

The VT-2004 Programme in Action – the VT-Day and What Followed



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ISC VT-2004

November 5th -7th 2004

Paris

How people felt involved in VT-2004?

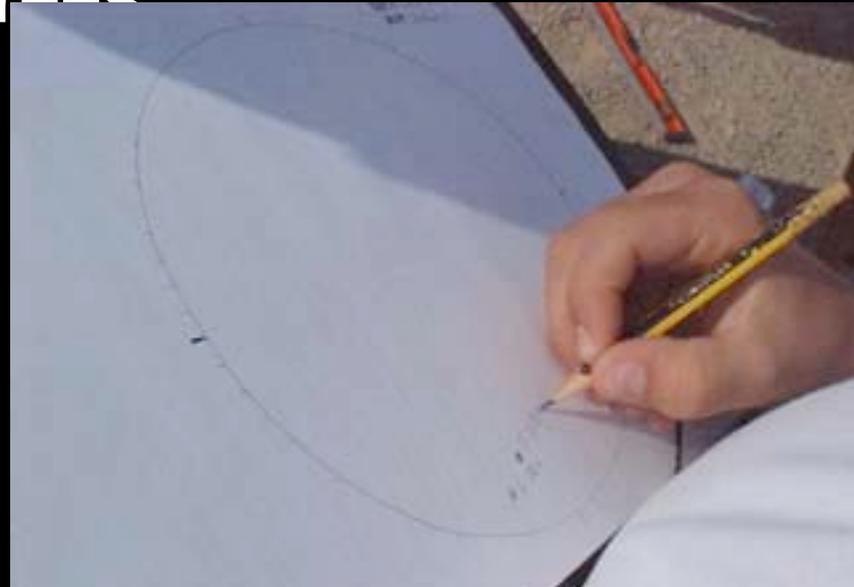
- VT-2004 promoted Venus Transit observations. It was not only to observe “2 bodies moving very far away”
- VT-2004 made people feel involved in different ways. I will show you some examples



1st : VT-2004

“European dimension”

- In order to build a United Europe, it is important that our students start to cooperate on common projects. The pupils of today will be the Europeans of the future.
- It is necessary to induce young people to study towards science degrees



1st : VT-2004 “European dimension”

- **Science will play a more central role in our society in the future. Everybody should be educated in science. The people will need to have enough knowledge to form an opinion before voting.**



2nd : VT-2004

“Promoted media coverage”

- **Complete pages on VT in important newspapers**
- **Monographic issues for specialized journals (more for educators than general audience)**
- **Images and simulations for news bulletins on TV**

2nd : VT-2004

“Promoted media coverage”



- **“journalists were interested in stories which centre around the transit event”**
- **“there was special interest in local stories”**

3rd : VT-2004 “personalise” the transit

- Participants feel a personal interest to take “my time contact” and to get “my AU”



11/10/04

e.g.: Observing in Open University

- Group very different people together (age, education, interest...)
- 2nd contact “a slightly cold atmosphere” only small clouds introduce “suspense”



11/10/04

e.g.: Observing in Open University

- 3rd contact “warm atmosphere” each telescope-team tries to get a “good observation time” to be sent to Paris Observatory and get “their AU”



e.g.: Observing in Open University

- 4th contact “hot atmosphere” – now everybody feels integrated. They started shouting. It was their common project and they want to work very well.
- The feeling was similar to that during a “total solar eclipse”. People look very excited.

