

Chapter 18:

The Annual Funds, a Building, and a Centennial

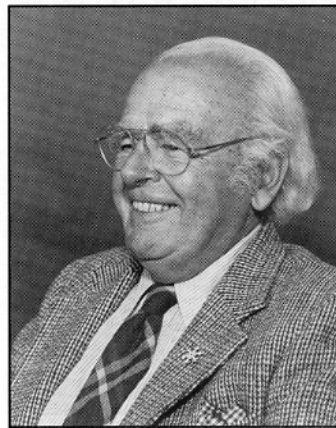
A key ingredient required for the success of the A.S.P.'s outreach programs has, of course, been the money required for additional staff and expenses. As a result of the more aggressive investment policy overseen by Harold Weaver and the Society's Finance Committee, and the efforts to produce new sources of income, the A.S.P. has for the most part been on a much sounder financial footing than in past decades. But some years have still seen deficits, despite increases in the number of members, annual dues, and *P.A.S.P.* page charges.

As a result, a number of the Society's leaders and the executive officer felt that additional steps needed to be taken to insure the Society's financial security. This was especially true because the increased activities were putting great strains on the limited office space the Society had available. Moreover, many of the members and directors hoped that the A.S.P. could purchase a permanent headquarters building in time for its Centennial in 1989.

In 1979 (the ninetieth anniversary of the Society), the Board began exploring the idea of buying a real home for the A.S.P. In late 1980 it hired Paula Gillett, who had been a fund-raiser at the University of California at Berkeley, to conduct a feasibility study to evaluate the likelihood of raising enough money to either buy an existing building or build a new one. Her study showed that such a purchase had to be approached carefully and gradually, and that the Society should first begin a program of encouraging regular donations by members and friends who shared the A.S.P.'s goals.

Thus a new development program was approved by the Board in 1982, which was not limited to new quarters for the Society, but was aimed more generally "to enable us to widen significantly the educational programs by which we advance the essential mission of the Society: to increase the public understanding and appreciation of the science of astronomy." With Gillett as the Society's new Development Coordinator, the Board announced the first annual fund in the Society's history.

As co-chairs of this fund drive they enlisted Ansel Adams and Bart Bok. As we saw earlier, Adams, whose influence on twentieth century photography was enormous, was the son of Charles Adams, A.S.P. secretary for many years; Bok was an outstanding research astronomer who made important contributions to our understanding of the Milky Way and of star formation. He was the 1977 Bruce Medalist, the 1982 recipient of the Klumpke-Roberts Award, and a former A.S.P. Board member whose extensive work in popularizing astronomy had won the respect and admiration of both professional and amateur astronomers. Adams and Bok sent a letter to all A.S.P. members in North America and to many other people as well, concerning the fund-raising campaign and the expanded educational program of



Bart Bok (1906—1983). A recipient of the Bruce Medal and the Klumpke-Roberts Award, Bok also served as co-chair of the First Annual Fund, was a member of the A.S.P. Board of Directors, and wrote a number of popular articles for Mercury. A fund named in his honor supports the Society's educational programs. (University of Arizona photograph, courtesy of Joyce Bok Ambruster.)



Ansel Adams (left) and his father Charles Adams in Yosemite circa 1919. The elder Adams's love of astronomy and long association with the A.S.P. were not lost on his son; Ansel Adams co-chaired the Society's first Annual Fund campaign in 1982. (Photograph courtesy of and property of the Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust, all rights reserved.)



Isaac Asimov, one of the world's leading science popularizers and science fiction writers. Asimov is a winner of the Klumpke-Roberts Award and served as co-chair of the Second Annual Fund. (Photograph by Alex Gotfryd, courtesy E.P. Dutton)

the society. Fraknoi also described the campaign in a *Mercury* article, and explained in more detail why additional funds were needed: demands on the Society were increasing; printing and mailing costs continued to rise; federal and state support for science education was being cut back, and the help of private organizations like the A.S.P. was urgently needed.

The response to the fund drive was good, including several business and corporate donors (Perkin-Elmer, Eastman Kodak, the Orion Telescope Company, and Shaklee Corporation). Major gifts also came from the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, the Crowley Foundation, and the American Astronomical Society. The first list of donors was published in *Mercury* for March/April 1983 and the success of the drive led the Board to continue and expand the development program in the next few years.

