

NCA'ERS ATTEND NORTHEAST REGIONAL CONVENTION IN NEW YORK CITY.

Grace Scholz, Mabel Sterns, Bob Wright, Janet Perkins and Jewell Boling attended the Northeast Region Astronomical League Convention held at the American Museum of Natural History on April 23-24. Miss Sterns, who is on the national council, spent most of her time at council meetings. Miss Scholtz, who is national chairman of junior activities, gave a report on junior activity.

A very interesting program was carried out, including a demonstration at Hayden Planetarium and visits to Rutherford Observatory and the Watson Scientific Computing Laboratory which specializes in handling astronomical and nuclear problems. Dr. Bart J. Bok, Associate Director of Harvard College Observatory, outlined his future research plans at Harvard's South African observatory in his lecture, "The Center of Our Galaxy."

NOTES

Twenty or so members of NCA went to Baltimore on March 25 to visit the Watson Planetarium at the Maryland Academy of Sciences.

Mr. John De Audelet is on the sick list. We hope to see him about soon and hope he can bring out his telescope for some of the National Capital Parks Star Outings.

Captain George W. Wekler became Superintendent of Naval Observatory on April 20, succeeding Captain Guy W. Clark.

About 20 members of the NCA attended the Arthur Lecture at the National Museum on April 14. Sir Harold Spencer Jones, Astronomer Royal of Great Britain, spoke on "The Determination of Precise Time."

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MAY CALENDAR

- Date
- 4 Wed. Public observation night at Naval Observatory.
- 7 Sat. "In the Depths of Space," Dr. Paul Watson, 8:15 p.m. Commerce Auditorium.
- 8 Sun. National Capital Parks Star Outing at Campfire site, 16th and Colorado, 8:00 p. m.
- 11 Wed. Public observation night at Naval Observatory.
- 12 Thu. Open house at Young Memorial Observatory, 4410 River Road, N. W. 8 p. m.
- 13 Fri. Regular members' observation with the 5-inch. Naval Observatory, Carl Werntz.
- 14 Sat. Carl Werntz, spectrohelioscope. Naval Observatory. (Alternate, Thurs., May 19)
- 20 Fri. Junior observation night at the 5-inch. John Lankford. (Alternate, Fri., May 27)
- 21 Sat. Hobby show, foyer of Commerce Auditorium. 8 p. m.

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 7-10 p. m. Telescope making class, Roosevelt High School, 13th and Upshur N. W. Irene Warthen, instructor. SH-9451.

Note that for the month of May there is only one open house night at the Young Memorial Observatory, the 12th. Mr. and Mrs. Rotbart need not be called in advance.

"IN THE DEPTHS OF SPACE"-- What is found in the solar system out beyond the moon? Of what is our galactic system made up? Where is it headed? How much is known about what lies beyond the Milky Way? How do astronomers go about exploring distant galaxies? How do they find out the life cycle of a star? How are stars measured? Stellar distances determined?

Questions such as these will be answered by Dr. Paul Watson, Acting Director of the Maryland Academy of Sciences, when he delivers the regular lecture on May 7.

HOBBY SHOW, MAY 21. Once again it is time to bring forth the new things on which you have been working. Let's have a room full of interesting astronomical exhibits to show our visitors. Even though you have displayed your exhibit at previous hobby shows they will most certainly be of interest to our new members and those who attend the hobby show for the first time.

THE MIRROR MAKING CLASS has been moved from the Morse Street location to the Roosevelt High School at 13th and Upshur, N. W. This move was made to eliminate the cost of rent. The class is open to anyone who is interested in making a mirror for a telescope. (You do not have to be an NCA member to join the class.) Miss Irene Warthen is in charge of the project (SH-9451). Blanks and supplies are on hand. Classes will be on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 7:00 to 10:00 p. m. in lecture room No. 5 in the basement of the Roosevelt High School.

