

NEW MEMBERS

- Hazel B. Chisholm, 7009 Iroquois Road (15) WI-7812
- George Agnew Lott, 2009 F Street N.W. Executive 9552
- Mrs. Ernest Eden Norris, Sr., 2204 Wyoming Ave. N.W. Michigan 2424
- Selah P. Young, 828 S. Ivy Street, Arlington, Va. Chestnut 1609
- \*Gerry Bowman, 6301 Utah Avenue. Ordway 2387
- \*Miles Davis, 1422 Rhode Island Ave. N.W. North 7724
- \*Jay French, 1834 Belmont Road N.W. (9) Columbia 3074
- \*Arlene Simas, 1614 Longfellow St. N.W. Georgia 9032

IN MEMORIAM

With much sorrow we learned of the death of Mr. Edmund C. Stanton on April 7 as a result of a stroke. Mr. Stanton was a charter member of the NCA and trustee of the society from 1939 to 1943. Although in recent years his health had not permitted him to be as active as he wished, nevertheless he was a welcome participant in many of our activities. We shall miss this real amateur astronomer. ---Grace C. Scholz

OCCULTATION PREDICTIONS

Morgan Cilley and Edgar W. Woolard

May	Star	Magnitude	Immersion	Hour Angle
13	1206	5.9	8:12 PM	3 1/2 W
13	1211	6.2	8:31 PM	4 W

Both on the dark side.

AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS REGIONAL CONVENTION

to be held at Pittsburgh, May 14-16, see Star Dust, April. That week-end falls midway in a two-week period during which the AAA of Pittsburgh and the Buhl Planetarium are conducting an intensive program to demonstrate their facilities to the public. Another committee is arranging a display of amateur-made telescopes and astronomical exhibits. Mr. Benfer wants photographs and equipment from NCAs to send to Pittsburgh. Please cooperate with him in making the NCA display one to be remembered. Make hotel reservations at the Fort Pitt.

\*\*\*\*\*

Mabel Sterns, editor, 2517 K Street N.W. (7) DI-9422

STAR DUST

National Capital Astronomers  
Washington, D. C.

May 1948

Vol. 5, No. 9

\*\*\*\*\*

Date

MAY EVENTS

- 1 "Origin of the Solar System," Prof. George Gamow, 8 p.m. National Museum. Also the annual election.
- 7 5-inch night for regular members. 8 p.m.; star clusters; Carroll Slemaker. Alternate, May 14.
- 11-15 Discussion group, 8 p.m. foyer of Commerce auditorium, 14th and D N.W. G. R. Wright.
- 14-16 Regional convention of Astronomical League, Pittsburgh, Pa.
- 28 Junior night at the 5-inch. 8 p.m. Carl Werntz.

Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, telescope making, room 235 McKinley High School, 6:30 to 9:51 p.m. R. M. McLellan, instructor.

PROF. GEORGE GAMOW of George Washington University will deliver his popular lecture, "Origin of the Solar System," at the May meeting. The problem of the origin of our sun and its system of planets represents one of the oldest riddles of astronomy. The old Kant-Laplace hypothesis was later substituted by the collision hypothesis of Chamberlin-Moulton and Jeans. However, this hypothesis also failed to explain known facts.

A few years ago a new theory of the origin of planets was proposed by a young German physicist, von Weisäcker. This theory, which seems to give a complete answer to the problem, is in a way a combination of two old leading theories. Similar to the Kant-Laplace hypothesis, the new theory assumes that planets were formed without any help of the second star from the material which was left over from the formation of the sun. The process by which planets were actually formed resembles very much the planetesimal hypothesis of Chamberlin and Moulton.

THE SECOND ASTRONOMICAL HOBBY SHOW had few duplicate exhibits of the first one. John Lankford: plaster model of the moon, illustrated calendar of astronomical and NCA events, chart showing positions of the sun, moon, and stars for April, books on Mars and astronomy, chart showing types of telescopes, Spitz pinpoint planetarium, and notebook of planet observations with drawings...

Carl Werntz: records of variable star observations, 12" mirror under construction, globe of Mars as seen through the 5" and drawings of the planet...David Robert: meteor track camera taking plates up to 14"x14" covering a field of 90°...Bob Wright: collection of books, telescope for projection of sun spots, with grating for viewing stellar spectra, charts for plotting meteors, blueprints for telescope mounting, hand spectroscope, neon and argon lamps...

Herbert B. Alvord: electrically driven machine for grinding and polishing mirrors and lenses, 7x50 binoculars which he had machined and assembled, 82 mm. refractor, Foucault test, astro compass...Donald Miller: drawings of constellations...Judy and Arthur Wubnig: astronomical pictures and drawings from periodicals...Mabel Sterns: directory of astronomical observatories...Lyle T. Johnson: camera for stellar and meteor photography, F.L. 13½", f:3.5, takes 8x10 plates or cut film...Edwin C. Johnson: 5" refractor, 25" F.L. comet seeker with set of erecting prisms for terrestrial work.

Leroy Benfer: 4¼" richest-field telescope...Morgan Cilley: 3 3/4" refractor, King sidereal time calculator...Grace Scholz: publicity scrapbook of NCA, history of NCA...Ralph C. Masters: scrapbook of NCA...William H. Evans: 24" duplex mirror--one side parabola of 92" focus; the other, a Schmidt camera of 30" focus. Chart of parabolic mirror with spectroscope. 15" Schmidt photographic (F.L. 13") and visual (F.L. 26") duplex. Chart of the two systems (using either side). An objective prism for spectroscopy with one side of this duplex. Auxiliary glasses. 16" polished mirror (F.L. 92") demonstrating silver tarnish.

FIVE-INCH NIGHT April 15 was clear and well attended. The telescope is reserved one night a month for regular members, and one for juniors. The other days are open to both. Next 5-inch night for regulars will be Friday, May 7--alternate May 14, 8 p.m.

JUNIOR NIGHT in April drew 13. It is gratifying to see interest in astronomy spreading among the younger students. Next observation, May 28 to see star clusters and nebulae. Carl Werntz in charge.

A SPECIAL OBSERVATION took place April 10th in Rock Creek Park with Mrs. Dorothy Stafford's class at All Souls' Church as guests. Six telescopes were in use, Carroll Slemaker chief observer.

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE: President, G. R. Wright; Vice President, Grote Reber; Secretary, Jewell Boling; Treasurer, Abraham Robinson; Trustee, Irene Warthen. Nominations may be made from the floor at the election May 1.

ARTICLES ON ASTRONOMY have appeared in several magazines during recent months. Mr. Hinckley recommends these, among others:

"Look Upward," Time, Feb. 9, 1948, pp. 56/65. Quite a good popular coverage of the 200-inch, and the research program of Dr. Hubble and staff.

"Nature's Greatest Explosions: Supernovae," N. U. Mayall, Scientific Monthly, Jan. 1948, pp. 17/24. A splendid short article by the Lick Observatory astronomer. Discusses the three supernovae of 1054, 1572, and 1604 observed in the galaxy, and the discoveries of extragalactic supernovae. Properties of light curves are described and the various collapse theories summarized.

"Static from the Stars," Popular Science, Jan. 1948, pp. 148/54. "Hunt for Lost Planets," Science Digest, Feb. 1948, pp. 90/92. "Which Way is North," Science Illustrated, Jan. 1948, pp. 58/60.