by-laws tracking all of the proposed changes is available on the HAD web site. However, rather than simply vote the by-laws amendments up or down in toto, we feel it is more reasonable to vote on each specific type of amendments being proposed. Therefore, you will be asked to vote yes or no for each of the specific changes outlined above.

The HAD Committee believes these changes are necessary and will, taken as a whole, improve the smooth functioning of the division while maintaining appropriate relations with other the AAS. Please mark your ballots at an early date and return them to the HAD Secretary/Treasurer, Ron Brashear, at your earliest convenience. We look forward to a high level of participation in this election and hope each of you will participate.

### BY-LAWS OF THE HISTORICAL ASTRONOMY DIVISION, American Astronomical Society

#### Proposed Revisions 2003

Article I - Name and Purpose [No Changes]

Article II – Membership [No Changes]

Article III - Officers and Committee of the Division [In addition to "Chairman" to Chair" and "Annual Meeting" to "Regular Meeting":]

[Rewording:] 5. Nominating Subcommittee. - The Nominating Subcommittee submits nominations for officers and members of the Committee in accordance with paragraph 6b. of this Article. The Chair of the Division shall, with the advice and consent of the Committee, appoint a Chair and two members of this nominating committee to serve until the next regular election. The Past Chair of the Division, when available, shall normally be Chair of the Nominating Committee. No more than one member of the Nominating Committee shall be a member of either the old or the new Committee of the Division.

[Substantial Changes:] 6. Election of Officers and Committee Members. - The Officers and Committee members, excepting the Secretary-Treasurer, shall be elected by ballot in the following manner:

- a. Not later than twelve months before the Regular Meeting of the Division at which an election must be conducted, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Division shall invite all members of the Division to propose via written reply, candidates for officers and committee members for the following

term. Any member of the Division proposed as a candidate for a position on the Committee by not fewer than ten (10) members of the Division at least ten months before the Regular Meeting shall be deemed to be nominated to the position, provided the nominee has stated to the Secretary-Treasurer a willingness to serve if elected.

b. Not later than ten months before the Regular Meeting, the Nominating Committee shall submit to the Committee nominations of at least one candidate for each vacancy for an officer, and at least one for each vacancy for a committee member. It shall be the duty of the Nominating Committee to obtain from each nominee a written statement indicating a willingness to serve if elected and a brief biography, and to provide these to the Secretary-Treasurer.

c. The Secretary-Treasurer of the Division shall prepare a ballot containing the names of all candidates nominated according to Paragraphs 6a. and 6b. of this Article, together with a brief biography or statement by each candidate. The Secretary-Treasurer shall distribute these ballots to all members of the Division not later than seven months before the Regular Meeting. A member shall cast not more than one vote for each position of the Committee to be filled, and shall return the ballot in a sealed and signed envelope to the Secretary-Treasurer. Alternatively, a member may post a ballot by electronic mail to the Secretary-Treasurer. An electronic mail ballot must originate from the member's electronic mail address as it is maintained in the Secretary-Treasurer's membership list. To be valid, the ballot must be received not later than five months before the Regular Meeting. The Secretary-Treasurer shall count the votes and submit the tally to the Chair. Election shall be by a plurality of those voting, except that the two nominees receiving the largest number of votes for Committee Member shall be declared elected. The secretary shall inform the candidates and members of the Committee of the results no later than four months before the start of the Regular Meeting. In case of a tie, the Members present at the Regular Meeting shall choose by ballot among the tied candidates.

Article IV - Duties of Officers and Members of the Committee [No Changes except for "Chairman" to Chair" and "Annual Meeting" to "Regular Meeting"]

Article V - Meetings of the Committee [No Changes except for "Chairman" to Chair"]

Article VI – Finance [No Changes except for "Annual Meeting" to "Regular Meeting"]

Article VII - Meetings of the Division [No Changes except for "Annual Business Meeting" to "Regular Business Meeting"]

Article VIII – Programs  
[Rewording] 2. Abstracts. - The Committee of the Division shall require that abstracts for all papers, except for invited lectures, intended for presentation at a meeting of the Division be submitted in accordance the requirements of the Society.

