

COMMISSION No. 51

BIOASTRONOMY : SEARCH FOR EXTRATERRESTRIAL LIFE

(BIOASTRONOMIE : RECHERCHE DE LA VIE DANS L'UNIVERS)

Report of Meeting of August 9, 1988

President: F.D. Drake

BUSINESS MEETING

I. NEW OFFICERS

George Marx (Hungary) was elected President and Ronald Brown (Australia) Vice-President for the period 1988-1990. M. Papagiannis (USA) continued as Secretary and will serve as such over the period 1988-1990. The members of the scientific organizing committee for the period 1988-1990 are:

F. Drake (USA)
G. Gatewood (USA)
S. Gulkis (USA)
J. Heidman (France)
J. Jugaku (Japan)
N. Kardashev (USSR)
V. Slyath (USSR)
J. Tarter (USA).

II. NEW MEMBERS

Approximately 40 new members were added to the Commission, bringing the total membership to about 280. The Commission also has some 40 consultants, an unusually large number because some of the prime interests of the Commission are in scientific areas not ordinarily addressed by the IAU. Thus the total number of scientists active in the Commission is about 320. This number again illustrates the widespread interest in the work of the Commission, a phenomenon which has been evident since the founding of the Commission at the XVIII General Assembly at Patras.

III.I. SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS

The Commission held its second scientific meeting, IAU Colloquium 99, at Lake Balaton, Hungary, in June 1987. Some 200 scientists participated in this one-week meeting, which was held at excellent facilities on the shores of Lake Balaton. Arrangements for the meeting were excellent. The officers of the Commission were especially pleased to see the active participation, including many scientific presentations of people who have not been active in bioastronomy before. The proceedings of the Colloquium have now been published in the volume "Bioastronomy.... the Next Steps", edited by George Marx.

At Baltimore, the Commission received an invitation from its French colleagues to hold the next scientific meeting in the summer of 1990 at an attractive site in the French Alps. The Commission was delighted to accept this invitation. The Chairman of the local organizing committee will be Jean Heidman. It is anticipated that this will be a very popular meeting, particularly because of the rapidly growing activity in the areas of science relevant to Commission 51. The necessary approvals and support from the IAU administration are being sought.

IV. SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS

The Commission greatly increased the number of scientific sessions which is sponsored at the General Assembly. Although only one scientific session was held at the XIX General Assembly, four were held at Baltimore. Attendance was excellent. Again, the Commission officers and the session organizers were pleased to see participation by people who had not previously been active in the affairs of Commission 51. The titles of the scientific sessions were:

- 1) The Search for Other Planetary Systems;
- 2) Ongoing Searches for Extraterrestrial Radio Signals;
- 3) Proposed Radio Searches for Extraterrestrial Radio Signals;
- 4) Proposal for New Approaches to the Search for Extraterrestrial Life.