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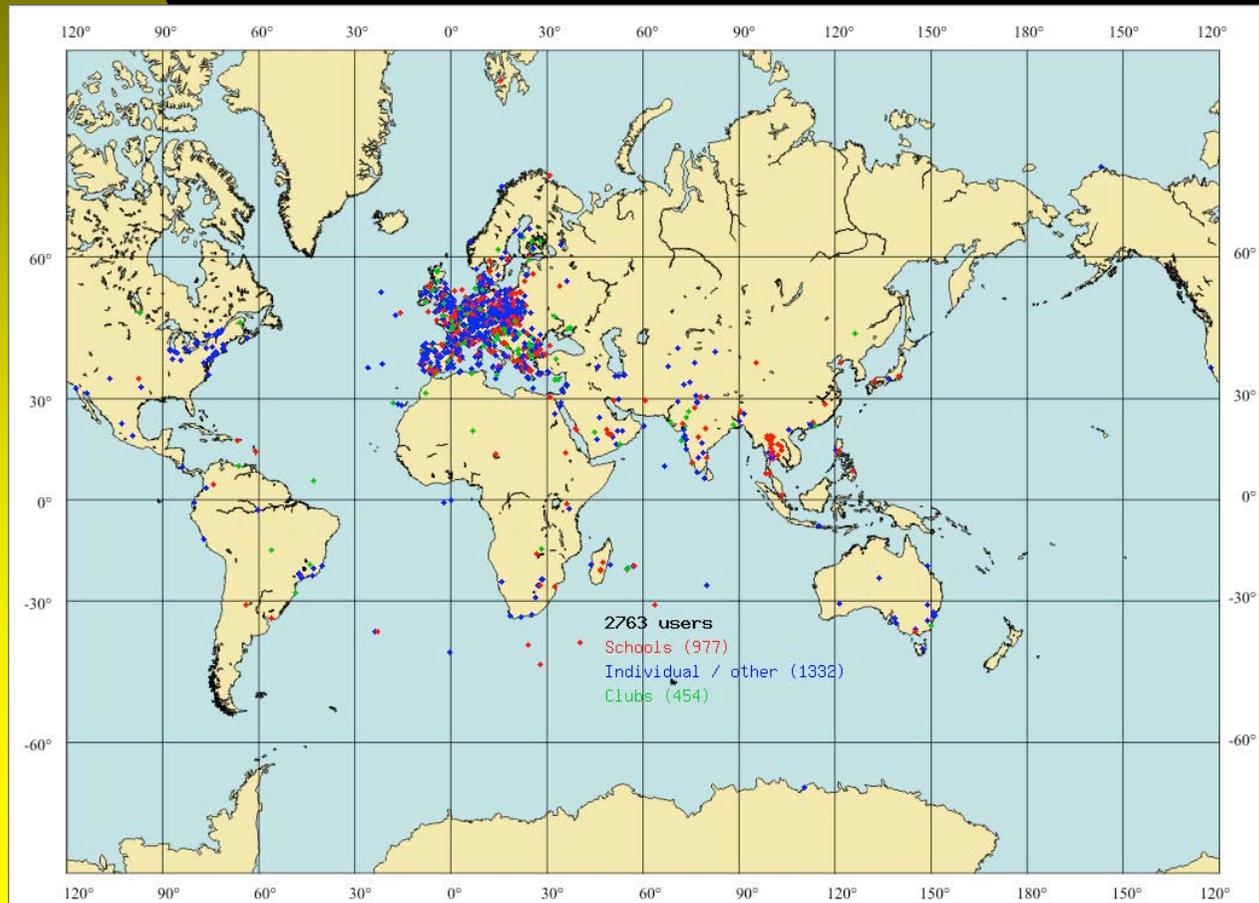
e.g.: Observing in Open University



- They love what they are doing and they know that their observations are going to be important.
- Paris Observatory cannot do the calculations of AU without their “contacts timing”

e.g.: Observing in Open University

- They are involved in a big international project. Everybody is important!



11/10/04

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e.g.: Observing in Open University

- They really enjoyed to do science during this morning with an “exciting observation” and they felt that they repeated the “old adventure of European astronomers”



- It was a very positive feeling.
- They feel like protagonists!!!

Participants conclusion

- *“See you next year for the observations of the annular solar eclipse in October!!!”*



4th : VT-2004

“teenagers as scientific disseminators”

- “Older” students **teach younger ones** in the same school



40

1°BACH-A

11/10/04

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e.g.: secondary school campaign

- Students (16-17) interested at first, because ***“nobody now living has ever seen a Venus transit”***
- They start to investigate and ***become more and more captivated”***. ***“It is necessary to tell everybody in the school about this event”!!!***



e.g.: secondary school campaign



- “Teenagers as teachers” inform all students in the school (lectures, posters, simulations...)
- They learn a lot when they have to explain to other pupils!!!!

e.g.: Secondary school campaign

- ***“The 6-10-year olds get more interested”.***
They can learn all that they need (and want) to know from teenagers!



e.g.: Secondary school campaign



- The teenagers prepare for the observations starting a few days before the event
- Go to the playground. Let all pupils turn their back towards the Sun (for safety). Put on the glasses themselves and turn to see the Sun.

