



News from The Society for Astronomical Sciences

Vol. 3, Number 2

2005 Symposium: Best Ever!!

The 2005 **SAS** Symposium is now history and by all counts, it was the best we have had to date, not only for content but also international participation. We had a wide variety of topics this year and a number of participating professional astronomers who gave presentations emphasizing the role amateurs can play in the particular topic presented. Among them was Dirk Terrell, Arne Henden, Alan Harris, Lance Benner, Mark Whorton, David Bradstreet and others. Hopefully some or all of these presentations will strike a chord in a few of us to get involved in their particular project.

In addition, we were especially pleased that a contingent of four spectroscopists from France were able to join us at the Symposium. In particular, Valerie Desnoux, who gave the outstanding talk on spectroscopy efforts in Europe and author of the spectroscopy analysis software Vspec. Also, Christian Buil who one could consider as the

“father” of amateur CCD was attending. More than one copy of his 1991 book was seen floating around with his autograph inside!

Arne Henden, the new Director of the **AAVSO** and continuing Advisor to the **SAS** gave the after dinner talk. He highlighted how two groups such as the **AAVSO** and **SAS** may interact in a synergistic manner in the future and maintain their distinct personalities. As an example discussions are underway for a joint **AAVSO/SAS** Symposium in the not to distant future.

Arne agrees that this type meeting would be very valuable to all AND because of the **SAS** location coupled to the RTMC, it should be held at the same time and same place! This would be an added draw for many across the country to attend. Stay tuned!

We thank our 2005 Sponsors whose support makes our meeting possible:

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Survey Results: The Members have Spoken

If you recall, we had two surveys during the course of the 2005 SAS Symposium. One was with regards to the Working Group for Professional-Amateur Collaboration (WGPAC), a committee of the American Astronomical Society. The other was an internal survey conducted by the SAS Committee in order to get a better feel for what was good/bad/neutral about this years Symposium. The results are in and you can see the breakdown of the two surveys on pages 5-7 of this Newsletter. Unfortunately, the number participating in the WGPAC survey was very modest (32) which makes it very

difficult to get a representative cross-section. But one thing very much stood out and that was the number who had NEVER heard of the WGPAC. Most of the time I incorporate updates on the Groups activities into the Newsletter so hopefully this will make members aware of the Group.

The other survey dealt with our SAS Symposium and where we may make improvements, eliminating

the bad, enhancing the good. One thing that was clear, workshops are a very desirable feature of the Symposium even if it extends the total SAS Symposium an extra day, i.e. workshop held on the Tuesday before the Symposium. We are planning to continue/expand the workshop (s) in the future.

In This Issue

2005 Symposium Pictures	2-3
Membership information	4
Results of Surveys	5-7

Committee:

- Lee Snyder – Co-Chairman
- Robert Stephens – Co-Chairman
- Robert Gill – Audio Visual Webmaster
- Dave Kenyon – Program Co-Chairman
- Dale Mais – Program Co-Chairman, Newsletter editor
- Brian Warner – Program Co-Chairman
- Jerry Foote – Program Co-Chairman

Advisors:

- Arne Henden
- Dirk Terrell



*News from The Society
for Astronomical
Sciences*

Below: Group photo of SAS 2005 Symposium. What are they looking at? Some don't see it and some are looking in the wrong direction whatever it is.

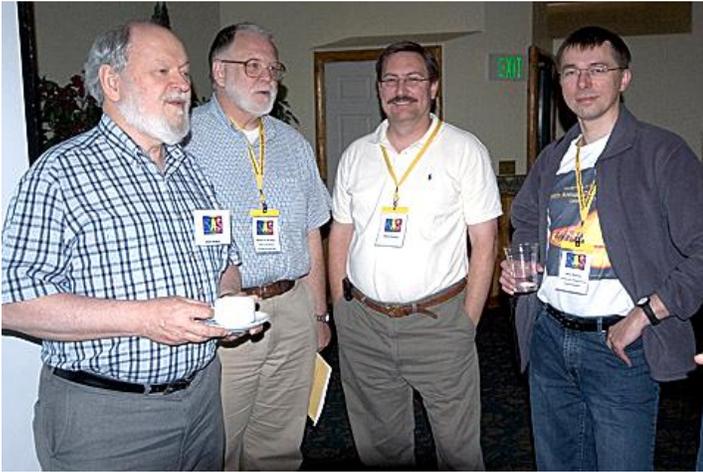


Right: Spectroscopists from France and USA meet at SAS Symposium (Kaye, Buil, Desnoux and Mais). Below: Henden, Terrell and Bradstreet obviously enjoying the Symposium.





