

Minutes of the XXV International Scientific Instrument Symposium
Jagiellonian University Museum, Krakow, Poland
10-14 September 2006

President: Paolo Brenni
Secretary: Sara Schechner
Treasurer: Marian Fournier

The Scientific Instrument Commission held its twenty-fifth annual symposium on 10-14 September 2006. Eighty-four members attended.

1) Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Mara Miniati, Aleksiej Emeljanow, Swen Hauschke, Jorgen From Andersen, Elena Helerea, Yola and David Coffeen, Jean Davoigneau, Robert Anderson, and Peter de Clercq.

2) Review of Minutes from Last Meeting in Beijing, 2005.

The Minutes of the 24th Plenary Session, held at the Ancient Observatory in Beijing in August 2005 were circulated, reviewed, and accepted.

3) SIC Finances

Last year, the Treasurer, Marian Fournier, reported in Beijing that the Commission had €2228.82 in its bank account. The current balance this year is € 2750.00.

Receipts:

€1510.81 (\$1900) as a grant from the IUHPS, consisting of \$1000 for the annual meeting, \$600 for the website, and \$300 for running costs.

Expenses:

€775.00 (\$1000) for the symposium in Krakow.
€117.77 was paid to Sara Schechner for costs incurred in Beijing on SIC business.

4) Report of Ongoing Commission Activities

A. Online Resources and Initiatives

SIC website, <http://www.sic.iuhps.org/>

There have been additions to the reference section. New links to digitized trade catalogues continue to be added to the Commission's website. We continue to place the SIC Bibliography online as well.

The Commission formally thanks Dana Freiburger for his work as webmaster of the SIC site and the Museum of the History of Science in Oxford for its support.

The SIC Bibliography this past year was compiled by Harry Leechburch, the librarian of the Boerhaave Museum. He will continue next year.

B. SIC Publications

As reported last year, the Istituto e Museo di Storia della Scienze in Florence offered the Commission the possibility of publishing our proceedings and papers in the form of our own separate volumes in *Bibliotheca di Nuncius*, with our own series numbers. The new publication will be called *SIC: Scientific Instruments and Collections*. There will generally be one issue per year, consisting of 200-250 pages with black and white and color illustrations. Questions were raised on how it will be distributed by Olschki. The SIC board will let the membership know through Rete.

The editorial board for the first issue will be Giorgio Strano (editor-in-chief), Mara Miniati, Alison Morrison-Low, and Stephen Johnston.

The topic of the first volume will be Renaissance instruments, with papers taken from the Dresden symposium. The next topic has not yet been decided.

5) Future Activities and Meetings

A. Scientific Instrument Commission Symposia

2007 Cambridge, Massachusetts

The XXVI Symposium will be held in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 2007 at the new facility of the Harvard Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments and will be jointly sponsored by CHSI and the MIT Museum.

2008 Symposium will likely be held in Portugal. Details to follow.

2009 Budapest

This meeting will be part of the International Congress of the IUHPS, Division of History.

For 2010 we have invitations from Miñorca and Florence.

B. Other Future Meetings

SICU2: An International Workshop on Historic Scientific
Instrument Collections in the University
21-24 June 2007 in Oxford, Mississippi
<http://www.olemiss.edu/~sicu2web/>

This meeting is sponsored by the Scientific Instrument Commission and the University of Mississippi, with funding from the US National Science Foundation. One theme of the meeting will be how collections may be used for undergraduate teaching.

The Scientific Instrument Heritage of the Second Half of the 20th Century
Musée des Arts et Métiers-CNAM
Paris, 17 November 2006

The *Musée des Arts et Métiers* is organizing a workshop dedicated to the scientific instrument heritage of the second half of the 20th century. Invited speakers will present results from projects undertaken in various museums as well as the most recent experiences concerning the acquisition, selection, cataloguing, preservation, and exhibition of instruments and apparatus of contemporary science.

Conferences: On the Invention of the Telescope
Autumn 2008, Holland

Collaborative plans are still in the works with the Antique Telescope Society and other groups for a meeting this year, probably in the Netherlands. There will be a scientific symposium on the prehistory of the telescope on September 23, 2008 in Gent or Antwerp (contact: Sven Dupre). In Middelburg, there will be a scientific congress on "A World Change: The Origin and Development of the Telescope, 1550-1650," on September 25-27, 2008 (contact: Albert van Helden).

6) Commission News

Paolo Brenni mentioned a letter that he wrote in his capacity as SIC President to the French Ministry of Culture and to the Director of the observatory of Paris concerning the preservation of the Coude telescope. He also wrote a letter to the

president of the National Institute for Astrophysics, who is responsible for the astronomical museums of Rome, advising that the museums stay visible in the city.

Sara Schechner, as SIC Secretary, maintains our liaison with the IAU.

7) News from Members

Sara reported on the efforts of the Historical Astronomy Division of the American Astronomical Society with regard to the preservation of astronomical heritage (including instruments) in the US.

Paolo discussed a French national project to create an inventory of the scientific, historical heritage of the second half of the 20th century.

Ad Maas announced a conference on scientific research during World War II in January 2007.

Robert Hicks announced a job opening at the Chemical Heritage Foundation for someone to work on collections, exhibits, and education, and do independent research.

Stephen Johnston announced a Scientific Instrument Society initiative to make small research grants-in-aid for travel and photography. Grants will be up to £500. There will be a maximum of three per year.

Peter Abrahams described an Antique Telescope Society meeting at the McDonald Observatory in Texas; and mentioned that the Microscope Society was looking for an editor.

Gloria Clifton noted a one-day symposium at Greenwich on November 16, 2006 on using nautical instruments as evidence.

The group discussed the creation of a SIC logo and what would be appropriate to represent us on our journal cover, on the web, and elsewhere. It was agreed that we would solicit ideas from members.

8) Thanks

Formal thanks were expressed to the Professor Stanisław Waltos, Director of the Jagiellonian University Museum, Ewa Wyka, and other staff members for organizing the wonderful symposium in Krakow.

Respectfully submitted by
Sara J. Schechner
SIC Secretary