

## Western Australia is very active with SETI Projects.

Our members in Western Australia have become very active over the past few months proving that the isolation from the Eastern States is no barrier to our program of setting up a country wide network of Radio Telescopes looking for signs of artificially created radio signals in the microwave region of the electromagnets spectrum.

Programme director in Western Australia, Guido Nigro, has been extremely busy organising the removal and re-installation of a 10 metre antenna for our Golden Grove Observatory in the beautiful Chittering Valley.

The dish will be moved from the grounds of the Perth Observatory where it has been stored for the past 10 years after starting its life as part of a communications network between Carnarvon and Perth. Satellite communications killed the old network and made all the terrestrial networks obsolete and luckily for us, we have benefited by becoming the users of this beautifully constructed dish. We are grateful to the Astronomical Association of Western Australia for having the foresight to realise that good science can be done if you have the right tools for the job. The new addition to SETI project should see its first signals in about 3 months.



The Gascoyne Region of Western Australia is probably the last place where you would expect to see a large Satellite tracking installation, but the NASA APOLLO era, the Carnarvon Shire was host to an integral part of the NASA days space network. It was there that many of the crucial links to the moon were maintained during those very historic missions. The site has been sitting idle now for 12 years and this has caused the instruments to fall into disrepair.

The Carnarvon Shire Council has been looking for an organisation to take over the site and make use of the facilities there. Various organisations made applications to the council with ideas to use the site but, luckily for us, the Gascoyne Historical Society was successful in their application to develop it as a tourism feature for the region. At a council meeting on the 25th June 1999, the approval was given to Gascoyne Historical Society to take over the management of the site and develop it as a tourist venue. The Historical Society plans to develop a space technology museum dedicated to the part the region played in the race to the moon by the USA. NASA has offered to provide items of "space memorabilia" nature including space suits and other artefacts from the era when the station was in use.

Mrs Cecily Miller, one of the local Carnarvon identities, has worked extremely hard with her group of people to convince the council that their plans would be of more benefit to the regions outlook.

SETI was involved with the plans to utilise the site and played an important part of the development application to the council. Various television and radio interviews were given by us explaining the role that we would play in the development of the site and providing that we can obtain some additional funding for the repairs needed, we will initiate our programme to get the dish up and running again.

The 33 metre dish (110 feet), when up and running again, will be one of the largest instruments on the world purely dedicated to the Search for Terrestrial intelligence. We plan to install some state of the art radio receiving systems and computers that will be capable of peering out into the cosmos several hundred light years in an effort to find out if there are other technological civilisations whose presence can be detected by their radio traffic.

Our managing director, Mr. Noel Welstead, said 'this is truly an historic event that will be played out on the western coast of the Earths oldest continent. The OTC programme has left us all with a legacy of discovery that will be continued through our groups SETI Research programme to discover artificially created radio signals from nearby technological civilisations.

The old OTC facility will spearhead our programme into the new millennium, and give us a real chance of making what is arguably the most important discovery of all time. We here at the institute are very excited about this major development that has been in slow motion now for about a year.

**More news on this as developments occur.**

Not to be outdone by us in the east, a new member of our programme, Mr Mario De Ruyter from Tideline Electronics in Derby Western Australia has commenced the construction of Western Australia's third (3rd) SETI Radio telescope. Mario has found a 4.5 metre Andrews dish antenna previously used by Telstra as a satellite communication link. When the service was discontinued, there were dishes all over the place and Mario was lucky enough to get one and start his own radio telescope project. We here in Brisbane will be helping Mario to get his station up and running as quickly as possible. Derby is a small township located in the far north of Australia, just south of East Timor. A very unlikely place to find something of this nature!

More news and some pictures of his progress will be posted at a later date.