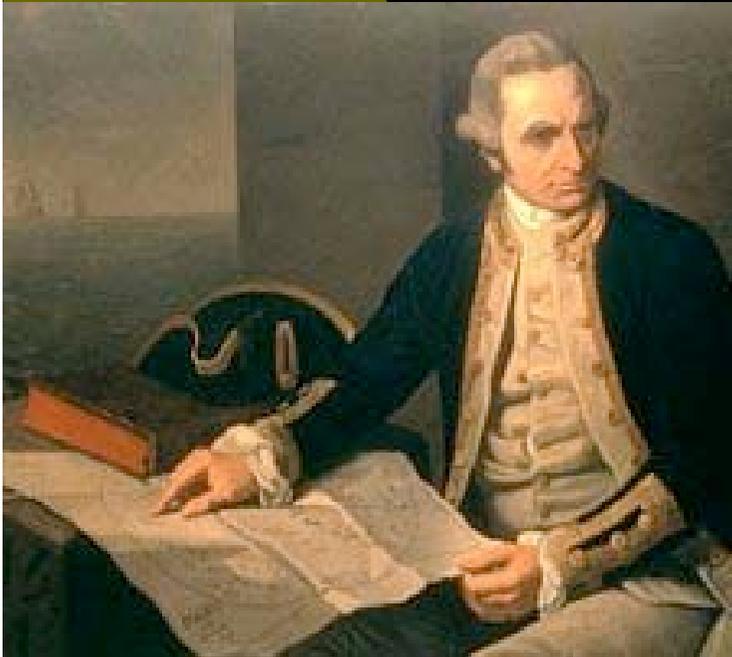
e.g.: Secondary school campaign

- Nice, happy and surprised faces and very special comments: *“Oh!, the Sun is very small!
It is smaller than the Moon”*



e.g.: Secondary school campaign

- *“We are seeing the Black Drop as Capt. Cook”!!!*



Secondary pupils conclusions

- *“When the transit finished everybody applauds”!!!*
- *“We did not think that they could have enjoyed themselves so much”*
- *“We did not imagine that we organised this so well”*



Secondary pupils conclusions

- *“We take down all the telescopes with the feeling that we have seen a **truly unique event!!!**”*
- *“It was a **historical moment**”*



5th : VT-2004 “marketing for astronomy”

- How to inform and promote about the transit: the best way is ... **“a secret”**



e.g.: Secondary school campaign

- From May 1st to 3rd June
- In every room 300 din-4 saying:

***"Certain dates are worth the effort.
but it won't make you go blind...
be very careful!"***

- Nothing else !

e.g.: Secondary school campaign

Everybody interested:

“What does that mean?”

- ◆ A new traffic promotion ...
- ◆ A new campaign about safe sex...

Everybody tries to discover in the media...

e.g.: Secondary school campaign

- 4th June (Friday)
- For everybody 600 din-4 saying:

"On Tuesday do not look into the Sun..."

+ all details about the transit in one page"

e.g.: Secondary school campaign

- 7th June
- Only one poster:



***"Bart Simpson saying...
Yes I know!!!***

On June 8th is the VT. OKKKKK!!!

