

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

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Please submit all material and send all communications to the address below:
The Editor, Newsletter, McLaughlin Planetarium, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario

Joint Meeting

ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA

AND

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF VARIABLE STAR OBSERVERS

June 28–July 1, 1974

University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba

June 28–July 1 of 1974 will be a very exciting time in Winnipeg. The Winnipeg Centre is host to the joint meeting of the RASC and the AAVSO. All Winnipeggers and their guests will be celebrating the 100th birthday of the city. Mayor Stephen Juba, our honorary president, has extended an invitation to all delegates to attend a banquet in honour of the occasion. The entertainment committee is arranging a full measure of traditional western hospitality, from cookouts to excursions on the famous Red River. We expect many exciting events. The Winnipeg Centre extends an invitation to you to attend the joint assembly.

Our 1974 assembly will coin a new word: *Centrascope '74*. Winnipeg is looking forward to an invasion by Amateur Telescope Makers from all over the continent to take part in a *Festival of Telescopes* which we think will be one of the highlights of the Assembly. For two or possibly three nights: Saturday, Sunday and Monday, telescopes of all types, amateur built or commercially built, whatever you would like to bring, will be set up at a suitable location where you can join your confreges with similar interests. You can discuss them, or just view your favorite celestial objects or generally 'chinwag' a little. You can help us by introducing our fellow Winnipeggers to the fascination of sky watching.

On Sunday afternoon, judges will circulate around the telescopes and look them over. When the viewing is right for your type of instrument they will try it out for actual performance. Then, at the end of the festivities, they will announce their decisions on the best entries in each of five classes (a) Mechanical Excellence, (b) Optical Performance, (c) Originality of Design, (d) Telescopes by Junior Builders, 16 or under, and (e) Radio Telescopes. Awards will be given in each class.

For details on *Centrascope '74*, please contact Mr. B. F. Shinn, 173 Kingston Row, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R2M 0T1.

Now is the time to prepare your papers for presentation at the assembly. The papers sessions will be held jointly with the AAVSO. This means that there will be more papers presented. We will therefore have to be quite strict about time limits for the papers. It is recommended that ten minutes be the length of presentation. This would allow for short discussion afterwards.

Abstracts of about 150 words in length should be prepared and sent before May 15, 1974, to Dr. J. B. Rice, Department of Physics, Brandon University, Brandon, Manitoba, R7A 6A9.

Remember that members of Centres should first submit their abstracts to the Executive of their Centre for approval.

Members who hope to attend are urged to complete the form on the third page of this Newsletter and send it immediately to the indicated address.

Be sure to come to the "heart of the continent" where the sky meets the prairie wheat and where sunsets and seeing can be out of this world.

Local Planning Committee for
1974 Joint Assembly

Presentation of an Historical Plaque

A plaque commemorating an outstanding Canadian, Sir Sandford Fleming, has been erected by the Archaeological and Historic Sites Board of Ontario in the War Memorial Gardens at Kirkcaldy, Fife, Scotland, and was unveiled on Friday, September 21st, 1973. The presentation was made by the Agent General for the Province of Ontario in the United Kingdom, Ward Cornell, on behalf of The Hon. Jack McNie, Minister of Colleges and Universities in the Ontario Government. John B. Kay, O.B.E., The Provost of Kirkcaldy accepted this memorial on behalf of the Royal Burgh. The following inscription appears on the plaque:

Sir Sandford Fleming 1827–1915

Inventor of Standard Time and pioneer in world communications, Fleming was born in Kirkcaldy and trained in engineering and surveying before immigrating to Canada and settling at Peterborough, Ontario, in 1845. He soon moved to Toronto but retained a lifelong interest in his birthplace which he visited frequently. In 1882 he was made a Burgess and Freeman of the Town. He was the builder of the Intercolonial Railway and as chief engineer of the Canadian Pacific Railway conducted surveys of a transcontinental route. His proposal, presented to the Canadian Institute in 1879, outlining a worldwide uniform system for reckoning time, and his advocacy of a cable route linking Canada with Australia, earned Fleming universal recognition. He was knighted in 1897.

While only the highlights of his illustrious career could possibly be recorded on a commemorative plaque, numerous articles and biographical notes on Sir Sandford Fleming have appeared in the years between 1915 and 1970. He lived to see his dreams become realities as his plans materialized for linking the widely separated parts of Canada by rail, not without facing many frustrations along the way.

