

## Fellowship Award to Alan Batten

Dr. Alan Batten joined the Victoria Centre in 1962, three years after his 1959 arrival in Canada as a postdoctoral fellow at the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory (DAO) following his undergraduate (St. Andrew's University) and graduate (University of Manchester) studies in astrophysics. After a highly productive scientific research career, Dr. Batten retired from the DAO as a Senior Research Officer in 1991 to pursue very actively his interests in promoting the development of astronomy and astronomy education in developing countries, studies in the history of science with emphasis on astronomical topics, and the intersections of science and religion in society at large.

His scholarly works over 60 years have been numerous and well referenced (>2,400 citations according to NASA's ADS). His 89 JRASC contributions span a 47-year period from 1961 to 2008. Besides numerous original research findings on multiple stars and stellar astrophysics, Alan documents many contributions to astronomy by Canadians, as well as the major issues faced by the Society during his leadership years.

Throughout his DAO research career Dr. Batten was an active life member of the Victoria Centre, which continues to this day. He served as Centre president in 1972 and his most recent turn as a featured speaker was December 2015. His experiences at the local level were then elevated to the national level where Dr. Batten served as the RASC President (1976-1978) and then as Editor of the Journal (1980-1988), for which he was recipient of the national Service Award (1988). Reading his many JRASC contributions on Society affairs in those years provides unique insight into the evolution of Canadian astronomy. That 20 of his 89 JRASC contributions were published following receipt of the 1988 Service Award is testimony to his ongoing respect of, and support for, the Society's publications. That support includes contributing The Nearest Stars section to 40 editions of the *Observer's Handbook* (1970-2009). His appointment to a four-year term as the Society's Honorary President (1993-1997) highlights the Society's high regard for Dr. Batten.

His presentations are exemplary expositions on his most recent studies in history of astronomy and his reflections upon developments in society at large as viewed from the unique perspective of a distinguished astronomer. He also delivers lectures on astronomy-related topics organized through other organizations to the benefit of members of the Victoria Centre and the public at large. Dr. Batten's generosity has been a great benefit to many with whom he has willingly shared his time and expertise over nearly six decades of active participation in, and leadership of, Canadian astronomy.

The experiences of leading both CASCA and the RASC as national, bilingual, astronomy organizations in a geographically challenging country prepared Dr. Batten well for representing Canadian astronomy in the broadest sense during subsequent decades of forefront service to the International Astronomical Union (IAU). Following his role in organizing the first-ever IAU General Assembly to be held in Canada (1979), he served as an IAU Vice President (1985-91). During that period and for many years subsequently, Dr. Batten shared his accumulated experience from RASC, CASCA, and scientific

research collaborations to promote the development of astronomy education and research in countries previously missing it from their educational systems. Over a decade he travelled extensively to work closely with national leaders and extensively documented the lessons learned. His success reflects his abiding interests in people, their diverse cultures and worldviews.