

PREFACE

The year 1973 marked the highest peak of IAU activity up to now. Besides the General Assembly in Sydney, and the Extraordinary General Assembly in Poland, there were held eleven IAU Symposia and one Colloquium.

Several IAU Publications cover this activity. The Proceedings of the Symposia are published in separate Volumes, while the Transactions of the General Assembly and of the Extraordinary General Assembly contain short reports of the Commission meetings, the administrative sessions, and the opening ceremonies.

The present Volume covers some of the scientific Highlights of the General Assembly and of the Extraordinary General Assembly. It contains five Invited Discourses given in Sydney and Poland, some selected papers, and the Joint Discussions at the General Assembly of Sydney.

Of course, there were many more papers of special interest presented in Sydney that could not be included in this Volume. Their titles can be seen in the reports of the various Commissions. It is regrettable that the Invited Discourses of C. H. Townes (Interstellar Molecules) and F. J. Low (Infrared Astronomy) were not submitted for publication. Also only five papers or abstracts of the Joint Discussion on the 'Origins of the Moon and Satellites' have been available.

Despite these minor shortcomings, I believe that the present Volume is faithful to its title: it gives a substantial part of the Highlights of Astronomy in 1973.

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