SEVENTY-FIVE PEOPLE attended the first National Capital Parks Star Outing of the season on April 9. The following NCA members furnished telescopes: Leo Scott, Leroy Benfer, Dr. Francis Wells, Mrs. Dave Rotbart, Carl Wertz, U. S. Lyons, Miss Irene Warthen, Mrs. Janice Crowell, Bob Wright, and Miss Janet Perkins. This was the first star outing held at the new location 16th and Colorado. The next one will be held Sunday, May 8. Bring out your telescopes and help with this public service program of the N. C. A.

DR. SHAPLEY GUEST OF JOHN LANKFORD AT THE NCA 5-INCH and thereby hangs a tale. "The Neighbors," a periodic conclave of astronomers for the informal exchange of ideas rather than the presentation of papers, formerly held only at Yale University, met the weekend of April 23-24 in Washington in honor of Sir Harold Spencer Jones, Astronomer Royal of Great Britain, now visiting here. John Lankford, bound for his regular observing stint at the NCA 5-inch, happened onto Dr. Shapley at the Naval Observatory. John invited Dr. Shapley down to see the instrument where the variable observations Harvard has been getting from here are made.

Dr. Shapley inspected the 5-inch, signed his name in the NCA register, and spent some time with John and also Carl Wertz, Carroll Slemaker, and Miles Davis discussing variable star and galactic observing. He gave John the names of two stars which he suspects of being variables, but of which there is no proof, and John plans to make a systematic investigation of this the basis of his science talent contest project for 1952.

The boys were invited by the astronomers to see the showing of the color film on the International Astronomical Union's meeting in Zurich. Astronomers attending "The Neighbors," in addition to Sir Arthur and Dr. Shapley, included Dr. E. W. Brown, Dr. Henry Norris Russell, Dr. Fred L. Whipple, Dr. Donald H. Menzel, Dr. Joel Stebins, Dr. Dirk Brauer, Dr. Paul W. Merrill of Mt. Wilson and Palomar, and some European astronomers. The boys met and got the autographs of most of them.

NEW PLANETARIUM IN SAN FRANCISCO. The California Academy of Science, San Francisco, has announced the awarding of the contract for building a new hall of science and the Morrison Planetarium. The planetarium will be constructed in this country and will combine features of different types of planetariums now in use. A two-year fund-raising campaign is planned.

NCA COMMUNICATIONS FROM FOREIGN LANDS

Germany. Mr. Teoms Muhle of the Wilhelm Foerster Institut, Berlin, writes about an observatory which he and his fellow amateur astronomer, Mr. Rechlin, are erecting in the American Sector of Berlin. The only other observatory is in the Russian Sector. Great difficulty is encountered due to the shortage of materials. A 2-inch and a 12-inch will be housed in the observatory. All friends of astronomy in the area, young and old, spend all free time and Sundays removing rubbish and carrying on construction tasks.

The Institut learned of NCA through the International Exchange Service of the Smithsonian Institution and has written NCA with reference to the possibility of "arranging an exchange of ideas about the beauty of the sky and its marvels and about the progress of astronomy." The letter also inquires if it is possible for NCA or its individual members to help the Institut by "transmission of new astronomical publications, etc., because it is impossible in Germany to get new astronomical literature or star cards."

NCA members wishing to write Mr. Muhle or to send publications to the Institut should address communications:

Wilhelm Foerster Institut
Sternwarte Berlin Sud
Berlin-Schöneberg
Papestrasse 2

Brazil. The Brazilian Society of the Friends of Astronomy has sent NCA a copy of their illustrated book describing the recent Palomar Exposition held in Brazil. Would some NCA member who reads Portuguese like to read it and tell the rest of us about the Exposition?

New Books

"The Stars are Yours," James S. Pickering, Macmillan Co., New York, 1948, 264 pp. \$3.95
An outstanding introductory book for the layman. Non-technical exposition and excellent star-charts, photographs, and tables. --R. J. Hinckley

REPORT OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE. At the April meeting, Miss Scholz, Chairman, announced the following nominations for NCA officers for the year 1949-1950: President, Bob Wright; Vice President, Clay P. Butler; Secretary, Mrs. Louisa Jones, Miss Janet Perkins; Treasurer, Joseph Matthews, Arthur Wubnig; Trustee, David Rotbart, Leo W. Scott, Edwin Smith. Election will be held at the monthly meeting May 7.

