

INTERSTELLAR DUST AND RELATED TOPICS

SYMPOSIUM No. 52

I.A.U. Symposium No. 52 on 'Interstellar Dust and Related Topics' was held at Albany, N.Y. on the State University of New York campus from May 29 to June 2, 1972. The meeting was sponsored by Commission 34 of the I.A.U., and supported by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the National Science Foundation, and, locally, by the State University and by Dudley Observatory. There were 158 participants of whom 49 were from 15 countries outside the U.S.A. An important feature of the meeting was the attendance by a sizeable number of physicists, chemists and geologists. The principal topics discussed were: extinction and polarization, diffuse interstellar features, dust around and in close association with stars, reflection nebulae and other aspects of dust scattering properties, alignment mechanisms, dust and gas, distribution of molecules and processes of molecule formation, radiation effects on dust, physical and chemical interaction of dust with the ambient medium-dust formation and destruction, gas and dust in H II regions. There was a clearly indicated need for additional data from laboratory and theoretical studies of the chemical, physical and optical properties of potentially important dust materials. Identification of both silicate and ice in grains was inferred from infrared absorption data. In general the value of the infrared as well as the ultraviolet observations was demonstrated. New techniques in polarimetry appear to be providing important grain optics criteria. The physical and chemical activities of the dust grains in the interstellar medium and their interactions in association with stars dominated in interest over the more passive properties of dust.

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