

## NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

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### Notes from Newfoundland

It is only in summertime that we, of the St. John's Centre, get to see any astronomical VIPs.

In early June, Dr. Helen Hogg, visiting here for meetings of the Royal Society, met with us and treated us to an enlightening talk on clusters, amply illustrated with slides. Her talk and the question that resulted had a stimulating effect upon us.

As did that of Dr. John Percy in late July, en route to England. He also met with our group. The meeting was informal and spontaneous. The range of questions were as wide as the scope of astronomy itself.

Ray Thompson dropped by to make himself known. (The one with the Maple Observatory near Toronto). Ray was travelling Eastern Canada, camping around with family. The call was appreciated.

July's eclipse was observed by 28% of our membership. Randell Dodge, Stephen Kelland, Bill Hurley and Gary Dymond headed for a good clear sky and successful viewing at Antigonish, where they spent their summer's pocket money on film. Your correspondent was not so fortunate. Brackley Beach, Prince Edward Island, offered cloudy skies, with a particularly grey cloud spreading like a hand over the moon at the moment of totality. Although no special features were visible, the course of the eclipse could be followed and enjoyed.

At our September meeting we shall be comparing notes, showing slides and films of the eclipse. We shall be able to tell more about the Newfoundland Eclipse Expedition once we have co-related our observations and experiences.

Kennedy O'Brien, member of St. John's Centre RASC, and presently studying medicine in Dublin, is also a member of the Irish Astronomical Society. Home on vacation this summer, Ken brought with him a special request from I.A.S. that greetings from them be passed on to the RASC, with the warmest of wishes for its future.

DORA RUSSELL

### A Delayed Annual Report:

The Winnipeg Centre had a very active year in 1971. We explored new areas of interest in group mirror grinding through the winter months, and a special series of observational nights, during the holiday months, both for members as well as the public. Ten regular meetings were held through the year, July and August excepted. The dates of our meetings along with the main programs follow:

January 14: Film. "Time in Space" by Bulova Watch Co.

February 12: Slides on the "Apollo XIV Launch" and Oxgen Dump Pictures and presentation by Jack Newton. Films: "The Moon Old and New", "Cosmic Zoom", "To the Edge of the Universe".

March 12: "Pulsars, what?" by Willard Elliot.

April 16: "Quasars" - Mr. Bill Webster - Wpg. Planetarium Astronomer.

May 14: "Mars" - Dr. J. N. R. Scatliff.

June 11: Junior Night Spectacular, Astrophotography by Barry Wiebe: Apollo Missions by Collin Sewel: Stellar Evolution by Dan Wright: Extraterrestrial Life by John McCarthy: Cassegrain Telescope Baffles by Paul Moffat.

July & August: Summer observing program for members and the public.

- September 10: History of the Planetarium – Mr. Don Davis.  
October 8: “Quasars” by Mr. R. Bochonko “The Black Brant Rocket” by Mr. Gunter Planchaeu.  
November 12: “Stars in our Cellar” by Mr. Jim Gould Film “Exploring the Milky Way”.  
December 10: Annual Meeting and Election of Officers and Council: Film And Commentary “Construction of the J. Newton 12½” Telescope” – Mr. B. F. Shinn; Slides and Commentary “Construction of the J. Newton Observatory” –, Mr. J. Newton. Aurora Slides and Commentary – Mr. A. Lindsay.

The Executive Council held six meetings during 1971, each very busy in setting the plans for this successful year. Of particular interest, Mr. Del Stevens was appointed Co-ordinator of Observing Chair (a very challenging position) who has arranged many rewarding excursions for the membership.

The list of our elected Executive and Council:

Past President	Mr. D. H. Gallagher
President	Mr. Jack Newton
Past Vice President	Mr. J. W. Elliot
2nd Vice President	Mr. Paul Moffat
Secretary	Mr. A. Luchik
Treasurer	Mr. T. Cairns
Councillors	Mr. Del Stevens Prof. Basil Rotoff Mr. Jim Gould Mr. Brian Dentry Mr. Andrew Lindsay Mr. Roy Belfield

A. LUCHIK,  
Secretary

### **The Burke-Gaffney Observatory:**

The Director of this new Observatory, Mr. David DuPuy extends an invitation to all R.A.S.C. members to visit the Observatory whenever making a trip to Halifax.

The visiting hours are as follows: – Winter schedule: 7 p.m. on Saturdays

Summer Tours: just after sundown

It is of interest to know that in the past six months 2000 visitors have been in attendance.

### **Metrication**

As all of us realize, Canada is slowly but surely moving towards a complete metric system in every aspect of measurement. Most of us would say the sooner the better! To prepare the general public for such a conversion the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs has recently published a series of booklets on the subject of the metric system as it affects the average person. Such booklets as “A Guide for Consumers” and “Metrication, a Guide for Producers” contain much of interest to the science-oriented mind. The booklets cover among other things the metric units, basic rules for writing metric quantities etc. Anyone interested in obtaining free copies of these publications should write directly to the department mentioned above, Room 1308 Canadian Building 219 Laurier Avenue West, Ottawa.

