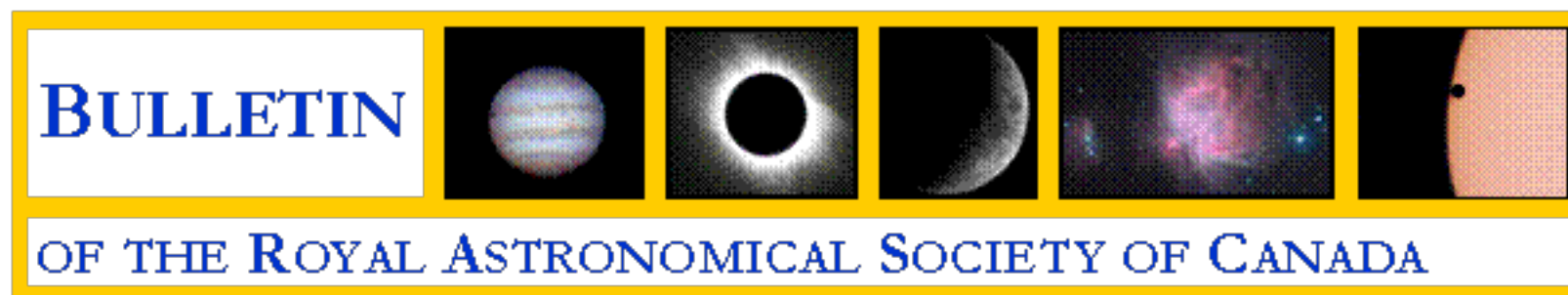


2008-09



September 2008 - Volume 3, Number 9

Ian Levstein, Editor

We welcome your comments on the *Bulletin*. Email them to the Editor at bulletin@rasc.ca [1].

Member: ~FULL_NAME~, RASC ID: ~ID~

► [News @ RASC.ca](#)

Fall Astronomy Day

by **Kim Hay**, Acting Astronomy Day Chair, RASC Education Chair As the summer star parties wind down and the kids head back to school, it means that many RASC Centre activities are starting up again. This is just a quick reminder that there is a Fall Astronomy Week (2008 September 29 - October 5) and a Fall Astronomy Day (Saturday, 2008 October 4) for those Centres that either did not participate in the Spring 2008 events or now want to run a fall event. If your Centre decides to run an event, please let [me](#) [2] know. Please see [here](#) [3] for what your Centres can do. Your events can include mall displays, sidewalk displays, observing events, and day or night events. Celebrate Fall Astronomy Day, as the precursor to the International Year of Astronomy, and get the word out... "The Universe is yours to Discover"

RASC: One Hundred and Forty Years of Art and Observation

by **Randall Rosenfeld**, RASC Archivist

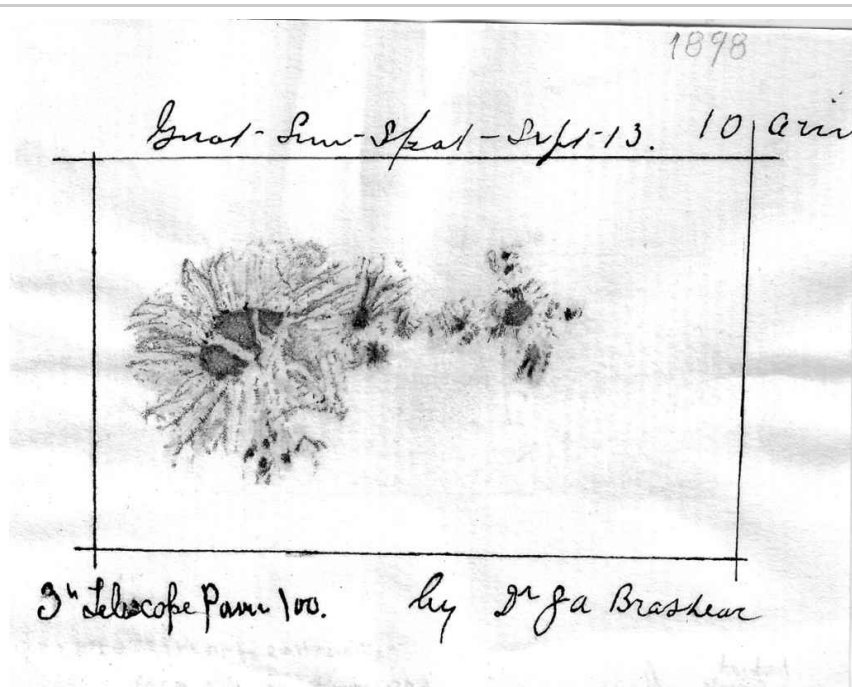
Ever wonder how RASC members did their astronomical imaging a century ago? Curious

about the fate of astronomical drawing in the RASC?

Explore the risks and triumphs, differences and similarities in observational sketching then and now through *RASC: One Hundred and Forty Years of Art and Observation. (RASC: 140YAO)* Based on striking hand-produced astronomical images largely drawn from the RASC's National Archive, *RASC: 140YAO* presents high-quality reproductions and explanatory panels identifying the objects and their observers, and explaining how the RASC artists crafted their images. *RASC: 140YAO* is accompanied by a full 24-page catalogue specifically commissioned for the exhibit.



