

DIVISION VII GALACTIC SYSTEM

SYSTÈME GALACTIQUE

Division VII provides a forum for astronomers studying our home galaxy, the Milky Way, which offers a unique laboratory for exploring the detailed structure of the stellar and gaseous components of galaxies and the process by which they form and evolve.

PRESIDENT	Patricia A. Whitelock
VICE-PRESIDENT	Ata Sarajedini
PAST PRESIDENT	Georges Meylan
BOARD	Ortwin Gerhard, Miroslav Giersz, Georges Meylan, Birgitta Nordström, David N. Spergel, Rainer Spurzem

DIVISION VII COMMISSIONS

Commission 33	Structure and Kinematics of the Galactic System
Commission 37	Star Clusters and Associations

DIVISION VII WORKING GROUP

Division VII WG	Galactic Centre
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PROCEEDINGS BUSINESS & SCIENCE MEETINGS on 21 August 2006

1. Introduction

Most of the day was devoted to the scientific session with a brief business meeting for Division VII and Commission 33 just before lunch. Commission 37, the other ‘half’ of the Division, had already held their business session on 17 August.

2. Business Meeting

The president described the various activities of the Division which primarily involve sponsoring IAU Symposia and Colloquia. The suggestion for members of the new Board (see below) were approved and most of the discussion centred around the proposed Working Group (see below).

3. Working Group on the Galactic Centre

At the meeting it was decided that Division VII would form an IAU Working Group on the *Galactic Centre*. The first chair would be Joseph Lazio who would select an organizing committee taking into account those at the meeting who expressed an interest, the usual considerations of equity and representation, but primarily ensuring that all the major parties working in the area were represented.

There had been some debate on the possibility of making this an inter-Divisional Working Group on *Galactic Centres*, in order to encourage the exchange of ideas between those working on related Galactic and on extra-galactic problems. In the end this was not the path chosen, but noting the considerable interest from Commission 28 (Galaxies) it was decided that participation

from this group would be encouraged. The possibility of widening the scope of the Working Group would be re-examined after three years, at the time of the next GA.

4. Science session – new results on the Galactic Centre

This topic was chosen because it is of broad interest to members of the Division and because it was a subject in which there had been considerable progress over the preceding three years. Furthermore, the Division VII Board had considered in detail the proposal that the Division should create an IAU Working Group to work on the *Galactic Centre*. The IAU General Assembly in Prague offered an ideal opportunity to gauge the level of interest in such a group.

A special organizing committee was set up for the occasion, comprising: Reinhard Genzel (Germany), Ortwin Gerhard (Germany), Cornelia Lang (USA), Joseph Lazio (USA) and Patricia Whitelock (South Africa, chair).

The science session comprised the following invited and contributed presentations:

- Super-massive black hole at the Centre of our Galaxy Mark Morris (USA)
- Radio imaging of Sgr A* Avery Broderick (USA)
- Recent near-IR/X-ray and the first time-resolved AO near-IR polarization measurements of Sgr A* Andreas Eckart (Germany)
- Sgr B2 region in H¹³CO⁺ and SiO lines Masato Tsuobi (Japan)
- Galactic Centre region as seen by HESS in very high-energy γ -rays Loic Rolland (France)
- Theory of accretion and flares Sera Markoff (the Netherlands)
- Origin of the young stars in the Galactic Centre Thibaut Paumard (Germany)
- Origin of the young stars in the central parsec Simon Portegies Zwart (the Netherlands)
- *Spitzer* mid-infrared survey of the inner $2^\circ \times 1^\circ.5$ of the Galaxy Howard Smith (USA)
- Star clusters and star formation in the Galactic Centre Angela Coteria (USA)
- Centres of disk dominated galaxies Marcella Carolla (Switzerland)

This proved a very interesting meeting with the lecture room full to capacity for much of the day and lively discussion following each of the presentations.

5. New Division Board

The established practice of Division VII is for the Board to comprise the presidents, vice-presidents and past presidents of Commissions 33 and 37. This process will be continued, but the chair of the Working Group will also be nominated for membership of the Board.

The past practice of the Division has been for the presidency to alternate between Commissions 33 and 37 from one triennium to the next. Within these terms the new president would have been from Commission 37, but on this occasion the Commission 37 president had not previously been on the Divisional Board and decided she did not wish to take up the Divisional presidency as well as that of the Commission. It was therefore agreed that the new president of Commission 33 would also take up the leadership of the Division.

The new Division VIII Board is, therefore, as follows:

- Ortwin Gerhard (Germany, president, president Commission 33)
- Despina Hatzidimitriou (Greece, vice-president, president Commission 37)
- Charles J. Lada (USA, vice-president Commission 37)
- Joseph Lazio (USA, chair WG Galactic Centre)
- Ata Sarajedini (USA, past president Commission 37)
- Patricia A. Whitelock (South Africa, past president Commission 33)
- Rosemary Wyse (USA, vice-president Commission 33)

Patricia A. Whitelock
president of the Division