- All people were well informed

Secondary pupils conclusions

- *“First time we participated in a scientific task: we learned different things than in the classroom”*



Secondary pupils conclusions



- *“We discovered that to do research it is necessary to plan, to think and to control very well all details”*
- *“We discovered that it is very important to distribute tasks in the right way”*
- *“We discovered, that we know very little and we have to learn a lot”*



Secondary pupils conclusions

- *“We discovered that we would like to continue discovering” (concrete plans)*



6th : VT-2004

“Life motive in primary schools”

- **Organising** mathematics, social sciences, natural sciences, languages, computers, arts...
all around the transit



e.g.: Primary school planning

- Making models in the gym room and using cake plates (model VT-2004)



e.g.: Primary school planning



- Telescopes (to observe)
 - pupils draw what they are seeing

e.g.: Primary school planning



- Computers (to compare) - pupils observations with VT-2004 website



e.g.: Primary school planning

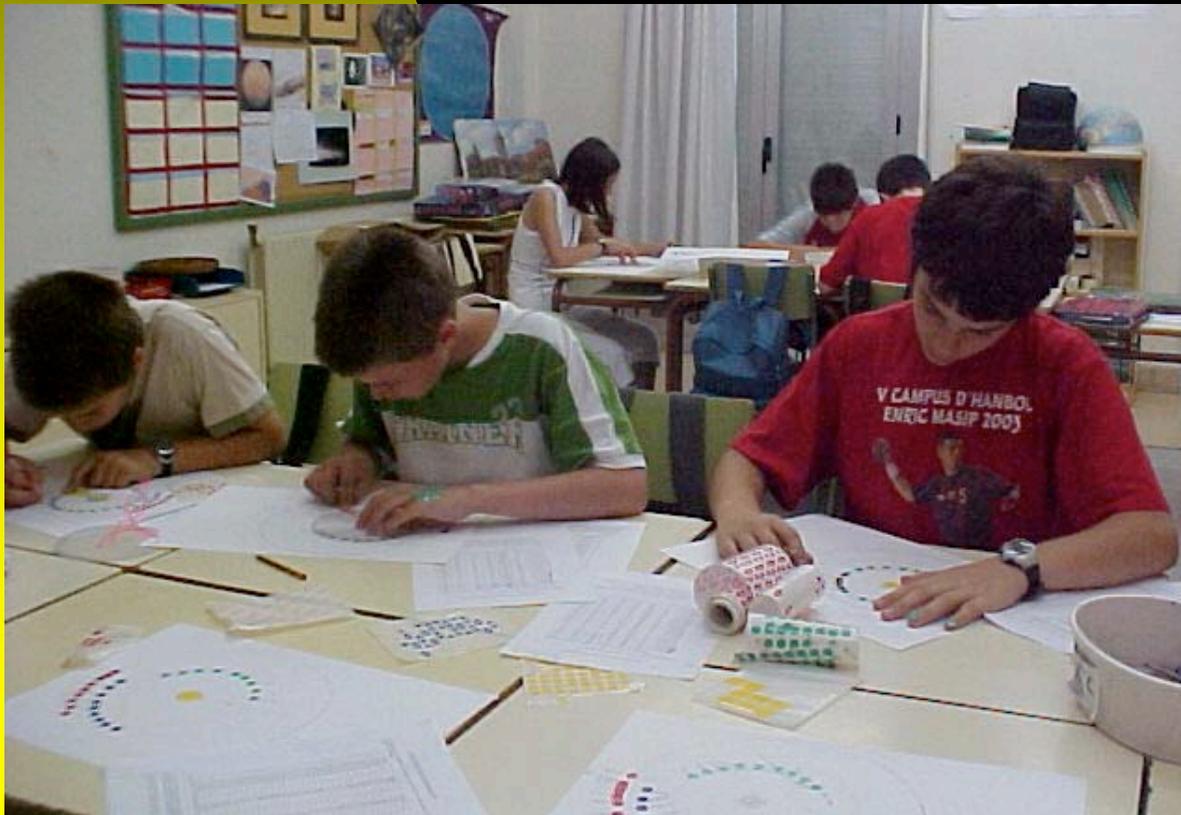
- Pupils feel involved as they are in the same project as professional observatories



- This project appears on TV too!
- The school is connected with real world.

e.g.: Primary school planning

- Pupils “can have an opinion” about the phenomenon because they learn at school. They can participate in family conversations



- “Teachers recorded their opinions using a video camera”

Primary teacher conclusions

- *“With these activities, pupils get a good methodology and a good level of autonomy for science study”*



