

Minutes of the XXIX International Scientific Instrument Symposium

Florence, Italy

4-9 October 2010

President: Paolo Brenni

Secretary: Sara Schechner

Treasurer: Hans Hooijmaijers

The Scientific Instrument Commission held its twenty-ninth annual symposium on 4-9 October 2010 in Florence, Italy at the Museo Galileo, formerly known as the Istituto e Museo di Storia della Scienza. The plenary business meeting was held on Thursday, October 7, at the Museo dei Mezzi di Comunicazione. About 100 people were present.

1) Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Dana Freiburger, Anthony Turner, Tatiana Moiseeva, Rand Evans, Alison Morrison-Low, Josh Nall, and Stephen Johnston.

2) Review of Minutes from Last Meeting in Budapest, Hungary, 2009

The Minutes of the 28th Plenary Session, held in Budapest, Hungary in August 2009 were circulated and reviewed. There was a correction of a typographical error.

3) SIC Finances

The SIC Treasurer, Hans Hooijmaijers, reported on the Commission's finances from September 2009 until September 2010.

Receipts:

€1500 grant from IUHPS

€ 100 interest

Expenses:

€100 bank fees

Note: We anticipated having to pay fees for site visits in Budapest, but had none.

Balances:

Current account: €1700.

Savings deposit: €4600.

Note: We still have expenses to cover for the Florence meeting.

4) Report of Ongoing Commission Activities

A. Online Resources and Initiatives

SIC website, <http://www.sic.iuhps.org>

There have been additions to the reference section. New links to digitized trade catalogues continue to be added to the Commission's website. We continue to place the SIC Bibliography online as well. The

latest additions to our resource section are links to videos of experiments performed with historical instruments.

The Commission formally thanks Dana Freiburger for his work as webmaster of the SIC site and moving the site to a new internet service provider.

The SIC Bibliography this past year was compiled by Harry Leechburch, the librarian of the Boerhaave Museum. He will continue next year. The Commission formally thanks him as well.

B. SIC Publications

The second volume of the Commission's new publication, *SIC: Scientific Instruments and Collections*, is to be published by Brill in 2011. Giorgio Strano, the editor-in-chief, described the papers in that volume, which are devoted to telescopes. A future volume might be Silvio Bedini's manuscript on Campani, but it needs a lot of work (being about 800 pages and lacking footnotes).

The Commission formally thanks the editors of the *SIC* series—Alison Morrison-Low, Stephen Johnston, and Giorgio Strano—along with the guest editor for the next volume, Sven Dupre.

5) Future Activities and Meetings

A. Scientific Instrument Commission Symposia

2011 Kassel, Germany

There was much discussion about the site of next year's meeting. Silke Ackerman had made inquiries into our holding a meeting in Istanbul. She reported that she had discovered a number of interesting collections to visit, but that there were administrative and networking issues that will require a longer lead time to solve. She recommended that we postpone a visit to Istanbul for a later year.

Other possible sites for were proposed, including Kassel (for 2011), Athens (2011 or 2012), Rio de Janeiro (2012 or 2014), and Hamburg (for 2012).

In the end, the Commission accepted the invitation to have its XXX Scientific Instrument Symposium in Kassel, Germany. It will be hosted by the Astronomisch-Physikalisches Kabinett (APK) there.

B. Other Future Meetings

In 2013, we will meet with the International Congress of History of Science, Technology, and Medicine (<https://www.meeting.co.uk/confercare/ichst2013/>).

6) Commission News

Paolo Brenni reminded Commission members that there will be an election of SIC officers before the IUHPS Congress in Manchester, in order to insure a smooth transition in 2013.

Paolo Brenni described letters written by the SIC in support of various instrument collections. One was written to the Rector of the University of Lisbon in support of the Museum of Science there. Another was written to support a grant for acquisition of new storage cabinets at Yale University.

Sofia Talas and Jim Bennett described a research project that will explore the origins and local peculiarities of 18th century cabinets in Europe. They anticipate organizing a special session on the topic at the next SIC Symposium.

Sara Schechner, as SIC Secretary, maintains our liaison with the IAU and the American Astronomical Society's Working Group on the Preservation of Astronomical Heritage.

7) News from Members

Roland Wittje discussed a new association, Universeum. More information can be found at <http://www.universeum.it/>.

Richard Dunn of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, announced a five-year research and exhibition project on the work of the Board of Longitude and collaboration with the University of Cambridge.

Michael Korey remarked on the sad passing of longtime SIC member, Inge Keil, and recollected her many contributions to the SIC community. Jürgen Hamel will be putting together a memorial volume in her honor.

8) New Business

The possibility of having some travel support for students to attend SIC meetings was discussed and endorsed. Money would need to be raised to make this a reality.

9) Thanks

Formal thanks were given to the Museo Galileo, the Fondazione Scienza e Tecnica, and to Fausto Casi for welcoming the Scientific Instrument Commission to their collections and making this a most memorable and stimulating meeting.

Respectfully submitted by
Sara J. Schechner
SIC Secretary