

Heritage Committee: Interim Report to the Board, November 2017

Member	Term	Affiliation
Elizabeth Griffin <i>Chair</i>	2015–18	DAO/NRC
William McCutcheon	2016–19	University of British Columbia
Nathalie Martimbeau	2015–18	
Eugene Milone	2015–18	University of Calgary
David Pantalony	2014–17	Science Curator, CSTM, Ottawa
John Percy	2017–20	University of Toronto
Lee Robbins	2015–18	University of Toronto
Tim Robishaw	2015–18	DRAO/NRC
Randall Rosenfeld	2015–18	University of Toronto
Ian Shelton	2017–20	(University of Toronto)
David Turner	2017–20	Saint Mary's University
Gordon Walker	2017–20	UBC and UVic
Jasper Wall	2015–18	University of British Columbia

Committee activities have continued to focus on three projects:

(1) *Book: The History of Canadian Radio Astronomy.* As reported last May, our commitment to assist with developing a book on “The History of Canadian Radio Astronomy”, originally planned and commenced by the late Richard Jarrell (former long-serving member and Chair of this Committee) continues to be a major goal in our sights. One or two contributions are already completed, some are well advanced, and others are still being sought. They are being woven into a more homogeneous set by Professor Wall, who is also preparing the main Introduction to the subject. A more complete update will be ready by next May.

(2) *CASCA Archive.* As already described, the management of a physical archive for CASCA is now in the efficient hands of Randall Rosenfeld. Enquiries should be sent directly to him (rosenfel-at-chass.utoronto.ca).

(3) *Astronomy's heritage plate collection.* In mid-2018 the Committee plans to hold an international Workshop to discuss, and as far as possible decide, a plan for managing the preservation of the inherited materials (photographic plates and associated log-books) which represent astronomy's rich, global, and highly important archive of historical records. The ultimate aim is to transfer the information on the plates onto electronic media for ingestion into modern research programmes. As a forerunner to that Workshop, a special meeting, led by Griffin, was held in November during IAU Symposium 339, *Southern Horizons in Time-Domain Astronomy*, in South Africa. A similar Special Session, but under the aegis of the History of Astronomy Division of the AAS, will be held at the AAS winter meeting in January 2018.

Members' Activities in Brief

Mostly in celebration of Canada 150, John Percy (University of Toronto) gave 8 presentations to local associations and societies on Canada's/Toronto's astronomical achievements 1867–2017. He led two walking tours on the topic for Heritage Toronto, and created “Canada 150” webpages for both the department and the Dunlap Institute at the U of T. He also wrote informal articles for the Journal and the Newsletter of the RASC.

Randall Rosenfeld is serving as Chair of the RASC 2018 Sesquicentennial Working Group (<https://www.rasc.ca/2018>). Canadian astronomical history and heritage play prominent roles in many of the planned programmes. Podcasts are also being prepared.

Committee Needs and Priorities

The Committee will need modest funding (a few \$K) to reimburse research costs, as and when incurred, in the preparation of Rich Jarrell's book, *The History of Canadian Radio Astronomy*.

Presentations

Randall Rosenfeld: *Music of the Spheres: Astronomers as Musicians, & Musicians as Astronomers*, RASC Halifax Centre, Saint Marys University, 2017 May 12.

Randall Rosenfeld: *Truth at the Eyepiece...Assimilating the Past to the Present, and is There a Future for Astrosketching?*, Minas Astronomy Group, Maktomkus Observatory, Avonport, NS, 2017 May 13.

Publications

R.E.M. Griffin & L.A. Balona, *Accessing Data for long-term variability*, Report on a Workshop held at IAU Symposium 339 in 2017 November.

W. McCutcheon, Article in the *Queen's Alumni Review*, published in 2016, www.queensu.ca/gazette/alumnireview/stories/early-years-radio-astronomy-queen-s (This should have been mentioned in last year's report, but was unfortunately omitted).

R.A. Rosenfeld, *An Inventive Account of the Astronomy of van Gogh's La nuit toile of 1888*, JRASC 111, 74–78, 2017.

R.A. Rosenfeld, *Earliest RASC Star Party Antecedents?*, JRASC 111, 122–128, 2017.

R.A. Rosenfeld & C. Muir, *Earliest RASC Star Party Antecedents, II: How Old is the Term?*, JRASC 111, 228–232, 2017.