



The Big Telescope Building Shows Up at La Silla

From its inception in March, 1973, it took just nine months for the first visible bit of our building to appear over the rocky soil of La Silla's highest mountain top. Now it has only to rise and grow.

For several months past the eruptions from rock-blasting on the platform of the truncated peak have provided a little spectacle on most afternoons. Since 1968 this platform has offered, as it were, a standing invitation to further activities. Now about one half of it has been levelled down two metres more in order to make sufficient room for the building. Another two metres down in the earth are trenches and holes blasted into the rocky soil.

On the remaining half of the platform the contractor installed his site facilities, consisting of a carpenter's shop, a magazine and office barrack, and a concrete plant with storage for gravel and sand.

In January, 1974, a full view could finally be obtained of the octagonal concrete foundation for the pier which will later support the telescope. Further out, a circular trench of 30 m diameter for the outside wall surrounds the light grey plate.

It goes without saying that the first bucket filled with concrete and poured into its proper place was hailed as marking the birth of the edifice, and this event was celebrated with a gay little ceremony. W. Bauersachs

ESO/Chile and CERN SB Division Make Agreement

In January, the Technical Department of ESO / Chile concluded an agreement in principle with the CERN Sites and Buildings Division for a number of projects, including road improvement at Pelicano and La Silla, the central heating system, the low tension electrical distribution network and the water softening plant.

CERN (J. Rouel's service) will carry out the studies for this work and propose solutions. A prime mover is H. Laporte, head of the SB Division, who has visited Chile in this connection; and M.-A. Peuch, Asst. Director, ESO / Chile, is also closely involved. N. Rodgers

Exhibition on Role of ESO

A historical picture exhibition on the role of ESO was held at CERN in the first half of November, 1973. This show is still available and can be placed at the disposal of any agency wishing to use it. It will probably be displayed at the Palais des Découvertes in Paris, within the near future.

TP Division Extends Premises

At the TP Division, Geneva, an assembly hall, mechanical workshop and optical laboratory are under construction and will be completed probably in July, 1974. The new buildings will be occupied mainly by W. Richter's group on the design and assembly of the 3.6 m telescope.

The optical laboratory will be used by J. Van der Lans for tracking experiments and—in cooperation with R. Wilson—for optical experiments and tests.

The MESSENGER is at present planned as a quarterly publication. Contributions for issue No. 2 should accordingly be received by the editor by July 15, at the latest. They may be sent directly to The Editor, The Messenger, ESO / Hamburg, or via the local correspondents, namely:

- R. Havlen, coordinator, Chile
- M. de Groot, La Silla (scientific matters)
- G. Anciaux, La Silla
- M. Becker, Santiago
- N. Rodgers, ESO TP Division, Geneva