Article IX – Amendments  
[New amendment:] 4. Temporary Suspension. Individual articles of these By Laws may be suspended until the next Regular Meeting of the Division by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members of the Committee, subject to the quorum requirement as defined in Article V.3. Any such suspension shall be reported to, and affirmed by, the membership at the next Regular Meeting.

## BALLOT

### On Proposed Changes to the HAD Bylaws

**The following resolutions, to be voted upon by all HAD members, summarize those discussed on pages 3 and 4 of this newsletter. The entire draft of the revised by-laws can be found on the HAD website, along with the text of the original bylaws.**

a. Resolved, to modify the HAD By Laws in Article III Paragraph 6, by moving the entire election process to dates five months earlier than provided for in the existing by laws.

**Approve      Disapprove**

b. Resolved, to modify the HAD By Laws by adopting a revised nominating process in Article III, Paragraphs 6a and 6b, such that the general membership has an opportunity to nominate candidates for each open position in each election, but also to permit the Nominating Committee to nominate only one candidate for each open position.

**Approve      Disapprove**

c. Resolved, to modify the HAD By Laws by adopting a revised balloting procedure in Article III, Paragraph 6c to permit voting by e-mail as well as by paper ballots delivered by regular postal service.

**Approve      Disapprove**

d. Resolved, to modify the HAD By Laws by de-gendering the language and by removing gendered titles such as Chairman and replacing them with gender neutral titles such as Chair throughout the document.

**Approve      Disapprove**

e. Resolved, to modify the HAD By Laws by adding, as Article IX Section 4, a provision for temporary suspension of a limited section of the By Laws when necessary for the conduct of business between regular meetings of the Division.

**Approve      Disapprove**

f. Resolved, to modify the HAD By Laws by regularizing a few minor inconsistencies in references to meetings, as business meetings, regular business meetings and regular meetings throughout the document and revise the program abstract requirements to coincide with current AAS procedures.

**Approve      Disapprove**

To vote please do so by utilizing only one of the following procedures:

- (1) Mark this ballot by circling your choices and send it (or a copy) by regular mail to the HAD Secretary
- (2) Mark this ballot and fax a copy to the HAD Secretary
- (3) Send an email (from your identifiable email address) with your choices of "approve" or "disapprove" for each of the six resolutions listed above.

Selections must be marked clearly or ballots will be considered void. Please send your ballots so that they arrive **before December 1, 2003** to the HAD Secretary, Ron Brashear, at: Smithsonian Institution, P.O. Box 37012, Dibner Library NMAH 1041, MRC 672, Washington, DC 20013-7012. Fax: 202-633-9102 / Email:brashearr@si.edu

## Report on HAD Meeting in Seattle

[This report is a continuation of the one in the Feb. 2003 *HAD News*.]

The HAD Business meeting was held between the HAD II and HAD III sessions on Monday. Attendance was quite low, unfortunately, and we hope that all HAD members present at future meetings will take the time to attend the business meetings. The minutes of the 2003 meeting are printed elsewhere in this issue.

After the business meeting, the second HAD session on Monday focused on "Biography of 19th and 20th Century Astronomers." Having eschewed the business meeting, the audience from the earlier session returned and the crowd numbered over seventy people.

The first paper was by **Brenda Corbin** (US Naval Observatory) and was titled, "Etienne Leopold Trouvelot, 19th Century Artist and Astronomer." Trouvelot, born in France in 1827, came to the United States with his family in 1855, settling in Massachusetts. He supported his family as an artist, but became interested in astronomy after observing and sketching auroras in the 1870s. When astronomers at Harvard saw the quality and detail in these drawings, they invited him to join the staff and use their telescopes for observation and making drawings of celestial objects. In 1875 the U. S. Naval Observatory invited him to Washington to use the 26-inch refractor, at that time the world's largest refractor. Through the years he made more than 7000 drawings which were highly regarded by astronomers who saw them, especially for the fine detail of the drawings. Trouvelot wanted to publish a portfolio of some of the best drawings and approached Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers in New York. The 15 drawings he chose were produced as chromolithographs, and the set was published in 1881 selling at \$125. Very few complete sets remain in institutions today, and one set sold at auction within the last few years for many times the original price. However, Trouvelot will always be remembered not for his astronomical artistry but as the person who introduced the gypsy moth into the United States. In his attempt to bring better silk producing caterpillars into the country, some egg masses escaped and the rest is history.

