

Annual report of the C.C4 Working Group "Classical Observatories from the Renaissance to the 20th Century" (2017)

Report for the period 1 January to 31 December 2017.

The commission WG of the IAU currently comprises:

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The working group was formed at the beginning of 2016.

The objective of the WG is putting forward WH nominations of classical observatories, especially trans-national, serial nominations, for example La Plata and Hamburg observatories.

The next objective is to promote further case studies of classical observatories and to publish them in the web portal (www.astronomicalheritage.net).

Contribution for the publication of the proceedings of the Hawaii GA 2015: "Route of astronomical observatories" project: Classical observatories from the Renaissance to the rise of astrophysics. In: IAU Volume 11 (2016), Issue A29A (Astronomy in Focus), pp. 124-128. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743921316002581>.

IAU's list of Outstanding Astronomical Heritage (OAH) sites

A further new objective of the WG Observatories is to compile a list of astronomical sites or institutions that have had a significant role in the history of astronomy, regardless if they are included or not in the UNESCO's list. There should be no using of the words "Astronomy World Heritage" in the title of the certificate which would create confusion with the concept of World Heritage and the World Heritage Convention in general. The idea is to call it "IAU List of Outstanding Astronomical Heritage" (OAH). Although the word "Outstanding" has particular connotations within the WH Convention, however, this would be not as sensitive as using the phrase "World Heritage", while still being as powerful. This idea of an "IAU

Certificate" was adopted during the 99th annual meeting of the IAU Executive Committee in Mexico (2016).

In the meantime the preliminary structure that has been designed to request such information is a provisional characterization that, in about 500 words, accounts for the following information:

- Name of the site:
- City or geographical position
- Coordinates:
- Country:
- Webpage:
- Short description of the cultural heritage (including age, building, instruments, archive material, etc., authenticity and integrity)
- Link to case studies in the portal:
- Is it declared a World Heritage Site?
- Importance for the history of astronomy:
- Astronomical Relevance (today):
- Management and contemporary usage:
- Bibliography (books and published articles)
- Images
- State of conservation, Protection, Context and environment

The WG will start to propose important sites in the "Portal to the Heritage of Astronomy" (<https://www3.astronomicalheritage.net/index.php>).

The process for handling the nomination and consideration of further sites will be discussed at the GA in Vienna (2018).

Concerning the IAU GA in 2018, G. Wolfschmidt will give a presentation (besides the short report of the WG) on: "Observatories 100 years ago - UNESCO vs. IAU List of Outstanding Astronomical Heritage".

Meetings:

- Cultural astronomy conference: The road to the stars.
Juan Antonio Belmonte. Santiago de Compostela, Spain. 18-23 Sept 2017
- Southern horizons in time - domain astronomy.
Elizabeth Griffin. Cape Town, South Africa. November 2017.

Prof. Dr. Gudrun Wolfschmidt

<http://www.hs.uni-hamburg.de/DE/Ins/Per/Wolfschmidt/index.html>

<http://www.hs.uni-hamburg.de/DE/GNT/w.htm>

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