The Second Annual Fund began in the fall of 1983, and brought in over \$41,000. This fund, led by science popularizer Isaac Asimov and astronomer Margaret Burbidge, supported the development of the newsletter on astronomy for teachers, new slide sets and information packets, and two workshops for teachers. It also saw a significantly increased number of donors, which the Society's leaders found very encouraging.



During the A.S.P.'s first century, its San Francisco headquarters had at least 15 different addresses. Its first rented rooms (starting in the summer of 1889) were at 408 California Street (left, arrow); its last were at 1290 24th Avenue above an ice cream store (right). (408 California Street photograph courtesy of the Bank of California Museum.)

Subsequent Annual Funds, under Development Coordinator Juliana Ver Steeg (who replaced Gillett in 1984) have helped significantly to expand the A.S.P.'s educational programs, and the growing lists of donors have been published every year in *Mercury*. The Board also created the membership category of Corporate Affiliate of the A.S.P., to acknowledge companies which make significant contributions to the Society. By 1989, over 40 corporations had been elected to Corporate Affiliate status.

In 1983 A.S.P. Board member Bart Bok suddenly died, depriving the Society of one of its most inspiring leaders. In consultation with his children, the Society created a Bart Bok Memorial Fund, to support educational projects on a scale greater than had been possible before. By the end of 1985 this fund totaled over \$35,000, as colleagues, students, "grand-students", and admirers of Bok contributed generously to it. The income from this fund has helped finance improvements to the Hotline, the production of new educational materials, and the expansion of the newsletter for teachers.

Although the Society had grown tremendously since the changes inspired by the Aims Committee report, it still lacked the permanent home that would provide a central focus to its programs and activities. As we saw, the original library begun by Holden (and its replacements) had to be given away because the Society lacked the space to house it. As the centennial of the Society approached, the feeling grew that it was finally time to act on the question of an appropriate A.S.P. home. Actually, the search for a permanent home for the Society began as early as February of 1889, but the Board had always come down in favor of renting office space (or, on occasion, accepting free space for a while from a generous individual or institution).

In almost a century the Society had at least fifteen different addresses. The original meeting was in the PCAPA's rooms in San Francisco, which were used until that summer when the A.S.P. rented rooms at 408 California Street. From 1891-1906 the Society was at 819 Market Street, the California Academy of Sciences Building, which was destroyed in the great fire. After a few years at the Students' Observatory in Berkeley, in 1909 it rented new quarters in the Phelan Building in downtown San Francisco. It moved to the Lick Building in 1917, the Postal Telegraph Building in 1919, the First National Bank Building in 1924, and the Merchants' Exchange Building in 1925. This was where the then secretary, Charles H. Adams, worked, and the office remained there until 1943, when it moved to 129 24th Avenue, Adams' home.

From 1950 to 1960 the Society's address was at the home of the assistant secretary-treasurer, Mrs. Vera Graves; in 1961 it moved to the Natural History Mu-

1982:	Ansel Adams and Bart Bok
1983:	Isaac Asimov and E. Margaret Burbidge
1984:	William A. Fowler and Larry Niven
1985:	Loren Acton and Clyde Tombaugh
1986:	Arthur C. Clarke and George B. Field
1987:	Vera C. Rubin and Fred L. Whipple
1988:	Timothy Ferris and Maarten Schmidt
1989:	Paul Hodge and E. C. Krupp

seum Building at the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park. In 1973, the Academy needed the space and the A.S.P. office moved out of San Francisco to suburban Daly City. In 1975, the growing staff came back to the city, first to 1244 Noriega Street, and then in 1978 to 1290 24th Avenue, where it remained for ten years in cramped quarters over an ice cream parlor.

In the late fall of 1987 the Board of Directors concluded that the overcrowding at the Society's current offices made it imperative to find new, expanded quarters, and they authorized the search for a building. Board members felt (and a survey of a cross section of the members had confirmed) that with the centennial a year and a half away, the time really had come to find a permanent home. After a long and frustrating search, in which the staff looked at over 20 buildings selected by three real estate agents, an ideal building was found in one of the outer districts of San Francisco at 390 Ashton Avenue. Built in the 1930's and extensively remodeled in the early 1980's, it provides nearly 10,000 square feet of space for offices (and for storage of the A.S.P. catalog materials and back issues of *Mercury* and the *P.A.S.P.*).