**Tom Williams** (Rice U.) followed with "The Wizard of Puget Sound: Dalmero Francis Brocchi (1871-1955)." Within a few years after the incorporation of the American Association of Variable Star Observers (AAVSO), Seattle resident Brocchi joined its ranks and became a substantial contributor to variable star astronomy. A railroad engineering draftsman by profession, Brocchi contributed very significantly to the development of the system of charts necessary to guide variable star observers. He was responsible for drafting over five hundred sets of comparison charts as well as for the creation of a useful AAVSO atlas. In addition to his prolific work in developing charts, Brocchi was a substantial contributor as an observer; he served on the AAVSO council as a vice-president and was chairman of the AAVSO Chart Committee for many years. Brocchi was celebrated in the Seattle area for his knowledge of the night sky and for his well-constructed ob-

servatory. The observatory housed a 12-inch reflecting telescope that incorporated both an unusual set of optics and a completely unique telescope mounting.

The next paper was a joint effort by **Roy Clarke** (Smithsonian Institution) and **Howard Plotkin** (U. Western Ontario), "UCLA Astronomer Frederick Charles Leonard (1896-1960): From Childhood Prodigy to Mature Obsession." Clarke presented the paper and started with a story of the precocious 13-year-old Frederick Leonard bursting onto the astronomical scene in 1909, when he audaciously attended the 10th anniversary meeting of the American Astronomical Society (AAS) at Yerkes Observatory. Astronomers like F.R. Moulton and E.C. Pickering recognized his talents and provided encouragement, but he was denied membership to the AAS due to his youth. In addition, his lack of rigor in observations, verbose editorializing, and hunger for the limelight gave his elders pause. After two degrees from Chicago, he moved in 1919 to the University of California, Berkeley, completing a solid Berkeley/Lick PhD in December, 1921, with a dissertation on the spectra of visual double stars. He moved within weeks to the Southern Branch of the University (later UCLA), where he introduced an undergraduate astronomy program. Although he continued various research projects at Mt. Wilson and later Lick, they were purely observational, with little interpretive analysis. Perhaps sensing that the science of astronomy was beginning to pass him by, Leonard's career path veered suddenly to meteoritics by 1930. He and meteorite collector-dealer Harvey H. Nininger founded the Society for Research on Meteorites in 1933 (later, the Meteoritical Society), and Leonard became its first president and edited its journal over the next 25 years.

The final paper in the session was another joint paper by **Lucy Amory** (Vassar & Maria Mitchell Obs.), **Peter Boyce**, **R. diCurcio**, and **Vladimir Strel'nitski** (Maria Mitchell Obs.), "Meridian Stones: for Form or for Function?" Amory presented the paper for the group. The goal of this investigation was to reveal the original intent and purpose of the creator of the "Nantucket Meridian Stones," self-taught astronomer and surveyor William Mitchell (the father of the first American female astronomer, Maria Mitchell). Throughout time, these two enigmatic stone obelisks in downtown Nantucket have been cloaked in controversial legends. They did not find any mention of these stones in the original diaries and journals of William Mitchell, or in the town's public documents (except for the written decision of the 1840 town meeting to allot money for the stones' erection). However, among several controversial articles on the stones in the local newspaper published during the 20th century, they found one (dated 1921) which gives the most plausible explanation: the meridian line defined by the stones was used by the local surveyors to keep track of the variation in the magnetic declination, the angle between the directions to magnetic North and true (geographical) North. This hypothesis was compared with the existing information on the purpose and use of other historical meridian markers, both in America and Europe. This project was supported by Vassar College and the Nantucket Maria Mitchell Association. For more information on this project, look at [www.mmo.org](http://www.mmo.org).

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**HISTORICAL ASTRONOMY DIVISION OF THE AAS**  
**Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting [Draft]**  
**Monday, January 6, 2003**

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 PM by the HAD Chair, Barbara Welther.

