

## Editor's Note

These past six months since the last Newsletter (No. 4) have seen a great deal of activity as far as the Working Group on Wide-Field Astronomy is concerned.

Firstly, the highly successful IAU Symposium (No. 161) on 'Astronomy from Wide-Field Imaging' was held in Potsdam, Germany, from 23-27 August 1993. Some 200 persons attended from all over the world, and it was particularly encouraging to see such a high percentage of participation from the Eastern European countries. Our Working Group can claim to be truly 'International' in this respect. Just under 200 papers have now been gathered for inclusion in the Proceedings, which have been retyped in a unified form and are currently being finalised. It is hoped that the Proceedings will be sent to the publisher (Kluwer Academic Publishers) by the end of February, and should appear in print during July 1994. All participants at the meeting will receive a copy.

Secondly, there has been a great deal of concern over the recent announcement by Eastman Kodak that they are to discontinue the production of certain of their astronomical emulsions. The participants of IAU Symposium No. 161 prepared a resolution providing a united voice of concern to Eastman Kodak. You will see a copy of the resolution included in this Newsletter, together with a response from Gordon Brown of Kodak.

Thirdly, we now see a threat to the Sonneberg Observatory and its very valuable plate collection. This too evoked a strong protest from the IAU Symposium, and the resolution produced, together with responses from various authorities in Germany, are included also in this Newsletter. The very valuable plate archive of the Sonneberg Observatory is an extremely important legacy for future astronomical research work, and we must ensure that the authorities involved are made aware of the extreme concern of the astronomical community to see that this rich treasure is properly safeguarded.

Finally, the Organising Committee of the Working Group is also now in the process of change. With the end of the 1st 3 years of the WG, it is now time to elect a new Organising Committee, and at the present time the process of electing new committee members is taking place. Both Richard West and I are standing down from our respective rôles (Richard as Chairman, and I as Secretary). In August of this year, you will see a new Organising Committee in place, with a new Chairman, new Secretary, and 8 new ordinary members. The 'official' changeover of the committees will take place at the time of the XXII General Assembly meeting of the IAU at the Hague.

We are also taking this opportunity to update our records for membership of the WG. Due to movement of persons, either from one institute or another or out of astronomy completely, our records may now be out-of-date or incomplete. Hence we bring the reader's attention to the extremely important announcement on the next page. If you wish to continue to be a member of the WG, you must return to me the completed questionnaire that will be sent to you in the next few weeks. Failure to do so may mean that your name is not retained on the list of active members.

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