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History of Canadian contribution to astronautics and history on early SETI activities (3)

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CANADIAN CONTRIBUTION TO SETI - PAST AND PRESENT

Abstract

Canadians have historically contributed to various aspects of the Search for Extraterrestrial Life in the Universe (SETI) and continue to be active. During the 1980s a SETI search of the northern sky was carried out using two 64 ft dishes at the Hay River radio observatory in the Northwest Territories. Astonishingly, the entire operation and equipment purchase was largely self-funded and managed by an amateur radio astronomer. Project Target, as it was known, later moved to the 46 metre Algonquin Radio Observatory in Ontario, site of several other SETI searches, until 1991. The importance of the social sciences for SETI was championed by Dr. Allen Tough and others, who brought forward ideas and projects during the 1990s and 2000s that generated new ways of thinking about SETI, the societal implications of first contact and the effect of culture and history on SETI. Canadians actively participate in the SETI League, serve on the International Academy of Astronautics SETI Permanent Committee and many other groups, programs, and ongoing research programs focused on SETI or astrobiology. Although Canada does not have an institutionalized SETI search program, the Canadian Astrobiology Training Program for undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral researchers interested in the scientific search for life in the universe is underway at several Canadian universities.