

COMMISSION 46 : TEACHING OF ASTRONOMY - ENSEIGNEMENT DE L'ASTRONOMIE

PRESIDENT : L.N. Houziaux

VICE-PRESIDENTS : M. Rigutti, C. Iwaniszewska

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE : J. Kleczek (Secretary of ISYA), D. McNally (Editor of Newsletter, ICSU CTS representative), D.G. Wentzel (Past-president of Commission, publisher of Newsletter), E. Kononovich, M. Gerbaldi, R.R. Robbins (Astr. Education Materials), S.E. Okoye, A. Sandqvist, S. Ferraz-Mello (Visiting Lecturer Program)

MEMBERSHIP

There has been no change in membership since the Patras General Assembly.

WORK OF THE COMMISSION

The various activities of the Commission have been actively pursued.

1. International Schools for Young Astronomers.

The program has been continued thanks to the financial help of IAU, Unesco, and of local authorities. A school has been held in Lembang, Indonesia from May 16 to June 2, 1983, with students from India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand. The Local Organizing Committee, chaired by B. Hidayat was very efficient, and the school is considered to be one of the most successful held to date. Both teachers and students expressed their appreciation to the School Secretary, Dr J. Kleczek, and to the IAU Executive Committee. Another school, foreseen in Venezuela for September 1983, had to be cancelled due to the lack of support of the Venezuelan Research Council. There are plans to hold several schools during the 1985-1988 period.

2. Visiting Lecturers Projects.

At the last session of the General Assembly, it has been decided in Resolution A3 to support a contract scheme "for Visiting Lecturers with a sponsoring institution in a country newly entering into astronomical work". A subcommittee (set up jointly with Commission 38), under the chairmanship of Dr D.G. Wentzel has reviewed the various possibilities (see IAU information bulletin 50, p.14). A first contract, initiated by Dr M.L. Aguilar, has been signed in March 1984 between the IAU and the San Marcos University at Lima, Peru. The coordinating committee is chaired by Dr J. Sahade, who, as the first lecturer, started the courses in September 1984. A second contract is presently negotiated with the University of Nigeria, for a school in Nsukka, Nigeria. Dr D. Walsh has accepted to chair the coordinating committee for this project, organized locally by Dr S. Okoye.

3. Newsletter.

The Commission Newsletter is issued twice a year, roughly in January and June. During the period under review, issues n° 13 to 17 have been published and distributed. They include over 50 pages of articles, covering a wide variety of subjects, reporting on the current status of astronomy teaching in universities or stating the availability of new teaching material. We recently had the pleasure to welcome a first contribution by our Chinese colleague, Dr Du-Shenyun, from Beijing. The Newsletter Editor is Dr D. McNally ; as in the past, the Newsletter is produced and distributed by Dr D.G. Wentzel.

4. National Reports.

Every three years the Commission publishes (currently as an issue of its Newsletter), a collection of reports from National Delegates. This publication gives an overview of the astronomy teaching activities at general public, school and university levels throughout the world. The report for the period 1983-1985 will appear around May 1985.

5. Astronomy Education Materials.

This series of publications, started in 1970, is brought up to date every three years. It is at present also published as an issue of the Newsletter. The 1982 edition, issued as Newsletter n° 12, met with considerable success. It has been reprinted in 1983 with financial support of the IAU and most of the copies are nowadays distributed to institutions and individuals requiring them. The 1985 update is presently collected by Dr E. Kononovich (material in Slavic languages), Dr R. Robbins (material in English), and Dr M. Gerbaldi (other idioms). It is foreseen that the English part of A.E.M. will be published jointly with the American Association of Physics Teachers.

6. Education sessions at IAU Regional Meetings.

A full day has been devoted to astronomy education during the 8th IAU Regional Meeting, held at Toulouse (France), September 17-21, 1984. In addition to astronomers taking part in the meeting, the sessions were attended by over 80 schoolteachers of all levels, who had the opportunity to present some of their activities : instruments, video and movie films, books and leaflets. Dr L. Guggenheim (Paris) reported on the activities of CLEA (Comité de liaison enseignants - astronomes), which permit fruitful exchanges of ideas between professional astronomers and schoolteachers.

L. Houziaux

President of the Commission