

C19 COMMISSION REPORT

The present commission members are:

Acting-Chair: FONSECA, VICTORIA (2005) (2002) SPAIN

Chair: FRIDMAN, ALEXEI (Temporarily Inactive) (2005) (2002) RUSSIA

Secretary: WHITELOCK, PATRICIA (2005) (2002) SOUTH AFRICA

AGUIAR, ODYLIO (2005) (2002) BRAZIL

CHAPMAN, SANDRA (2005) (2002) UK

CZERNY, BOZENA (2005) POLAND

D'ANTONA, FRANCESCA (2005) ITALY

HASINGER, GUENTHER (2005) (2002) GERMANY

PADMANABHAN, THANU (2005) INDIA

SADLER, ELAINE (2005) AUSTRALIA

SASAKI, MISAO (2005) JAPAN

TAUTVAISIENE, GRAZINA (2005) LITHUANIA

TRIMBLE, VIRGINIA (2005) (2002) USA

Associate Members 2006-2008:

Robert Gent

Gerard Gilmore UK

Magda Stavinschi ROMANIA

Despina Hatzidimitriou GREECE

C19 SPONSORED CONFERENCES:

year 2006

23rd Texas Symposium on Relativistic Astrophysics held in Melbourne, Australia, from 11-15 December 2006 (<http://www.texas06.com/>).

The Conference was very successful, the number of attendees was 302 with a number of 30 countries participating. The number of participants from outside the host country was 200. The number of women participating was around 45 in average and the number of women giving invited papers was around 30 in average.

For the first time the C19 Young Physicist Prize was given to Marta Burgay during the Texas Symposium.

year 2007

International Astronomical Union Symposium 247. WAVES & OSCILLATIONS IN THE SOLAR ATMOSPHERE:

HEATING AND MAGNETO-SEISMOLOGY

Porlamar, Isla de Margarita (Venezuela)

17 - 22 September 2007
(<http://www.iaus247.org/>)

The meeting was quite successful with about 90 attendees.

year 2008

24th Texas Symposium on Relativistic Astrophysics also sponsored by C19 will be held in Vancouver, December 8 - 12, 2008(<http://www.texasinvancouver.org/main/welcome/>)

C19 YOUNG PHYSICIST PRIZE

year 2006

For the first time the C19 Young Physicist Prize was given to Marta Burgay during the 2006 Texas Symposium. Marta Burgay received the medal and the certificate, and she gave a presentation under the title "Secular and Orbital Changes in Emission from J0737-3039 System". Marta Burgay got her PhD at the University of Bologna. Being a PhD student of the collaboration on the Parkes Multibeam Pulsar Survey, she was given the responsibility of Principal Investigator for a companion survey known as the Parkes High Latitude Survey in Australia. In this survey she discovered the most exciting pulsar in the past two decades: the first known double pulsar system, PSR J0737-3039A/B, capable to supply data to test general relativity with unprecedented precision, a real leap in fundamental science.

year 2008

C19 Commission has given the award of its 2008 Young Physicist's Prize to Prof. Eiichiro Komatsu of the University of Texas, Austin, for his work on the interpretation of cosmic microwave background data, first from COBE and more recently from WMAP, especially limits on the non-Gaussianity of the CMB.

Very excellent candidates were presented and C19 also awarded Honorable Mention to two additional outstanding nominees, Marta Volonteri for her work on the evolution of black holes in the early universe and Sarah Gallagher for studies of highly absorbed quasars with broad absorption lines.

The Prize (consisting of a gold medal and a cash award) will be presented to E. Komatsu at the December 2008 "Texas" Symposium on Relativistic Astrophysics in Vancouver, BC, Canada, where he will deliver a talk about his work.

C19 expects to present its third prize by the end of 2010. An announcement of opportunity to nominate candidates for the 2010 prize, will appear in newsletters and/or web sites of IUPAP, the International Astronomical Union, the European Astronomical Society, the American Astronomical Society, and other organizations, with a deadline in early spring 2010.

A BRIEF NOTE ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF ASTRONOMY FOR PHYSICS

The International Year of Astronomy 2009 is a global effort initiated by the International Astronomical Union and UNESCO to help the citizens of the world rediscover their place in the Universe through the day- and night-time sky, and thereby engage a personal sense of wonder and discovery.

Everyone should realize the impact of astronomy and other fundamental sciences on our daily lives, and understand how scientific knowledge can contribute to a more equitable and peaceful society. IYA2009 activities will take place locally, nationally, regionally and internationally. National Nodes have been formed in each country to prepare activities for 2009. These nodes will establish collaborations between professional and amateur astronomers, science centres and science communicators to prepare activities for 2009. Already now, 126 countries are involved and well over 140 are expected to participate eventually.

To help coordinate this huge global programme and to provide an important resource for the participating countries, the IAU has established a central Secretariat and an IYA2009 website (www.astronomy2009.org) as the principal IYA2009 resource for public, professionals and media alike.

The major goals of IYA2009 are to:

1. Increase scientific awareness.
2. Promote widespread access to new knowledge and observing experiences.
3. Empower astronomical communities in developing countries.
4. Support and improve formal and informal science education.
5. Provide a modern image of science and scientists.
6. Facilitate new networks and strengthen existing ones.
7. Improve the gender-balanced representation of scientists at all levels and promote greater involvement by underrepresented minorities in scientific and engineering careers.
8. Facilitate the preservation and protection of the world's cultural and natural heritage of dark skies in places such as urban oases, national parks and astronomical sites.