

PREFACE

The principal purpose of IAU Colloquium No. 110 was to provide an opportunity for librarians of astronomical observatories and institutions to meet to discuss common problems and ways of stimulating greater cooperation between libraries in different countries. Others who were concerned with the provision of astronomical information were also invited to attend so that there could be wide-ranging discussions on most aspects of astronomical documentation. In the planning of the program, particular attention was given to new developments in the use of computers and telecommunication networks, but the needs of librarians and astronomers in institutions without access to such facilities were not overlooked. The original concept of a largely informal workshop had to be modified considerably when it was found that the number of participants would be two to three times larger than had been expected. Nevertheless, the program allowed time for general discussions, and these proved to be lively and useful.

The Colloquium was sponsored by IAU Commission 5 (Documentation and Astronomical Data) and was held just before the 20th IAU General Assembly in order to facilitate the attendance of librarians at the Assembly and to encourage the participation of astronomers in the Colloquium. A Joint Discussion which was held on the first full day of the Assembly served as a link between the Colloquium and the ordinary meetings of Commission 5. More importantly, the Joint Discussion, which had the title 'New developments in documentation and data services for astronomers', provided an opportunity for the participation of a much larger number of astronomers in discussions on some of the matters that had been discussed in greater detail at the Colloquium. A joint meeting of Commissions 5 and 46 (The Teaching of Astronomy) also provided a forum for a further discussion on the problems of developing countries in acquiring books and journals for research and teaching.

The local arrangements for the Colloquium were made by staff of the U.S. Naval Observatory and of other institutions in the Washington area; Brenda Corbin carried the main burden of the administrative work, while Ruth Freitag acted as Treasurer and arranged the reception and tours at the Library of Congress. Wayne Warren and Jaylee Mead organized the session and tours at the Goddard Space Flight Center. Many individuals, astronomical institutions, publishers and other organisations contributed towards the expenses and made possible the attendance of many librarians from overseas (see Appendix A). The total attendance was 120 persons, of whom 56 came from 25 countries other than the USA.

The first paper in this volume contains a general overview of the program of the Colloquium and reports on the discussions; it also contains extended summaries of some of the presentations for which no paper has been submitted for publication. This report is based partly on notes taken during the meetings and partly on the written records of the questions and comments that were submitted by those concerned. The papers that follow provide more detail on particular topics; some of the papers were presented orally and others as posters. Some additional reference material has been given in appendices for the general convenience of readers. We would like

to express our thanks to all the reporters and authors who have made possible this record of this very interesting, useful and enjoyable meeting.

We would also like to acknowledge the assistance that we have received in the preparation of the camera-ready copy; in particular, we wish to thank Annette Hedges of the Royal Greenwich Observatory, Anne Munchel and Mary Dagold of the Space Telescope Science Institute, and LeRoy Doggett of the U.S. Naval Observatory. Finally, we would like to express the thanks of all participants to Gert Westerhout, the Scientific Director of U.S. Naval Observatory, for his enthusiastic support during all stages of this Colloquium, from conception to the publication of these proceedings.

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