The building — whose layout was so right for the A.S.P. that not a single wall or door had to be changed — was acquired for a very favorable price, due in large part to the efforts of Treasurer Harold Weaver in negotiating with the sellers. With the selection of the building and the move into new quarters out of the way, a Centennial Fund was established in 1989 to help the Society move into its second century from a position of financial security. With increased endowment, the Society will be prepared to undertake a much stronger effort to improve scientific literacy in our schools, in our media, and among the public in general. A Centennial Fund Development Campaign is being launched with this as a goal, and given the careful preparation of the past decade, the Society is confident that the campaign's goal will be met within the next three years.

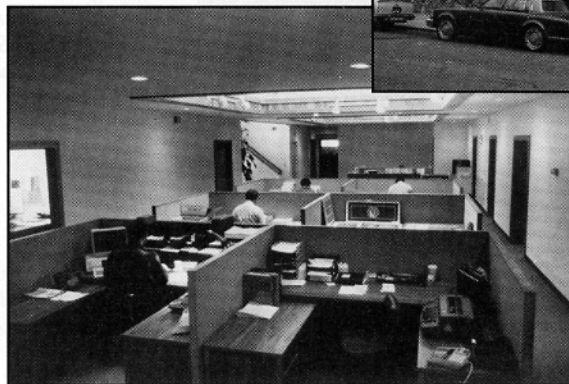
In the meantime the new building has turned out to be ideally suited for the Society's needs and has enabled the staff to make many of the Society's basic functions and programs more efficient and reliable. In addition, the new space allows volunteers and visiting members space that was never before available for assisting the Society or pursuing research projects of their own. Two rooms in the new building have been devoted to the revitalized A.S.P. library, and many members have donated books and journals to the Society to bring the collection back to its earlier levels.

The Society has embarked on other centennial projects as well. Among these, A.S.P. President James Hesser in 1987 proposed a series of retrospective articles in the hundredth volume of the *P.A.S.P.* Published during 1988, each issue of this volume contains a facsimile reprint of an important article from a past

issue of the *Publications*, together with an up-to-date commentary on this article and its topic by a current expert. For example, Robert J. Trumpler's 1925 paper on spectral types of stars in open clusters was reprinted, as was his 1930 article on the absorption of light by dust in the Galaxy, with commentary and updating in companion articles by Allan Sandage. I. S. Bowen's 1927 paper on emission lines in the spectra of nebulae formed the starting point for a more general review of the physics of gaseous nebulae by Donald E. Osterbrock. And P. J. E. Peebles commented on H. P. Robertson's 1955 paper on the theoretical aspects of the red shifts of galaxies.

Another new project in the publishing realm is the *A.S.P. Conference Series*. These volumes present the proceedings of various colloquia and symposia at a relatively low price and only a short time after the conference takes place. The first volume, "Progress and Opportunities in Southern Hemisphere Optical Astronomy: The CTIO 25th Anniversary Symposium," which appeared in mid-1988, consists of the papers presented at a January 1988 conference at Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory in Chile. Other volumes include "Optical Surveys for Quasars," "Fiber Optics in Astronomy," and the "Extra-galactic Distance Scale" (the symposium held at the June 1988 meeting of the A.S.P. in Victoria, British Columbia). The Society hopes in this way to further its commitment to the professional astronomical community at the same time that it contin-

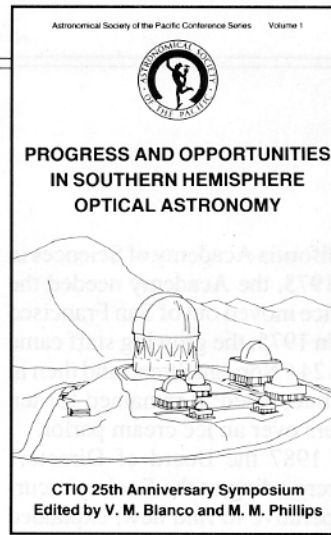
The San Francisco staff finally moved into a building owned by the Society in the spring of 1988. At 390 Ashton Avenue in San Francisco (right), the structure's



interior (left) is light, airy, and — most important — sufficiently spacious for efficient operation. (A.S.P. photographs.)



