

November 20, 1964.

Dear Jim,

As you possibly know, Vern Rensay has found that he cannot continue in the office of National Chairman of the Standing Committee on Observational Activities and I have been persuaded to take his place.

Among the matters that I would like to discuss with the National Co-ordinators is that of the procedure to be followed in issuing bulletins. When the Standing Committee was formed, no set rules were laid down, for we were breaking new ground and felt that we would learn from experience. Generally speaking, the Co-ordinator addressed his first bulletin to the presidents and secretaries of the Centres, asking that a contact be named for his particular field of observation. Subsequent bulletins were sent to these contacts (or in the case of Centres that had not replied, to the secretaries). Copies were also sent to the other Co-ordinators and members of the Standing Committee and to the National Officers. The procedure for reproducing and mailing the bulletins depended on the location of the Co-ordinator. Those in the Montreal area used the duplicating facilities of the Montreal Centre but supplied the stencils and paper. The Co-ordinator looked after the mailing, supplying envelopes and postage. I understand that those in the Toronto area used the facilities of the National Office, which also looked after the mailing. To date no bulletins have been issued in other areas.

It has now been suggested by our National President that all Co-ordinators, acting through the National Chairman, submit regular bulletins, short and to the point, on each of their disciplines at stated times of the year - say February, June and October. After editing by the National Chairman and the Editing Committee, these would be mimeographed and mailed through the National Office. Any special bulletins on timely subjects might still be sent out, but these would be the responsibility of the Co-ordinator and would not be handled by the National Office.

The suggested system has both advantages and disadvantages. I am attaching a list of the bulletins issued to date and, to start the discussion, am jotting down a few points that have occurred to me.

1. It can be seen that bulletins have not been issued with any degree of regularity. The deadlines of the proposed system would serve to prod the Co-ordinators. Some will find this irksome while others will welcome it.
2. Solves a problem for Co-ordinators who have no access to duplicating equipment. Those who have may be glad to be relieved of the work.
3. Solves the expense problem which has concerned the National Council for some time. Some Co-ordinators have incurred considerable expense but any system for reimbursing them would be difficult to control.
4. I believe it is the intention to mail the bulletins to the presidents and secretaries of the Centres, to members of the National Council, and to members of the Committee on Adult Education, as well as the National Co-ordinators and members of the Standing Committee. This wider circulation is certainly desirable. But each Co-ordinator has built up his own mailing list. The contacts for the Centres may differ and the lists may include names of some unattached members. How would this be handled?

5. Editing Committee referred to above is the Committee that reviews all material emanating from the National Office - Journal, Handbook, notices, circulars and bulletins. Co-ordinators must therefore be prepared to accept standardization of the material they submit.

6. There will be some loss of time in sending drafts back and forth. (Presume the Co-ordinator will have opportunity of reviewing, before publication, any changes made in his original draft.)

7. Injunction to keep bulletins short and to the point raises the question of subject matter. The lengthier bulletins have included instructions and report forms. Should future bulletins contain only brief outlines of programmes, with detailed instructions being sent only to those who subsequently request them? If so, how would the reproduction and mailing of this additional material be handled?

8. Additional supplies of instructions and report forms are required by Centres from time to time. How would the reproduction and mailing of these be handled?

9. Simultaneous publication of bulletins would make it easier to assess at any time the activity and progress. Might be the forerunner of a printed supplement to the Journal? (Incidentally, Co-ordinators are not presently limited to bulletins. They can submit articles for publication in the Journal, and several have already done so.)

I could go on at greater length but these are the main points that have occurred to me. The mechanical problems can undoubtedly be solved and the proposed system has much to recommend it. I would, however, appreciate an expression of opinion from each of you.

Sincerely,

*Isabel K. Williamson*

Isabel K. Williamson  
National Chairman,  
Standing Committee on Observational  
Activities  
Royal Astronomical Society of Canada.

Copies to:-

A. Ostrander - Lunar  
G. Caherty - Planetary  
J. Low - Comets & Novae  
E. Milton - Aurora  
T. Dickinson - Variable Stars  
S. A. Nott - Meteors  
V. Ramsay - Former National Chairman  
Dr. K. O. Wright - National President  
Rev. Norman Green - National Secretary.

ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA  
 STANDING COMMITTEE ON OBSERVATIONAL ACTIVITIES  
List of Bulletins Issued to Date

<u>Field of Observation</u>	<u>No. of Bulletin</u>	<u>Date Issued</u>	<u>No. of Pages</u>	<u>Subject Matter</u>
National Chairman	1	Sept. 1, 1961	3	Purpose of Committee, modus operandi, appointment of first 5 co-ordinators
	2	Oct. 30, 1962	1	Progress report end of first year
	-	Nov. 1962	1	July 20, 1963 Eclipse, appointment of Co-ordinator
Aurora	1	?	1	Invitation to Centres to participate
	2	Mar. 1963	2	Outline of new programme
Planetary	1	Oct. 25, 1961	1	Invitation to Centres to participate
	2	Feb. 7, 1962	2	Progress report and outline of Jupiter observing programme
	3	Apr. 5, 1962	6	Progress report, general instructions for planetary observing with 2 report forms
	4	July 17, 1962	5	Progress report, special instructions for observing Jupiter with 2 report forms
	5	Feb. 8, 1963	1	Progress report
Lunar	1	Nov. 7, 1961	1	Invitation to Centres to participate
	2	Feb. 20, 1962	1 f	Progress report
	3	Aug. 20, 1962	3 f	Progress report, outline of programme, dome catalogue
	4	June 1964	3 f	Programme for Lunar Eclipse of June 24, 1964 with report form & Kodak booklet.
Solar Eclipse	1	Jan. 1963	1	General invitation to centres to participate Que. road map enclosed.
	2	Feb. 15, 1963	2	Outline of Basic Programme
	3	Mar. 15, 1963	6	Instructions for Precision Observations with report form
	-	March 1963	1	Special invitation to unattached members
	4	April 6, 1963	6	Instructions for Photographic projects, with report forms & Kodak booklet
	5	May 4, 1963	4	Instructions for Visual Observations, with report forms
	6	May 27, 1963	3	Observing Sites & Field Stations in Quebec
	7	June 10, 1963	4	Special projects
	8	July 2, 1963	4	Eclipse Roundup, with list of participants (expected)

List of Bulletins Issued to Date (cont'd.)

<u>Field of Observation</u>	<u>No. of Bulletin</u>	<u>Date Issued</u>	<u>No. of Pages</u>	<u>Subject Matter</u>
Comets & Novae	1	Nov. 15, 1961	1	Invitation to Centres to participate
	-	?	5	Five instruction sheets & report forms sent to Centres
	2	Mar. 1, 1962	1	Progress report
	3	June 18, 1962	1	Progress report
	4	Mar. 19, 1963	2 f	Progress report & announcement of new programme
	-	Feb. 1964	6	Revised instructions & report forms issued
	5	Mar. 15, 1964	2	Progress report & comet ephemeris
<u>Announcements</u>				
	1	?	1	?
	2	?	1	?
	3	Mar. 23, 1962	1	Comet Seki-Lines
	4	June 18, 1962	1	Comet Humason
	5	?	1	?
	6	Feb. 26, 1963	1	Nova Hercules
	7	Apr. 7, 1963	1	Comet Alcock
	8	July 5, 1964	1	Comet Tomita-Gerber-Honda
	9	July 21, 1964	1	Comet Ikeya & Comet Tomita-Gerber-Honda
Variable Stars	-	(No bulletins issued to date)		
Meteors	-	(No bulletins issued to date)		

November 19, 1964