Assorted Pictures from 2005 SAS
Symposium



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Membership Information

Membership in the Society for Astronomical Sciences (SAS).

As has been pointed out in previous issues, it was felt that a modest membership fee would greatly help SAS to produce a better product for its members. This fee will be \$25.00 per year, the same membership fee of the old IAPPP organization. What will this membership fee provide? Well for one thing it WILL NOT go to any committee members as part of their efforts within SAS. We volunteer our time for The Society.

Members will receive a discount for the registration fee each year for the Symposium at Big Bear. It will assure you that you will get a copy of the published proceedings each year, even if you do not attend the Symposium. It will

help defray costs in bringing in outside speakers (professionals) to the symposium. And of course, members receive this outstanding Newsletter.

Membership is annual and runs from July to June of the following year. To become a member, send \$25 to: Society for Astronomical Sciences, 8300 Utica Avenue, Suite 105, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730. You may also join online at the registration page of the web site. Membership dues are tax deductible. We currently have 82 members with many renewals due in by June 1.

The SAS is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

<http://socastrosci.org/Default.htm>



Tom Kaye updating us on his spectroscopy efforts. Tom has recently retired and is moving to Arizona for its better skies. Also he will better be able to participate every year in the SAS Symposium!

Your Participation Wanted!

As I have mentioned in previous Newsletters, we need your participation in the Newsletter. We don't want this to become a one person or just a couple person show. If you have an article which can cover a variety of topics, please put it together for a future Newsletter. Work in progress is always welcome. In addition, we have started a "letters to the Editor" section where we would like to add 2-3

letters from the members/participants. We had no letters to incorporate into this Newsletter edition. Constructive comments are always welcome as we are always looking for ways to improve not only the quality of the Newsletter but also the quality of the Symposium. We want the SAS to become a year around organization not just a once a year group.

socastrosci.org/Default.htm

~ 400 B. C. 1830 1906 1913 1924

Our view of atoms has had an interesting evolution

News from the Working Group for Professional-Amateur Collaborations (WGPAC)

The WGPAC has been active over the past several months with several teleconferences and informal meetings at the American Astronomical Society meeting in San Diego this past January. I presented an update at the SAS meeting on these activities and conducted a poll on behalf of the WGPAC and the AAS. The AAS is beginning to express more interest in the Working Group and the potential of more advanced amateurs to participate in the AAS. Participation in the poll, 32 out of 114 registrants, was disappointing as it was hoped a larger cross section of SAS participants would give us a better feel of how amateurs may want to interact with the AAS. None-

theless, the most surprising result to me was the large number of people (a vast majority in fact) who had no idea of the working group. The reason this was so surprising to me was that the last several Newsletters have contained a section on the activities of the Working Group!! I'll let the reader interpret this finding.

For more information go to the WGPAC web site at:

<http://www.aas.org/wgpac/registry/>.



Total participants in questionnaire 32

Are you a member of the American Astronomical Society (AAS)?

No 28 Yes 4

Would you be interested in becoming an AAS member?

Yes 27 No 0 Maybe 5

What would prevent you from becoming a member?

Cost	12
Required Signatures	7
Time to participate	3
Lack of knowledge of AAS	2
Value vs. benefit	2
Nothing	2
Cost AND Signatures	2
Lack of technical qualifications	1
Value vs. time commitment	1

Since dues are usually the main concern, if dues (\$110) were half, would that make a difference?

Consider this in relation to what you spent last year in astronomy related purchases.

Yes 16 No 15 Perhaps 1

Have you visited the WGPAC website and entered information on yourself into the database?

