

SOCIETY MATTERS

From the Secretary

Greetings from the new Secretary! On behalf of the Society, I extend a hearty welcome to the new Executive Council of ASI, which assumed office in January 2004. The composition of the new council is as listed. We are immensely grateful to the previous council for striving to make the ASI a financially sound, self-sufficient professional body. The present council is committed to build on the excellent work done by the previous councils.

THE M.K. VAINU BAPPU GOLD MEDAL FOR YOUNG ASTRONOMERS FOR THE YEAR 2002

Our heartiest congratulations go to Dr. Brian P. Schmidt of the Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia, who received the Vainu Bappu Gold Medal for the year 2002 in a function organized at IUCAA, Pune, on January 24, 2004. At this occasion, he also delivered the Vainu Bappu Memorial Lecture on “Accelerating Universe”. The citation of Dr. Schmidt reads as follows: “Dr. Schmidt’s major scientific achievements have been in observational studies of supernovae. His thorough and insightful observations have helped in a better understanding of the progenitors of supernovae, the mechanism of the explosion, and the chemical composition of the different types of supernovae. Of particular importance has been his contribution to the use of the very distant Type Ia supernovae to determine the rate of change of the expansion of the Universe. Dr. Schmidt and his collaborators have recently shown that the Universe is not only expanding, but accelerating. If this result stands the test of time, it will undoubtedly be one of the most important discoveries in contemporary cosmology.”

VENUE OF THE 23RD ASI MEETING : ASI-2005

It gives me great pleasure to inform that the Executive Council of the ASI has accepted the invitation of Prof. Ram Sagar, Director, State Observatory, Manora Peak, Nainital, Uttaranchal, to hold the 23rd ASI Meeting. The Nainital Observatory will complete 50 years in April 2004. Therefore, it will be appropriate to hold the next ASI meeting in Nainital. It is expected that the meeting will take place during February 2005. An announcement will be sent by the organizers in due course, after the dates are finalized.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE VAINU BAPPU GOLD MEDAL-2004

The ASI invites nominations for the award of the Vainu Bappu Gold Medal for the year 2004. This award has been instituted by ASI in the year 1986 in the memory of Professor M.K. Vainu Bappu with the objectives to promote knowledge of Astronomy and Astrophysics and honour the contributions made by young scientists, normally not beyond 35 years of age, from any part of the world. The award is given at intervals of two years. The detailed announcement is available in this issue of the Bulletin, and at the ASI web site: <http://www.rri.res.in/asi/awards.html>. **The deadline for receiving the nominations is 31st July 2004.**

UPDATE OF ADDRESS

We are again in the process of compiling and updating the membership directory of the ASI. The members can check their current details in the ASI web-page available at the URL: <http://www.rii.res.in/asi/>. It is requested to fill in the update information in the attached form, and mail to me by post or e-mail.

Members are also requested to give their option about receiving the print copy of the Bulletin of the ASI. Your early response will be greatly appreciated.

- Ashok Ambastha