

Minutes of the XXVIII International Scientific Instrument Symposium

In conjunction with the XXIII International Congress of History of Science and Technology
Budapest, Hungary
28 July – 2 August 2009

President: Paolo Brenni
Secretary: Sara Schechner
Treasurer: Hans Hooijmaijers

The Scientific Instrument Commission held its twenty-eighth annual symposium on 28 July 2009 to 2 August 2009 in Budapest. Twenty-five members attended the plenary business meeting of the SIC.

1) Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Robert Anderson and Peter de Clercq.

2) Review of Minutes from Last Meeting in Lisbon, Portugal, 2008

The Minutes of the 27th Plenary Session, held at the University of Lisbon, Portugal in September 2008 were circulated and reviewed. There were no corrections.

3) SIC Finances

The SIC Treasurer, Hans Hooijmaijers, reported that on 1 July 2009 the Commission had €4500 in its savings account and €300 in its current account.

Receipts:

€1000 from IUHPS in February 2009 (\$1600).

This grant from IUHPS breaks down as \$1000 for the annual meeting, \$300 (of the 600 we asked for) for the website, and \$300 for running costs.

Expenses:

€700 (\$1000) for the symposium in Lisbon, Portugal, September 2008

€150 running costs of the bank account

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. The Commission formally thanks him as well.

B. SIC Publications

The first volume of the Commission's new publication, *SIC: Scientific Instruments and Collection*, is to be published shortly by Brill. Giorgio Strano, the editor-in-chief, described the papers in that volume and ideas for future volumes. These include the publication of Silvio Bedini's manuscript on Campani and perhaps papers from the Budapest sessions on "How Instruments Change Hands" and "Global Visions." Future meetings of the Commission might have sessions with strong themes, which could produce topical papers that would knit together well for a published volume. To be considered for inclusion in a volume, a paper would typically have been delivered at a SIC meeting.

5) Future Activities and Meetings

A. Scientific Instrument Commission Symposia

2010 Florence

The XXIX SIC Symposium will be held in Florence at the Istituto e Museo di Storia della Scienza, which will have undergone a major renovation and been renamed Museo Galileo. A website will be set up for registration and details later in the fall.

Other possible future venues were discussed, including Istanbul (2011) and Hamburg, Mexico, Latin America, Cambridge, UK, and Philadelphia (2012). Also mentioned was Minorca Island.

B. Other Future Meetings

The conference "Astronomy and Its Instruments - Before and After Galileo" will take place in Venice, Italy on September 28-October 3, 2009. This international conference is devoted to the history of astronomical instrumentation and is held in the context of the International Year of Astronomy (IYA 2009). For details, please visit <http://web.oapd.inaf.it/venice2009/index.php>

The Museum Boerhaave will have a program on "Newton in the Netherlands" in the spring of 2010.

In 2011, St.Petersburg will host a "year of Russian science." Tatiana Moiseeva can be consulted for details.

6) Commission News

Paolo Brenni described his work in Tartu on the observatory there.

Sara Schechner, as SIC Secretary, maintains our liaison with the IAU and the American Astronomical Society's Working Group on the Preservation of Astronomical Heritage.

Paolo Brenni raised the topic of election of SIC officers and apologized for not bringing it up more clearly at the last Commission meeting. Apparently, the IUHPS will not recognize a change in officers between congresses. Given the small turnout for the Budapest meeting, it was decided by those present not to hold an election on the spot, since this would be unfair to those who could not attend and pass on their votes. More lead time was promised for the next election. In the interim, Paolo Brenni and Sara Schechner were willing to continue, and those present agreed.

7) News from Members

The symposium "Learning by Doing: Experiments and Instruments in the History of Science Teaching" took place in Regensburg, Germany, 4-5 April 2009. An edited volume of papers is being put together by Roland Wittje and Peter Heering, and will appear as a special issue of *Science in Education*.

Michael Korey remarked that the Mathematisch-Physikalischer Salon in Dresden would be closed for renovations until June 2010, and Jane Wess reported that the Science Museum had reinstalled its astronomy gallery.

8) New Business

No new business was raised.

9) Thanks

Formal thanks were given to Professor László Kiss and Jeszenszky Sándor for arranging tours of the Electrotechnical Museum and the Hungarian Museum for Science, Technology, and Transport for Commission members.

Respectfully submitted by
Sara J. Schechner
SIC Secretary

Revised 22 October 2010