M81 Bodefoot acrylic



Brashear Great Sun Spot, 1898

First shown to acclaim at the recent 2008 General Assembly and in response to demand, the History Committee is making *RASC: 140YAO* available to all RASC centres throughout the country for only the cost of mailing. The exhibition is modular in design, and consists of thirty-six (36) 8" x 10" (20cm x 25cm) units, to allow flexibility in presentation. The informative and attractive catalogue is sent on CD-ROM in various formats ready for printing.

For more information contact [Barry Matthews](#) [4], Chair of the History Committee.

Changes Coming to RASC eStore

Members can look forward to the launch of a new look RASC eStore beginning later this month. The new RASC eStore will be integrated with member and customer profiles and will support a number of improvements over our current off-line eStore including:

- Full support for quantity discounts (available for RASC publications)
- US and Canadian dollar processing
- Real-time credit card authorization
- Improved confirmation e-mails with order details
- Support for new shipping options (coming soon!)

The implementation of the new eStore will save many manual and labour-intensive steps associated with our current eStore. Members will also be able to view their order history information online. Look for further announcements as the implementation process moves forward.

Sketching the Sky

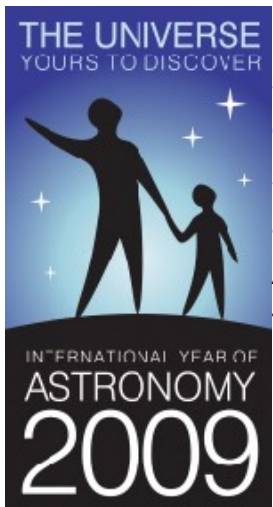
by **Kim Kay** (Kingston Centre) and **Randall Rosenfeld** (Toronto Centre)

The use of graphic art in science is millennial: it is both very ancient, and of this minute. From the inception of RASC training programs, astronomical sketching has played a crucial role. Some prominent RASC observers use sketching for the recording of scientific data for professional use, while others use it as the basis for more imaginative transformations of astronomical phenomena. Astronomical sketching can be used in conjunction with CCD programs, and new images and ways of seeing things can result from an innovative mix of old and new technologies. Many RASC members sketch; others wish they could start - but few have a community with which they can discuss techniques, trade images, seek advice, and receive mentoring. In an effort to foster such a community, some members of the RASC are willing to launch a moderated list, perhaps with a resource page on the RASC Web site; it may even be possible to have a RASC astrosketch of the day (or week, or month). Before such a project can be undertaken, it is necessary to determine if there is sufficient RASC interest to sustain it. If you are interested in being a member of a RASC astrosketch list, want more information, or just wish to comment, please send an email to [Kim Hay](#) [5], Chair of the RASC Education Committee.

► International Year of Astronomy 2009

IYA Newsletter Now Online

by **Kim Breland**, Program Manager IYA2009



Do YOU know... When is the Grand Kick-Off event for IYA2009? What other big dates should you mark on your calendar? What's the latest on the GalileoScope? What's the connection between symphonies, postage stamps, ham radios, Aboriginal youth, and space missions? Find the answers to these questions and more in the [News](#) [6] section at the brand new IYA2009 Newsletter, and on Facebook at International Year of Astronomy 2009 - Canada! Find out how you can get involved! See what's new! Check the Newsletter on the 1st of every month for all the latest IYA info!

► Across the RASC

VCO Officially Opens



Meade 14" LX200 mounted on the Paramount ME

On 2008 August 18, the Victoria Centre Observatory (VCO) was officially opened, with RASC members, corporate partners, and NRC staff helping to celebrate this milestone in the Victoria Centre's history. All the participants and volunteers who made the VCO a reality were thanked by President **Joe Carr** and Project Manager **Bruno Quenville**. A special commemorative award was presented to **Jim Hesser**, Director of the DAO - a key supporter of the project from within NRC.

"Today is an historic occasion for Victoria Centre since, in its long history, this is the first observatory that Victoria Centre can call its own. The project would not have been completed on time and under budget without help from our corporate partners, generous donations of funds and labour from Victoria Centre members, and especially without the goodwill and support from the National Research Council. Victoria Centre members put their hearts into this project, and can be justifiably proud of the result. Thank you everyone!" - **Joe Carr**, President, RASC Victoria Centre

