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WORKING GROUP ON PLANETARY SYSTEM NOMENCLATURE

(GROUPE DE TRAVAIL POUR LA NOMENCLATURE DU SYSTEME PLANETAIRE)

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1. Activities in the Last Triennium

Since the IAU General Assembly in Manchester, UK in August 2000, the WGPSN has conducted its business through numerous e-mail exchanges between the members. A nomenclature workshop was held in Birmingham, Alabama, US on October 6, 2002 in connection with the annual meeting of the AAS Division for Planetary Sciences. Only half of the WG members were present but input had been received by e-mail beforehand from the other members.

2. New Nomenclature

Some 140 provisional names have been assigned to surface features on Mars, Venus, the Galilean satellites and the asteroid Eros. These and subsequent names will be published in IAU Transactions XXVB if approved by the IAU GA in Sydney in 2003. The naming of 11 recently discovered satellites of Jupiter is somewhat overdue, so their provisional names are included here. The satellites are listed in order of increasing distance, while the Roman numerals are in order of recovery announcement on a Minor Planet Circular (MPC).

Temp. des.	Roman #	Name	MPC #
S/1975 J 1	= XVIII	= Themisto	44862
S/2000 J 3	= XXIV	= Iocaste	44032
S/2000 J 5	= XXII	= Harpalyke	44862
S/2000 J 7	= XXVII	= Praxidike	44506
S/2000 J 9	= XX	= Taygete	43760
S/2000 J 10	= XXI	= Chaldene	43761
S/2000 J 2	= XXIII	= Kalyke	44862
S/1999 J 1	= XVII	= Callirrhoe	44862
S/2000 J 8	= XIX	= Megaclite	44862
S/2000 J 6	= XXVI	= Isonoe	44506
S/2000 J 4	= XXV	= Erinome	44033

The source of the 11 new satellite names is the court of Zeus or Jupiter in Greco-Roman mythology. The names follow the established tradition for the satellites of Jupiter. For the outer satellites the convention is that the satellites in direct orbits have names (mainly Latin) ending in -a, and the satellites in retrograde orbits have names (mainly

Greek) ending in -e. The last ten satellites in the current list are thus all in retrograde orbits. With a direct orbit of significantly smaller size and greater inclination than the other outer satellites that have names ending in -a, the first satellite on this list, Themisto, was deliberately given a name with an -o ending, rather coincidentally aligning it with its inner neighbor, Callisto.

Additional satellites of the outer planets are being discovered at ever increasing rates. It has been predicted that in a few years time we may know 100 satellites of Jupiter. This has caused concern that the traditional sources of satellite names may get exhausted. This was discussed at the workshop in Birmingham. One solution is to allow new name categories; e.g., for Saturn's satellites a theme of dances in various countries has been proposed. A less radical solution, which is favored by the WG, is to start using the names of the many descendants of the principal Greco-Roman mythological characters after whom most satellites have been named so far.

The WGPSN regrets to have to retract the lunar crater name

`Eppinger, Lat. 9.4S, Long. 25.7W, 6 km diam.`

named by the IAU in 1976 for Hans Eppinger Jr. (1879-1946), Czechoslovakian doctor. Recently it has been brought to the attention of the WGPSN that Dr. Eppinger, according to the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. and other sources, conducted cruel experiments on prisoners at the concentration camp in Dachau. Dr. Eppinger's criminal conduct during the Second World War, despite otherwise notable contributions to medical science, disqualifies him for being honored on the Moon.

3. WGPSN Membership

With sadness we report that Merton E. Davies passed away on April 17 2001. He has been one of the most active members on the nomenclature teams ever since the creation of WGPSN in 1973. As a leading cartographer on many of NASA's planetary mission teams, he was the primary contributor of geodetic information about the planetary bodies.

In an effort to bring new expertise and more international participation to the nomenclature teams, two new members from Germany and the USA have been added to the WG, and four new members from the Netherlands, Hungary and the USA have been added to the Mercury, Mars and the Small Bodies Task Groups since the last IAU GA.

K. Aksnes

Chairperson of the Working Group

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