HAD Secretary-Treasurer, Ronald Brashear, asked for any changes, corrections, or additions to the 2002 Business Meeting Minutes, as published in the February 2002 HAD News. As there were none, it was agreed to accept the minutes as published.

Brashear gave the HAD 2001 Financial Report for the Division and the LeRoy E. Doggett Prize Endowment Fund [these reports will appear in a future number of *HAD News*].

Brashear reported that as of 29 Jan 2002, AAS reported that HAD membership was 273. This number was a maximum number as it may contain individuals who did not renew in 2002. Based on the \$5 fee that AAS charges HAD for divisional affiliates, there were 51 divisional affiliates in 2002.

HAD Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect, Thomas Williams, gave his report on the AAS Obituaries. Thirty obituaries were published in the 2002 *Bulletin of the AAS*. They were all for AAS members who passed away in 2001 and 2002 except for one in 1990, one in 1998, one in 1999, and two in 2000. Twelve outstanding obituaries have not yet been completed and these will be passed on to the incoming Vice-Chair. There have been an average of 22 obituaries published per year since HAD took over responsibility for seeing them prepared. Each obituary is published in the *BAAS* and the files are sent to the American Institute of Physics Niels Bohr Library, so we are building up a nice historical resource over the years. After a question from the floor, Williams noted that a person rates an obituary only if they are full members of AAS (and assuming that someone can be found to write one, every full member will have an obituary). There may be other special cases, however, where others (AAS patrons, associate members, etc.) may deserve an obituary and these are treated on a case-by-case basis.

Brashear reported the results of the election of officers for HAD. The Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect for 2003-2005 is Donald K. Yeomans of JPL. The two at-large HAD Committee Members for 2003-2005 are John W. Briggs (National Solar Observatory) and Alan W. Hirshfeld (U. Mass.-Dartmouth).

Welther reported that AAS had suggested that HAD hold their elections earlier than we have in the past. Earlier results would then allow AAS to publish the names of the new officers in the AAS directory (which goes to press on October 1). Because of how the election process is stated in the HAD bylaws, changing the election deadline would require changing the by-laws. Brashear then reported on how the schedule would need to be altered in order to allow for election results to be tabulated and reported to AAS in September. Essentially, the election slate put forward by the HAD Nominating Committee would be published in the February *HAD News*. The final slate, along with the ballot and candidate descriptions would then appear in the May (or June; see below) *HAD News*. This would allow for a deadline for receipt of ballots of five months before the HAD January meeting (i.e. early August) and still be plenty of time for ballots to be received and tabulated and candidates notified of the results and the results sent to AAS in time for the Directory. An added bonus to early elections would be that the elected officers would have enough time to make plans to attend the HAD meeting in January. The HAD Committee will draft language for a change in the by-laws and send the changes to the AAS Secretary, Arlo Landolt, so that the AAS Council can comment on the changes at their May 2003 meeting. The comments and revised by-laws will then be discussed and potentially voted on by HAD members at the 2004 business meeting. Therefore, the new election schedule could be in place for the 2005 election. Alan Harris recommended that, based on the experience of the AAS Division of Planetary Sciences (DPS), we make sure the language includes phrases such as "no later than" so that we are not too restricted by the by-laws. Donald Yeomans suggested that, while HAD is revising the by-laws, it also take the opportunity to remove any gender-specific language and also include a provision to have the by-laws suspended by a two-thirds vote of the HAD Committee. This latter provision has come in handy in the past in DPS to allow the division to, say, overcome problems imposed by deadlines in extraordinary circumstances. Another suggestion from the floor said that it might be a good idea to limit the scope of a by-laws-suspension amendment.

