

Seti What's New for 2001

December 2000 saw a flurry of activity for a few projects that we have had underway for the past year. So I thought it was appropriate to provide a general update of these projects and progress so far.

Boonah Space Centre.

Activity at the Boonah site was a little stalled during 2000 as many of our members were pre-occupied doing other things like overseas travel, business pressures, building houses and moving and just plain old relaxing when the time permitted.



Also were waiting for the delivery of the main two 14Metre dishes from the Power-link sites north of Brisbane. These two large dishes finally became scheduled for removal in late December 2000 and a team of riggers and technician's went onto the sites for the disassembly and shipping to the Boonah site. The freight contractor used for the shipping was a company called Universal Freight, a very appropriate name if you ask me, and apart from getting lost a few times the drivers managed to get the thousands of pieces of the two

24Metre dishes onto the site just before Christmas. What a Christmas present for us here at the Institute. Thank You Very Much Power-Link.

Power-link also threw in a few smaller dishes including an Andrews's 5metre, three piece, a unit that we will use somewhere, I'm sure.



Our next move is to take another trip to the CSIRO Narrabri ATNF site so we can recover the Solar Radio Heliograph towers and equatorial mounts and bring them back to Brisbane for modification. The modifications are needed to strengthen the equatorial mounts so they will accommodate the additional weight of the 14metre dishes that each weighs about 3 tones. The modifications include a much strengthened "X" and "Y" axis shafts and a heavy duty bearing assembly as well. The frame for the dish mounting will also need to be re-

constructed, as it needs to be much stronger to carry the increased load of the dish. Counter weights will also need to be added for balance of the extra weight. The mounts were originally designed to track the sun and as a result, only move south down to about 60 degrees. We will be adding an extra gear section that will allow the mount to get down to about 20 degrees in a southerly direction. This will give us all the sky we need to look at as we are located at -(minus) 27 degrees south and get a great view of the southern sky.



The equatorial mounts will be transported to the grounds of Simon Hydraulics, Eagle Farm, an eastern suburb of Brisbane where the modifications will be carried out. Simon Hydraulics has allowed Seti Research to utilize their fine engineering facilities whilst the modifications are being performed and we are very grateful to them for assisting our group with this crucial part of the project.

Our structural engineer, Brett Mills, will do the structural



analysis of the towers and mounts to ensure that the structure will stand up to the added weight and stresses associated with the new configuration, just to ensure that it stays up in the air where we want it!!

The footings for the towers should be in place by April This year (2001) and with luck, the dishes will be up in the air sometime in June/July.

A contractor will be engaged within the next few weeks to clear the block completely and make it level, ready for the assembly and painting of the dishes. We plan to re-assemble the dishes as soon as the block is cleared, and leave them sitting on the ground near where they will be finally located. This should be quite a site and also ensure that the pieces do not wander off to other locations with the help of the local inhabitants of the area!!!



Our web-master, Nicky Davies has been storing a number of the 3.2metre dishes at her house and we have also moved them onto site. Nicky has been down to the site a few times in the past couple of weeks to assist the unloading of the trailers, thanks Nicky.

Regards to all for 2001

Seti Research & Community Development Institute Limited