No 29 Yes 3

If you have not done so, why?

Didn't know about it	17
Seen no activity of group	2
Equipment in flux	2
Waiting for better info at web site	1
To many projects already	1

If you are versed in website design/database maintenance, would you be willing to volunteer to help with the WGPAC website?

Some SQL programming. If you are interested be sure to leave your name on questionnaire.

No 26

What other Astronomy related scientifically oriented organizations do you belong/participate in?

AAVSO	11	OCA	3	ASP	6	IOTA	1	IAU	1
APS	1	CBA	1	BAA	1	IAPPP	3	ALPO	1
SETI	1	Antique telescope Society	1						

Have you or would you be interested in attending or participating in an AAS meeting if it was in the area?

Yes 28 Maybe 2

Other comments: Please use backside if needed.

Eager to see Pro-Am develop	1
Want to do meaningful research	1

The following results were taken from 54 respondents to the survey.

Some of the respondents did not answer all questions.

With open-ended questions, there was more than once answer given in most cases.

What is your overall perception of the annual Symposium?

45 excellent 9 good

What do you like most about the Symposium?

23 Range of topics	15 Networking	11 Pro/Am mix/collaboration	6 Best practices exposure	5 David Bradstreet
3 Science	2 Workshop	1 Sponsors	1 Location/Hotel	1 Length of talks
1 Variable Star information	1 Photometry/Spectroscopy			

What do you like least about the Symposium?

2 banquet/food costs	2 tables/chairs too close	2 presentations were boring with only PowerPoint	
2 Resurrection of a Research Telescope presentation	2 too short	2 asteroid stuff	1 no cookies
1 to close to Memorial Day	1 no water pitchers on the tables	1 needs more workshops	1 coffee
1 lack of evening hands-on events		1 location	1 hard to see from the back of the room
1 some papers too technically advanced		1 better balance: hardware/data/results	
1 temperature in the meeting room	1 more breaks	1 drive up from Apple Valley	1 mid week meeting

What topics would you like to see covered?

11 Practical photometry workshop/tutorial	6 Data collection/reduction workshop	6 Pro/Am collaborations		
2 Equipment in use	2 Software demos	2 David Bradstreet	1 Cutting edge and current topics	1 New products/techniques
1 Carbon stars	1 Spectroscopy	1 Comets	1 More math	1 Telescope design and research
1 Solar and Solar system activity		1 Instrument design	1 How to write papers	1 CV's
1 Invited talks; Patterson, Landolt, Marcy		1 Survey telescopes	1 Robotic/Remote observing	1 GRB's, Blazars

Do you prefer papers on scientific results, techniques, or both?

43 Both 4 Techniques

Would you be interested in seeing the Symposium expanded if the extra day only contained workshops?

43 Yes 7 No 2 Other (depends on if the workshop is of interest to them)

Would you be interested in the Symposium being held at a different time of year?

8 Yes 35 No 4 Other (these were ok with this time of year, but would consider others options)

Do you also attend the RTMC Astronomy Expo?

24 Yes 20 No 2 What is RTMC?

If you are doing research, list the fields in which you are involved.

15 Asteroids	8 Variable stars	6 Binary stars	5 Exoplanet transits	3 Occultation's	2 Astrometry
2 Instrumentation	2 Be stars	1 Transient events	1 Archeoastronomy	1 Pretty pictures	1 Outreach
1 Photometry	1 Comets	1 MIRA's	1 Massive stars	1 Telescopes	1 NEO
1 Super Nova search		1 GRB's			

List other organizations of which you are a member.

17 AAVSO	11 Local Astronomy club	8 ASP	6 AAS	3 IAPPP	3 ALPO	2 IOTA	2 CBA	2 IDA	2 AUDE
2 AT60	2 RAS	2 CALA	2 IAU	1 WAA	1 RTMC	1 ADS	1 CAS	1 NASS	1 BAA

Do you feel you are getting a good value for your membership in SAS?

41 Yes 1 No

The remaining either didn't comment or were not yet members. Some commented that they would definitely join based on what they experienced at this meeting.