Brashear reported that, with the backing of the HAD Committee, he is switching the *HAD News* from a quarterly to a triennial issue. The cost of producing and mailing the newsletter has increased to the point where producing four issues a year is a strain on the HAD budget, but that three issues a year would be quite manageable. The change would also make it more likely that the *HAD News* would stay on a more regular schedule. *HAD News* would appear every year in February,

**Historical Astronomy Division  
of the American Astronomical Society**

Chair: Thomas R. Williams, trw@rice.edu  
 Vice-Chair: Donald K. Yeomans,  
 Donald.K.Yeomans@jpl.nasa.gov  
 Secretary-Treasurer: Ronald S. Brashear, brashearr@si.edu  
 Past-Chair: Barbara Welther, bwelther@cfa.harvard.edu  
 At-Large Committee Members: John W. Briggs,  
 jwb@hale.yerkes.uchicago.edu;  
 Alan W. Hirshfeld, AHirshfeld@umassd.edu

Website: [www.aas.org/had/had.html](http://www.aas.org/had/had.html)

*HAD News* is published in February, June, and October, and sent to all individual members of the Historical Astronomy Division of the American Astronomical Society. The deadline for receipt of articles, news items, and announcements is the first of the month prior to the month of publication. Please send contributions as plain text in email or as email attachments in Microsoft Word to Ronald Brashear at [brashearr@si.edu](mailto:brashearr@si.edu).

June, and October (every four months), and that this new schedule would be able to accommodate all necessary notifications of important news for the HAD membership. After each issue of *HAD News* is produced, an Adobe Acrobat version would be immediately mounted on the HAD website and an email sent out to the membership that the issue was now available. Camera-ready copy would then be sent to the printers and printed copies would continue to be mailed out to the membership as soon as possible.

Williams reported on a possible joint meeting of HAD with the DPS at the University of Cambridge, UK, from 4-9 September 2005. Costs would be minimized by having attendees stay in campus housing. Welther clarified that HAD would still have its regular meetings with the AAS in 2005 and 2006 and that the Cambridge meeting would be in addition to those. David DeVorkin noted that the last joint meeting of HAD with another division (the Division of Dynamical Astronomy in Chicago, 1992) focused the historical sessions on the subject of interest of the other division. He recommended that we do this with the DPS as well. Alan Harris said that the local organizing chair for the Cambridge meeting is Simon Mitton and that there are a lot of local resources of interest to historians of astronomy, so it should be a popular destination for HAD members. Williams asked for a show of hands of those present as to who would think a joint meeting is a good idea and then how many would actually be interested in attending. The good response means that Williams will now move forward in arranging a joint meeting with the DPS in 2005.

HAD Committee Member Brenda Corbin reported that HAD member Steve Dick's book, *Sky and Ocean Joined: The US Naval Observatory, 1830-2000*, is now in print and available from the Cambridge University Press.

Welther then passed on the official "Ich bin HAD" certificate and the chair's gavel to the incoming HAD Chair, Tom Williams.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 PM

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### HAD in Seattle (continued from page 5)

**Donald Osterbrock** (UCO / Lick Obs. / UCSC) submitted a poster paper, "Four Big-Telescope Planetary Astronomers of the 1920's at Mount Wilson, Yerkes, and Lick Observatories." But since it was the only historical poster paper submitted, it ended up in a poster session on Monday titled, "Planetary Systems: Instrumentation and Surveys." The paper described that, contrary to current mythology, many professional astronomers tried to do planetary research before World War II, as Ronald Doel and Osterbrock have previously emphasized. Their difficulty was that once the known planets had been studied with the biggest and best telescopes, spectrographs, and radiometers there was little more they could do until some new instrumental development came along, and these were rare in those years. Two astronomers who observed planets in the 1920s were Frank Ross, of the Yerkes Observa-

tory faculty, with the Mount Wilson 60- and 100-inch telescopes, and William H. Wright, at Lick, with its 36-inch Crossley reflector, which he considered a big telescope. Both were keenly interested in photographic emulsions (Ross had been a research physicist at the Eastman Kodak Laboratory), and when fast new panchromatic films and plates became available in the 1920s they quickly applied them to photographing the planets. Robert J. Trumpler, also at Lick, used its 36-inch refractor in a combination of photographic (in the yellow and red spectral regions) and visual observing to map and describe Martian surface features. All three of them began planetary observing at the close opposition of Mars in 1924; they were all mainline scientists who ultimately were elected to the National Academy of Sciences. All three of them were doing descriptive work, seeing what was there, and none of them had any theoretical ideas to check or disprove. Francis G. Pease, more of a telescope designer and engineer at Mount Wilson, also used its 60- and 100-inch reflectors, chiefly to take photographs of the planets for illustrations in books and magazines. They all used fine-grain photographic plates, but seeing was a problem they could not overcome. Ross and Trumpler dropped out of planetary astronomy after 1928, but Wright and Pease continued in it for many years.