### From Saskatoon Centre:

A very ambitious programme of special activities is planned by the Saskatoon Centre as outlined in a recent edition of the Saskatoon Newsletter. Other Centres would be wise to retain this outline as a guide.

Consideration is being given to the formation of special activities groups within the Centre with the theme of each group directed primarily toward a specific area in astronomy. The evenings available to the Centre are Mondays, Tuesdays, and Saturdays. With only three evenings and five activity groups, it is obvious that more than one group will be required to share evenings. It is possible that some groups may meet once a week while others may only meet every two weeks, or even only once a month. Directors will be appointed for each group, and the final number of groups, their meeting dates, and number of meetings per month will be entirely dependent on the number of leaders available and the number of members wishing to participate.

This "Team Director" will be responsible for the direction and guidance of the activities of each unit. In addition, an "Activities Coordinator" will be elected at the upcoming Annual General Meeting to act as a liaison between the Team Directors and the new Executive. The activities of each of these groups will in turn be reported regularly in the Newsletter. The members of each activities group will be responsible for the progress of their own group under the direction of their Director. Whatever additional assistance is required may be organized through the Activities Coordinator.

The Groups of Activities presently being considered are:

- a) *Fundamentals of Astronomy* – a classroom lecture series covering optics, spectroscopy, solar system & constellation studies, etc., all topics intended to further the member's knowledge of astronomy and associated equipment. Wherever possible, practical laboratory demonstrations would be used. All members are encouraged to attend this activity which would be held once a week, possibly Mondays.
- b) *Telescope Making* – a practical activity including mirror grinding, testing, mountings, etc. Dates and number of meetings per month will be determined by the enrollment and number of directors available.
- c) *Astrophotography* – a practical course on handling and development of films, darkroom techniques, printing, etc., and of course, actual photography with telescopes. Meetings would likely be held once a month, but may increase to twice a month later, depending upon the enrollment.
- d) *Variable Star Observing* – basically this would be an observing group, but some lectures would be given on star identification, positions, and determination of magnitudes, etc. Access to binoculars is desirable for members considering this activity.
- e) *Messier Club* – primarily an observing group, but knowledge of the constellations, stellar objects and how to locate them would be required.

All activities need not necessarily take place at the Observatory, in fact some are better carried out in your own back yard, or out in the country.

### Observer's Handbook 1973

Due to unforeseen circumstances the Observer's Handbook might be a bit late in reaching some members. There have been delays in some phases of production which could result in the Handbook mailing becoming enmeshed with an early Christmas rush! Be patient; this important publication is sure to arrive nevertheless.

### **R.A.S.C. Library**

The Librarian reports that many new books have been added to the shelves in the National Office. The library is open to all members. Drop in or write in for whatever type of astronomical reading or study which is of particular interest.

### **Update Your Mailing List**

Two new Centre Secretaries have been appointed as follows:

Kingston Centre  
Mr. Geoffrey Wyght,  
Rm 358, Gordon House,  
Queen's University,  
Kingston, Ont.

Halifax Centre  
Mrs. Marion MacArthur,  
2880 Connolly Street,  
Halifax N.S.

### **Toronto Centre News**

Toronto Centre's Members' Night of September 8 featured the July 10 solar eclipse, at least what there was to show of it! The evening was coordinated by Mr. Ralph Chou, who recently joined the Council of the Toronto Centre. Saturday, September 16 featured an open house at the Maple Observatory of Mr. Ray Thompson. Ray's observing facilities, which form an integral part of his home are spectacular to say the least! Those attending the Members' Night of September 22 were treated to a special showing of the current "Denizens of Outer Space" in the McLaughlin Planetarium.

The David Dunlap Observatory extended their annual invitation to the Toronto Centre for October 6. This open house is always a popular and well-attended outing for the Centre's members, giving them an opportunity to learn more about professional astronomical research at the observatory. On October 20th we were pleased to have Dr. Nolan Walborn of the David Dunlap Observatory speak to Centre on the topic of "Some Recently Discovered Phenomena Among the O and Early B Stars".

On Saturday, October 28, the third annual Astronomy Club Day was held for high school astronomy clubs across the city. This event, under the chairmanship of Andreas Gada was sponsored by the Toronto Centre in cooperation with the McLaughlin Planetarium, the Ontario Science Centre and York University. Activities for the sixteen participating clubs included the current show in the Star Theatre of the McLaughlin Planetarium, a talk by Dr. Helen Hogg, a short paper session, and a visit to York University's observatory facilities (unfortunately under rainy skies!).

Much of Toronto Centre's Council's time is currently being devoted to the details surrounding our planned incorporation, which will take place during 1973. A vote on the question of incorporation was presented to the general meeting of November 3rd and was passed almost unanimously. The Centre is fortunate to have among its membership Mr. Syd Fagan, Barrister and Solicitor, who is donating his services in coordinating the incorporation.

DAN OSTLER,  
Toronto Centre