All our readers, who frequently use the R.A.S.C. Observer's Handbook, fully appreciate the advantages of Standard Time, as well as the complexities of the Time Zones which span our vast land. In the early development of our practical astronomy, Canadian scientists had to turn their attention, as did scientists in other countries, to the accurate surveying of large regions, the measurement of time by transit observation of stars, and the difficult problems associated with the determination of longitude. With this recent recognition of the contributions of Sir Sandford Fleming, his name should be linked more closely than before with the names of Dr. W. F. King and Dr. W. B. Jack who along with him were the foremost pioneers in these areas in Canada.

J. E. KENNEDY
London, England

An Opportunity

Retired gentleman interested in Astronomy to work four days a week Tuesday–Friday and some evenings in Planetarium Book Store. Able to cope with children. Preferably some selling experience.

Phone or write: MRS. P. DOWTON, McLaughlin Planetarium Bookstore, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto, Telephone: 928–8540.

Henri Simard, 1922-1973

As this issue went to press the sad news reached us of the death, on December 30th, of the immediate past-president of the Society, Henri Simard. To his wife and daughter we extend the sympathy of all members.

A complete obituary will appear in the next issue of the *Journal*.

WINNIPEG CENTRE

Invites you to come to the
ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA
1974 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

To be held jointly with the
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF VARIABLE STAR OBSERVERS

at
THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

on
JUNE 28, 29, 30, JULY 1, 1974

To assist in planning for events and accommodations, as well as to receive registration forms, please fill out this form and send to: D. RICHARD BOCHONKO, Registration, 1974 RASC-AAVSO Joint Assembly, Astronomy, University College, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3T 2M8.

- I plan to attend
 I may attend
 Number in my party
- I desire the Local Planning Committee to make arrangements for me.
 Accommodation desired on campus
 hotel
 motel
- I will make my own arrangements.

NAME

ADDRESS

LE CENTRE DE WINNIPEG

vous invite à
L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE 1974

Tenue conjointement avec la
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF VARIABLE STAR OBSERVERS

à
L'UNIVERSITÉ du MANITOBA
les 28, 29, 30 JUIN et 1er JUILLET, 1974

Pour nous aider à organiser les logements et le programme, veuillez remplir ce formulaire et le renvoyer à l'adresse suivante : D. RICHARD BOCHONKO, Inscriptions, Assemblée Conjointe RASC-AAVSO 1974, Département d'Astronomie, University College, Université du Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3T 2M8.

- Je serai présent à l'Assemblée de 1974
 Il est possible que j'assiste à l'Assemblée
 Nombre de personnes qui m'accompagneront
- Veuillez me retenir un logement dans

- les résidents de l'étudiant
 un hôtel
 un motel

- Je m'occuperai moi-même du logement.

NOM

ADRESSE

**Nominations for R.A.S.C.
Executive 1974-75**

Any five members of the Society in good standing, may nominate candidates for any office, provided such nomination, accompanied by a letter of acceptance from the nominee, shall be received by the Secretary by March 31, 1974.

How Do You Observe...?

In the Ottawa Centre we have been faced with an ever changing cycle: the exodus of the old experienced observers, and the welcome of new members who have done no observing. When the experienced observer leaves a Centre, those who remain are faced with a void. Questions like these arise: Who can and will train the newcomer? Who will keep the new member from becoming bored?

Here in Ottawa we partially compensated for these losses by running training courses throughout the winter. These instructional sessions were all well attended and the quality of observations were improved a thousandfold. Regrettably we found this alone was not enough and should be supplemented. We prepared observational programs, and on their completion presented a "Certificate of Observational Merit." While presenting the courses over the winter we also found that the new observer was faced with a heavy task of extracting the required information from many volumes. To overcome this we compiled under one cover a "Beginner Package." This package explains the intricacies of observing astronomical subjects such as, solar, lunar, variables, etc.

This package is now available from the following person:

Mr. B. L. Matthews,
Ottawa Centre, R.A.S.C.,
133 Woodbridge Cres., Apt. 1,
Ottawa, Ont., K2B 7T2, Canada.

The price for the booklet is \$1.25 to cover reproduction and handling. This booklet is a valuable addition to any observer's library and is a handy reference for new or experienced astronomical observers.

B. L. MATTHEWS