

# Heritage Committee: Annual Report to the Board, May 2018

Member	Term	Affiliation
Elizabeth Griffin <i>Chair</i>	2018–20	DAO/NRC
William McCutcheon	2016–19	University of British Columbia
Nathalie Martimbeau	2015–17	resigned
Eugene Milone	2018–21	University of Calgary
David Pantalony	2018–21	Science Curator, CSTM, Ottawa
John Percy	2017–20	University of Toronto
Lee Robbins	2015–17	(UofT); resigned
Tim Robishaw	2018–21	DRAO/NRC
Randall Rosenfeld	2018–21	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	2018–21	University of British Columbia

**Membership:** With much regret, we had to accept the resignation of Lee Robbins and Nathalie Martimbeau, in response to external pressures from other duties and occupations. We would like to thank them both very warmly for their faithful service on the Committee for a number of years.

**Committee activities** have continued to focus on two active projects:

(1) *Book: The History of Canadian Radio Astronomy.* As reported previously, 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. Jasper Wall is the prime contact and organizer, and has a number of contributions already to hand, and which he is massaging into a more homogeneous set. He is also preparing the main Introduction to the subject. Springer has been approached as a possible publisher, and has expressed interest.

(2) *CASCA Archive.* As described earlier, physical space for a formal archive of CASCA materials has been lent by the RASC in Toronto, and is under the expert management of Randall Rosenfeld, appointed as the Society's Archivist. Randall can be reached at (rosenfel-at-chass.utoronto.ca).

*Astronomy's heritage plate collection:* Plans to hold an international Workshop (see the November 2017 report) had to be shelved when the Sloan Foundation (a likely funder) withdrew from the conversation. The situation at the DAO is discouraging: we can identify a subset of 40,000 photographic spectra that are potential assets for research, once correctly digitized and made available publicly, and we have two upgraded instruments suitable for the task, but there are no funds within sight this year to commence.

## Members' Activities in Brief

Elizabeth Griffin co-led a HAD Special Session at the AAS (January 2018) to discuss astronomy's heritage photographic data worldwide. She will raise the matter again at the IAU GA in August.

Following a busy Canada-150 year (see the November 2017 Report), John Percy has continued related activities: two short articles about the RASC's sesquicentennial, a presentation on Toronto's Astronomical Heritage, a campus walking tour, and two more (for Heritage Toronto) soon.



The Society's Archivist, Randall Rosenfeld, reports improvements to the formal archive space: the cabinets have been upgraded, and room for expansion has been added; the area (shared with the RASC Archive) has been renovated, providing a more congenial place for consultation (see above). Four of the RASC 2018 History podcasts have now been released, along with their supplementary webpages (<https://www.rasc.ca/rasc-2018-podcasts>), as part of the RASC's sesquicentennial programming; Randall served as the researcher, writer, and co-host. He has also been organizing the history symposium for the sesquicentennial (<https://rascga2018.ca/a-shared-sky-the-rasc-at-150/>).

David Turner's earlier investigations into the chancel ceiling paintings of stars in St. John's Church in Lunenburg (NS) have resulted in Committee membership. He has nearly completed a book on the story behind the paintings, and has prepared a shorter version for submission to a magazine.

David Pantalony (Canada Science & Technology Museum) reports the reopening of the facility, with record numbers of visitors. An upgraded astronomy section now displays several historic telescopes (restored or on loan), plus an area devoted to Indigenous Star Knowledge.

**For the record:** The DAO has been holding weekly historical talks in a "DAO-100" series. Peter Broughton will be giving a talk on the subject of his recently published biography of J.S. Plaskett.

### **Committee Needs and Priorities**

The Committee will need modest funding (a few \$K) for costs associated with Rich Jarrell's book.

### **Presentations**

Gordon Walker ("DAO-100" series): *From analog to digital – transformation of the DAO in the 1960s.*

### **Publications**

R.A. Rosenfeld, *Dr. Sommers Moon: Philology, Cartography, and Oblivion*, JRASC 112, 35–41, 2018

R.A. Rosenfeld & Heather Laird, *Beginnings – Documentary Traces & Tatters, or Lessons from doing the first RASC 150 podcast*, JRASC 112, 72–73; 76–78, 2018