- This school has 70% pupils who study for a sciences degree at the university”

Primary teacher conclusions

- *“We use astronomical phenomena that we can observe: Mercury and Venus transits, lunar eclipses, meteor showers...”*



- Every school has an astronomy lab: the playground

Primary teacher conclusions

- *“Thanks to VT-2004 (and other big institutions) for providing schools with proposals by which young pupils may work on current scientific topics”.*



- Contemporary science must be introduced into primary schools

Conclusions



- **We must think of “repeating” this experience in some way, also before 2012 – drawing on what we learned this time – for this we need to know what went well and what must be improved!**

Conclusions

- People remember their feelings
- VT –2004 promoted strong feelings for people:
 - ◆ They felt personally involved
 - ◆ They felt like protagonists
 - ◆ They take initiatives to disseminate science
 - ◆ They felt pride in the results of these initiatives

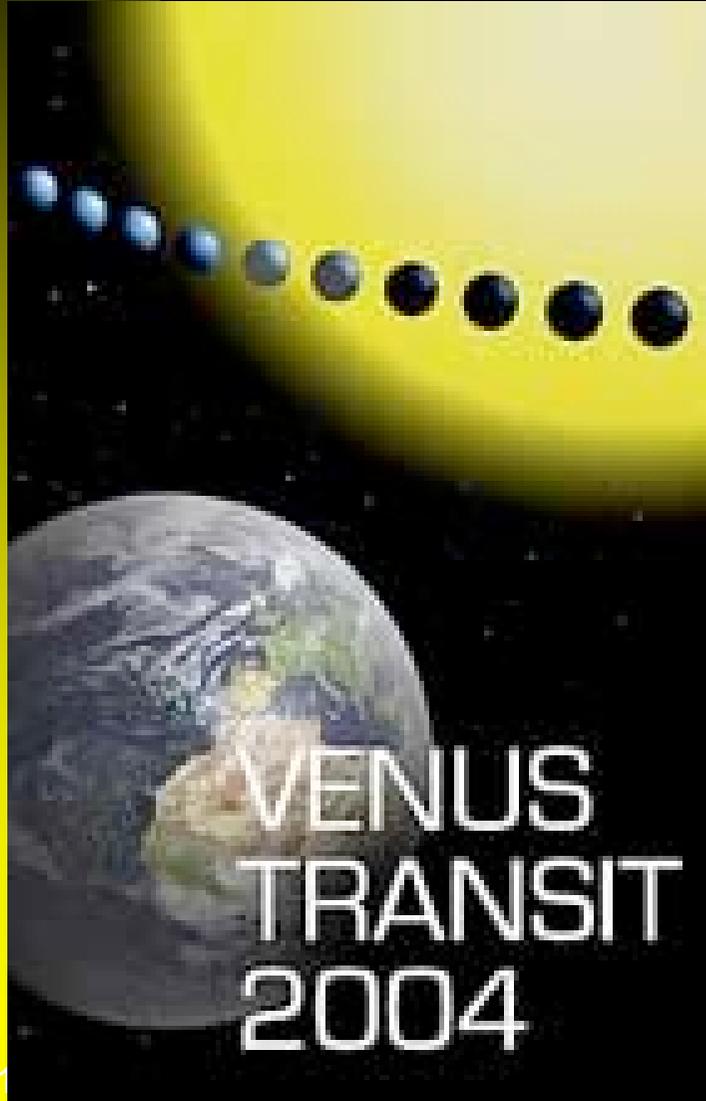
Conclusions

- ◆ They knew that they were participating in a historical event
- ◆ They felt that science can be exciting
- ◆ They felt that they love to discover
- ◆ They felt that school can be not far away from real world
- ◆ They can get opinions about scientific events

Conclusions

- A successful project like VT-2004 is not possible without a big group of people who work a lot
- The ISC knows that without all of you, VT-2004 could not have been realized.
- Thank you to everybody!
- The VT-2004 belongs to all of us!!

Conclusions



- **You will never forget that you observed the Transit of Venus in 2004...**

The VT-2004 was there to help you!