Although not part of a HAD session, our HAD colleague, **Steven J. Dick** (US Naval Observatory) gave a paper on Tuesday afternoon as part of a session called, "Physical Worlds, Biological Worlds, and Virtual Worlds." His paper, "Astrobiology and the Biological Universe," started with his pointing out that, four hundred years ago two astronomical world views hung in the balance: the geocentric and the heliocentric. Today astronomy faces a similar choice between two grand world views: a purely physical universe, in which cosmic evolution commonly ends in planets, stars and galaxies, and a biological universe, in which cosmic evolution routinely results in life, mind and intelligence. Astrobiology is the science providing the data to make this critical choice. This 20th century overview shows how we have arrived at the view that cosmic evolution may have resulted in life and intelligence in the universe. It examines how our astronomical world view has changed over the last century, recalls the opinions of astronomical pioneers like Russell, Shapley, and Struve on life in the universe, and shows how planetary science, planetary systems science, origins of life studies and SETI have combined to form a new discipline. Astrobiology now commands \$50 million in direct funding from NASA, funds 15 Astrobiology Institute members around the country and four affiliates around the world, and seeks to answer one of astronomy's oldest questions. Whether we live in a mostly physical universe, as exemplified in Isaac Asimov's Foundation series, or in a biological universe, as portrayed in Arthur C. Clarke's works, this reality will have profound consequences, no less than the Copernican theory. Astrobiology also looks to the future of life; taking a long-term "Stapledonian" view, it is possible we may live in a postbiological universe.

All in all, an excellent HAD meeting! Please make plans to join us in Atlanta in January!

## Announcing the Seventh Oxford Conference on Archaeoastronomy

The website for the Seventh Oxford Conference on Archaeoastronomy, to be held from June 20-27, 2004 in Flagstaff, Arizona, is now active. The conference is being sponsored by a number of organizations, including the Museum of Northern Arizona, the Pueblo Grande Museum (Phoenix AZ), Lowell Observatory, the Coconino County Board of Supervisors, the City of Flagstaff - Flagstaff Cultural Partners, Northern Arizona University College of Arts & Sciences / Physics and Astronomy Department, the NAU-NASA Space Grant Program, and the Roden Crater Project.

The Web site is being hosted by Lowell Observatory at the URL:

<http://www.lowell.edu/Public/ox7/index.html>

On the Web site, you will find program information and instructions for submitting abstracts, as well as local information. Please direct all questions and correspondence regarding the conference to: **Oxford7@earthlink.net**.

On behalf of the Oxford 7 Local Organizing Committee,  
Jeffrey Hall  
Assistant Research Scientist  
Associate Director, Education and Special Programs  
Lowell Observatory  
Flagstaff, AZ 86001

## Are You Ready for the Transit of Venus on June 8, 2004?

If not, check out the following hot links:

[www.transitofvenus.org/](http://www.transitofvenus.org/)

A comprehensive set of links to all things transit of Venus-like put together by Chuck Bueter

[sunearth.gsfc.nasa.gov/eclipse/transit/venus0412.html](http://sunearth.gsfc.nasa.gov/eclipse/transit/venus0412.html)

Fred Espenak's pages about the 2004 & 2012 transits on the NASA/Goddard Eclipse Home Page

[www.phys.uu.nl/~vgent/venus/venustransitbib.htm](http://www.phys.uu.nl/~vgent/venus/venustransitbib.htm)

R. H. van Gent's outstanding bibliography of the transits of Venus.

[sunearth.gsfc.nasa.gov/sunearthday/2004/index\\_vt.htm](http://sunearth.gsfc.nasa.gov/sunearthday/2004/index_vt.htm)

The NASA Sun-Earth Connection Education Forum's website that sponsors education and outreach activities relating to the transit of Venus.

**And by all means, be sure to attend the next HAD meeting in Atlanta with the AAS in January 2004 when we will have a special session on the transits of Venus. You'll be glad you did!**

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