

Organizing scientific meetings, (2) providing information about publications and other activities in the field of the history of astronomy, (3) undertaking joint projects.

The working group releases a newsletter in German language *Mitteilungen zur Astronomiegeschichte* as well as special issues with bibliographies. In 1994, the working group started to issue an electronic newsletter in German language, *Elektronische Mitteilungen zur Astronomiegeschichte*. It contains announcements of conferences, exhibitions, new books and other related material. An English translation, *Electronic Newsletter for the History of Astronomy*, is available. Outside Germany all newsletters are distributed free of charge. To be included into the mailing list please send an E-Mail message to W. Dick (wdi@potsdam.ifag.de).

Discussion

W.T. Sullivan : "HASTRO" is a valuable electronic forum for discussion of issues in the history of astronomy and in archeoastronomy. To subscribe to this E-mail bulletin board, contact Prof. S. McClusky, Dept. of History, University of West Virginia, Morgantown, West Virginia, USA.

AURA, KITT PEAK AND CERRO TOLOLO - THE EARLY YEARS

Frank K. Edmondson, *Indiana University, Bloomington, USA*

I retired as Chairman of the Indiana University Astronomy Department in 1978. This gave me time to start this project, a response to strong suggestions made by David Crawford, Albert Hiltner and Arne Slettebak several years earlier. During a 1978-79 sabbatical I taped 49 oral histories and collected archival material at the National Science Foundation and in Tucson. I was back in the classroom for four more years after the sabbatical, during which I taped 34 oral histories and continued to look for archival material. I became Professor Emeritus in 1983, which gave me full time to finish the archival search. I taped 9 oral histories in 1983-91. Altogether, I taped oral histories with 85 individuals in 92 interview sessions, and visited 23 institutions to collect archival material. 26 individuals provided archival material from their personal files.

I started to write in January 1988 and finished the 560 page manuscript on December 3, 1993. Two-thirds of the pages are text and one-third are the references. The Cambridge University Press has reviewed the manuscript, and the Press Syndicate of the University is expected to make the decision about publication in the near future.

THE NASA SETI HISTORY PROJECT

Steven Dick, *US Naval Observatory, Washington DC, USA*

The purpose of the NASA SETI History Project is to document NASA's twenty-five year involvement in the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI), and to produce a written history of this effort. The project seeks to place the NASA program in the context of the much longer history of ideas about extraterrestrial life, including concepts for interplanetary

communication earlier in the century. Interest in interstellar communication began within NASA at Ames Research Center in 1969. It was the subject of the Project Cyclops study in 1971, was given impetus by the Morrison workshops of 1975-76, and was funded for the development of equipment at the level of \$1.5 million from 1983-87. The strategy adopted was a microwave search at frequencies between one and ten Gigahertz. Ames was to carry out a targeted search of 1000 nearby solar type stars, while the Jet Propulsion Laboratory was to carry out an all-sky survey at less sensitivity. Observations were begun simultaneously on October 12, 1992 at Arecibo, Puerto Rico for the targeted search and at the Deep Space Communications Complex at Goldstone in the Mohave Desert for the sky survey. By action of Congress, what was to be a ten year program of observations was cancelled in September of 1993.

Making use of taped interviews, archives and published sources, the NASA SETI History Project concentrates on four dimensions of this history: the political, technical, exploratory, and cultural. The political dimension includes internal and external consensus-building and funding aspects. The technical dimension concentrates on the design and construction of the Multi-Channel Spectrum Analyzers, which will analyze millions of narrow channels simultaneously, as well as the interface of this equipment to the radio telescopes, and the subsequent detection software. The exploratory dimension explores how the project fits into the quest for humanity's place in the Universe. And the cultural dimension examines NASA's interest in the implications for society if an extraterrestrial civilization is successfully detected. This includes in the near term the post-detection protocols, as well as the long-term reaction of various elements of society.

With the termination of government funding, portions of the NASA project have been taken over by the SETI Institute, a non-profit institution that raises private funding. The NASA SETI History Project is in abeyance until further funding becomes available.

JOHN MELLISH AND THE CRATERS OF MARS

Michael Anderer, *St. Charles, USA*

This paper is an attempt to explore and evaluate the contribution of an American observer, John E. Mellish, to our understanding of Martian topography. Mellish (1886-1970) served as a research assistant at Yerkes Observatory in 1915-16 under Edwin Frost. Mellish had access to the 40" Clark refractor during this period which coincided with an aphelic opposition of Mars. He was subsequently claim that he observed "cracks and craters" near the Martian terminator in mid-november of 1915. A historical vignette of Mellish is undertaken as well as a technical analysis of the possibility that his claim had scientific validity. The author of the paper networked with Bradford Smith who serves on the Mars task force, committee on nomenclature who was able to advance the proposal that Mellish be recognized by having a crater named after him. The General Assembly of the IAU concurred and hence forth "Mellish" will be an officially designated crater.