James Hesser, Director of the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory in Victoria and A.S.P. President in 1987 and 1988. (Photograph by A. Fraknoi)



Cover of volume one of the A.S.P. Conference Series.

ues its many endeavors in public education. Along the same lines, the Directors in 1988 re-instituted a special membership fee for graduate students in astronomy and physics, to enable them to obtain the journals of the Society at a significant discount.

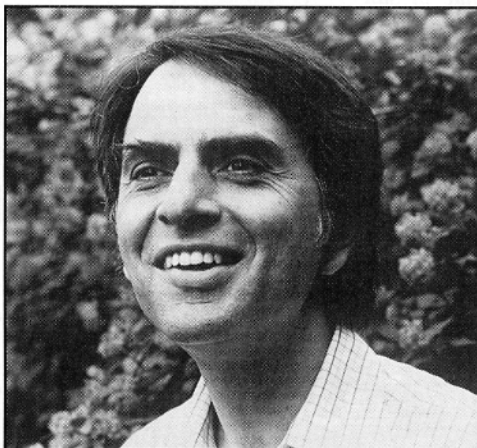
In June 1989, the Society held its Centennial Meeting, returning to the original Berkeley campus of the University of California, and to Lick Observatory and the Chabot Observatory, the three institutions most intimately involved in its founding. Congratulations were received from many astronomical organizations and observatories, and letters came from many members and elected officials to recognize the Centennial. The July/August issue of *Mercury* included one of these letters, from the President of the United States and Mrs. Bush. At the suggestion of long-time A.S.P. member Frank Edmondson, the International Astronomical Union agreed to name an asteroid "A.S.P." to commemorate the Society's centennial, so that members could say that the celebrations reached beyond the orbit of Mars.

Among those attending the Centennial meeting were the granddaughter and great-grandson of A.S.P. founder Charles Burckhalter, the son and grandson of former A.S.P. President and editor Robert Aitken, and several members who had belonged to the Society over

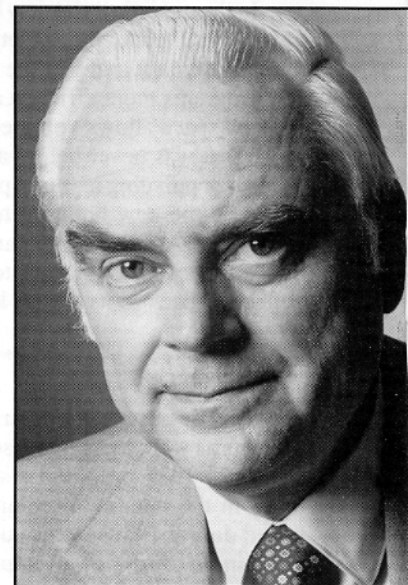
50 years. At the banquet, President Frank Drake read some of the congratulations and spoke about the rich history of the Society and the hopes of its members and leaders for the future.

And so the Astronomical Society of the Pacific looks back on its first century from a position of strength and wide respect. From a modest beginning of forty members in San Francisco, it has grown to over six thousand, worldwide. Its *Publications* are one of the major astronomical research journals and *Mercury* is widely read in schools and colleges as well as by individual members. Its educational programs reach out to teachers and to the general public in ever-expanding ways. Its founders and staunch supporters over the years would be pleased and proud to see where the Society is today. As it looks towards the future, the A.S.P. expects to continue to thrive, and to continue to broaden its services to astronomers and friends of astronomy around the world. Holden's words written in 1889 are just as true today: "It would seem that...a Society possessing such exceptional advantage ought to grow and prosper, and be of real weight in the advancement and in the diffusion of knowledge."

May the Astronomical Society of the Pacific continue to carry out this mission in its second century as successfully as it has in its first! ■



Astronomer and popular author Carl Sagan. Sagan is the winner of the A.S.P.'s first Klumpke-Roberts Award, gave the invited public lecture at the A.S.P.'s Centennial Meeting in Berkeley, and has agreed to serve as Honorary Chair (with Dr. Sally Ride) of the A.S.P.'s Centennial Fund. (Photograph © Susan S. Lang)



Frank Drake (University of California, Santa Cruz), president of the A.S.P. during the 100th anniversary celebrations. (Photograph by Don Fukuda, courtesy U.C.S.C.)