

## COMMISSION 27

## VARIABLE STARS (*ETOILES VARIABLES*)

**PRESIDENT**  
**VICE-PRESIDENT**  
**PAST PRESIDENT**  
**ORGANIZING COMMITTEE**

Conny Aerts  
Steven Kawaler  
Jørgen Christensen-Dalsgaard  
Tim Bedding, Carla Cacciari,  
Peter Cottrell, Margarida Cunha,  
Gerald Handler, Peter Martinez,  
Dimitar Sasselov, Seetha Somasundaram,  
Doug Welch

### BUSINESS Meeting, 16 August 2006, 16h00–17h30

#### 1. Overview of the activities and achievements

The meeting started at 16h00. The president welcomed the 24 participants to the business meeting of C27. After the approval of the agenda, she gave an overview of the activities of C27 of the past three years.

Large emphasis was put on contact with the community, through the creation of an up-to-date operational email list (311 entries) and a refurbishment of the Commission's web site. The president gave special thanks (by means of Belgian chocolates) to Dr. Andras Holl from Konkoly Observatory (Hungary) for his continuous efforts as C27 web master. On average a monthly message was sent through the email list, concerning the distribution of news, meeting announcements, newsletters, deadlines for proposals, etc. The feedback from the community was rather large (some 1000 messages were received by the president over the three years).

Strong attention was also paid to keep close contact with the IAU secretariat. The president collaborated with the secretariat on the debugging of the new IAU website.

A total of 18 IAU meeting proposals was evaluated by the OC. The OC did this evaluation by means of a ranking system, and not on a case-by-base basis, to ensure the most objective procedure.

A specific effort was made to make sure that the triennial report on Research in Variable Stars and C27 activities was as representative as possible. In order to achieve this, a draft version written by the president was screened by the OC, and, subsequently, distributed to all the C27 members with a call for feedback and comments. About 60 reactions were received according to which the draft was revised and submitted for publication in the transactions.

#### 2. Election of New Officers

Elections were held to compose the new Organising Committee of C27 for the coming triennium. The results are as follows:

- The new president is Steve Kawaler (USA)
- The new vice-president is Gerald Handler (Austria)
- Retiring OC members: Jørgen Christensen-Dalsgaard (Denmark), Carla Cacciari (Italy), Peter Cottrell (New Zealand), Dimitar Sasselov (USA), Doug Welch (Canada)
- Continuing OC members: Conny Aerts (ex officio), Tim Bedding (Australia), Margarida Cunha (Portugal), Peter Martinez (SA), Seetha Somasundaram (India)
- New OC members: Marcio Catalan (Chile), Laurent Eyer (Switzerland), Simon Jeffery (Northern Ireland), Karen Pollard (New Zealand), Katalin Olah (Hungary)

The president expressed her gratitude to Jørgen Christensen-Dalsgaard, Carla Cacciari, Peter Cottrell, Doug Welch and Dimitar Sasselov, who served on the OC of C27 for at least three terms of three years each with a lot of motivation and dedication. She thanked them for the fruitful collaboration. She welcomed Marcio Catelan, Laurent Eyer, Simon Jeffery, Karen Pollard and Katalin Olah as new OC members and wished them good luck with their OC work under the leadership of the new president.

### 3. New members

A total of 62 among the 925 approved new IAU members chose C27 as their prime commission. All of them received a welcome mail from the outgoing president straight after the GA. Their contact addresses have been added to the email list, which was passed on to the new president.

### 4. Contributed talks

Two talks were submitted during the preparation of the Business meeting. They were considered of high relevance to the commission and thus time was devoted to them.

(a) *IAU Archives of Unpublished Observations of Variable Stars by Michel Breger*

**Abstract:** Several of the IAU Archives of Unpublished Observations of Variable Stars are essentially unavailable at present. We propose a solution to this problem. In the past, data files were sent as paper copies to three places (Royal Astronomical Society in UK, Odessa Astronomical Observatory in Ukraine, and CDS in France). Recent communications suggested that the retrieval problem is still not solved and that modern access to the valuable and irreplaceable data needs to be established. A cursory inspection of a hundred files shows about half to be under 10 pages, but a few as large as 57 pages. We propose the following solution:

1. Peter Hingley (Librarian RAS) has kindly agreed to make paper copies of the files to be sent to a centre where they are digitized.
2. Arne Henden (AAVSO) has kindly agreed to digitize the data.
3. Michel Breger updates the cover sheets (e.g., listing publications and the occasional revisions) and descriptions.
4. The data are made publicly available through the AAVSO, Commission 27 and Vienna web sites with the AAVSO site being long-term.

We would like to receive the approval of C27 for this procedure before starting the work.

The proposal by Michel Breger to digitize the remaining Archives of Unpublished Observations of Variable Stars for which only a paper copy exists at present, was approved and the president thanked Peter Hingley, Arne Henden, Andras Holl and Michel Breger for their efforts.

(b) *Prospects and problems of the General Catalogue of Variable Stars by Nikolai Samus*

**Abstract:** I am planning to speak about the current situation with variable star catalogs. The Moscow GCVS team is continuing its effort but encounters a number of problems. To make the catalog a really GENERAL one, we have to merge it with many new catalogs presented by automatic surveys. We have made the important preliminary step by providing accurate coordinates for virtually all old GCVS stars. Then, the automatic classifications provided in the survey catalogs are too superficial from the GCVS point of view, and the GCVS classification system seems too complex. I will suggest a simpler classification system based on the GCVS experience, having in mind that experts in particular variability types will be able to supplement it in their specialized catalogs. I need the opinion of the commission/division for planning the future of the GCVS.

The plan was made to create an informal Working Group on variable star classification and future variable star catalog issues. This working group should be composed of members from both C27 and C42. Depending on the achievements during the coming three years, and the

needs thereafter, an official IAU Working Group Status will be applied for during the next GA in Rio de Janeiro. A call for participation will be made in the fall of 2006. The president thanked Nikolai Samus for taking up this initiative and his lively discussion.

## **5. Plans for future meetings**

It was decided that Division V (Commission 27: Variable Stars and Commission 42: Close Binary Stars) should join their efforts and start preparing a proposal for a Symposium on Variable Stars at the next GA in Rio de Janeiro in 2009. It was felt that this should be done in close contact with the Working Groups that act under the auspices of Division V, as these had already expressed their interest to join this initiative during the GA.

## **6. Closing Remarks**

The president thanked the C27 community for the numerous constructive reactions and encouragements she received from members. She ended the meeting by wishing the C27 members a good continuation of their work under the leadership of the new OC. She pointed out that the minutes of the meeting, as well as the slides of the talks, will be made available through the C27 website.

The meeting ended at 17h15 with a telephone conversation with the new president, who was unfortunately unable to attend the GA, giving him a summary of the meeting.

Conny Aerts  
*president of the Commission*