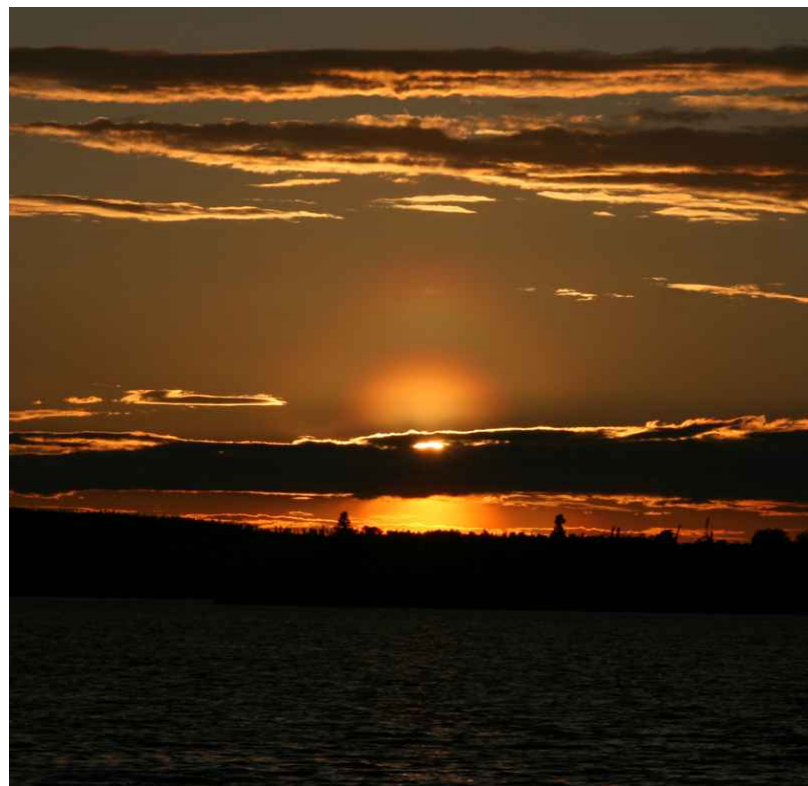
Another Fabulous Eclipse Venture

by **Leo Enright**, Kingston Centre

I recently had a phone conversation with **David Levy**, our Honorary President, who had just returned from a lengthy eclipse trip to Siberian Russia. He was still euphoric about the cloud-free experience of totality – especially since there were doubts about whether clear skies would prevail. Still feeling the effects of jet-lag, David and his wife, Wendee, were back home in Arizona, glad to recount the highlights of this unforgettable trip to Novosibirsk and the incredible experience of standing on the centre-line of the moon's shadow as it crossed the Russian steppes from north to south before mid-day on August 1st. They were part of an expedition organized by Sky and Telescope, and they enjoyed wonderfully clear skies between the time of second and third contact, though there were plenty of clouds to add to the tension in the hours before first contact. Of the many solar eclipses that David has seen in places as diverse as central Manitoba (1979) and Antarctica (2005), and aside from this being the first solar eclipse since 1979 whose path would cross Canadian soil - this eclipse held special meaning and he looked forward to it for many years. For David, the special attraction was that this eclipse was from Saros Series 126, the same one his astronomical hero and mentor, Leslie Peltier, had observed on June 18, 1938. Indeed, this eclipse was only the fifth one later in that series. Specifically, of the 72 eclipses in Saros Series 126, the June 1918 one was #42, and this one was #47. As expected, David and Wendee were now planning their next astro-venture, one that would take them not too far from the two RASC Centres of which David is Honorary President, Kingston and Montreal – namely, the Adirondack Astronomy Retreat near Plattsburg, NY. That venue has now become an annual event for them and draws a number of enthusiastic participants to a campground with dark and unpolluted skies; a place where observers may

avail themselves of one of the eminent masters of amateur astronomy. David is always willing to share the wonders of the sky in any way he can. Having received the good news about David's successful trip to Siberia, I was elated that his preparations and expectations had been duly rewarded with great weather and with an incredible view of a "solar-minimum type of corona." "Great report, David! Hearty congratulations from me and from the other members of the Kingston Centre! You did it again."

Bulletin Photo of the Month



This month's offering is a photo taken by **Rick Stankiewicz** on 2008 June 20. Rick is an unattached member. The corona is caused by diffraction of light by small particles in the air. The subtle multiple-ring effect is stunning.

The photo was taken on Lac Seul in northwestern Ontario using a Canon 400D, 17- to 70-mm Sigma lens set at 100 ISO, f/11, between 1/400- and 1/500-second exposure.

Double Corona Sunset

► The Sky this Month

What's New in the Sky

Readers are encouraged to check out the **Northern Skies** ^[7] section of the RASC Web site. Thanks to **Gary Boyle** for keeping us all in the know!

► Dates to Remember

- - **2008 September 2-7** - Northern Prairie Starfest, Edmonton Centre
 - **2008 September 5-7** - Spruce Woods Star Party, Winnipeg Centre
 - **2008 September 25-28** - Alberta Star Party, Calgary Centre
 - **2008 September 26-28** - Fall'N'Stars, Belleville Centre
 - **2008 October 4** - Fall Astronomy Day 2008
 - **2008 November 16** - National Council Meeting



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Links:

- [1] <mailto:bulletin@rasc.ca>
- [2] [mailto:education20002@rasc.ca?subject=Fall Astronomy Day](mailto:education20002@rasc.ca?subject=Fall+Astronomy+Day)
- [3] <https://www.rasc.ca/astronomy-day>
- [4] <mailto:opticks@sympatico.ca>
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- [6] http://www.astronomy2009.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=section&id=1&Itemid=2
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