DR. WHIPPLE'S LECTURE ON METEORS AND THE SCIENCE FAIR drew a capacity audience on April 2. Dr. Whipple described how the study of meteors has been put on a quantitative basis and how by photographing meteors with the use of a revolving shutter the rate at which they move can be determined. Dr. Whipple has proved that meteors are part of the solar system by showing that their orbits are parabolic rather than hyperbolic.

SKY AND TELESCOPE TO CARRY ARTICLE ON YOUNG MEMORIAL OBSERVATORY. Mr. and Mrs. David Rotbart, in collaboration with Miss Mabel Sterns, have contributed an article to Sky and Telescope describing the features of the Young Memorial Observatory. This article will appear in an early issue.

DR. EDGAR W. WOOLARD TO SPEAK BEFORE RITTENHOUSE SOCIETY in Philadelphia on May 13. His subject will be "The Impress of Past Ages in Modern Astronomy." He will point out the influence of ancient on modern astronomy. Dr. Woolard's article, "Astronomy from the Historical Point of View," appearing in Sky and Telescope July 1947, is along the same line.

Articles of Interest

William A. Kinney - "Operation Eclipse: 1948, National Geographic, March 1949, pp. 325/72.

Organization and planning for multiple eclipse expeditions covering 5,320 mile path from Burma to the Aleutians (May 8-9, 1948). Thirteen illustrations and map and 33 natural color photographs of local scenery. --R. J. Hinckley

NATIONAL CONVENTION. The National Convention of the Astronomical League will be held in Cleveland July 2-4. (April Sky and Telescope page 149 gives further details.) The National Capital Astronomers is anxious that our organization be well represented.

There will also be a Regional meeting for discussion of topics outlined in the February 1949 issue of STAR DUST and the election of Regional Officers for the ensuing year.

It is requested that all Juniors who are planning to attend the convention, or are planning on submitting a paper or exhibit contact Miss Scholz. Regular members are requested to get in touch with Bob Wright. Abstracts of papers must be in the hands of the Executive Secretary of the Astronomical League six weeks in advance of the meeting so that selection of those to be read may be made. Exhibits must be delivered directly to Cleveland and picked up at the conclusion of the convention. No arrangements can be made for mailing exhibits.

LATEST CONVENTION INFORMATION. Registration of delegates takes place Saturday, July 2, 8:00 to 9:00 a. m. Registration fee is \$1.00 for regular League members, 50 cents for juniors. Registrations should be in the mail by June 12.

Middle East Region convention is to be held concurrently. Two short sessions will take place. One will be at 9:00 a. m. July 2. At 2 p. m. July 4 election of officers will be held.

The convention opens at 9 a. m. Saturday July 2 and closes at 1:00 p. m. July 4.

Schedule of Activities. In addition to section meetings various activities are planned. Saturday evening a Star Party, sponsored by the Cleveland

Press, Astronomical League, and the Cleveland Astronomical Society will be held at Wade Park. About 5,000 are expected to attend.

Sunday noon, July 3, a banquet will be held in the Crystal Ballroom of the Tudor Arms Hotel. Dr. S. W. McCuskey gives a lecture, "The Expanding Milky Way." Three dollars for the banquet, including tax and tip.

Sunday evening trips are planned to the Warner and Swasey Observatory and the Cleveland Junior Workshop.

An instruments clinic, the first of its kind, will be conducted during the convention. Demonstrations will be made of grinding and polishing techniques. Foucault Testing Tunnels will be on display. A dozen or so prominent instrument men will be present to act as consultants. Visitors are invited to bring mirrors and mounts for consultation and advice.

Hotels, Meals, and Accommodations. Wade Park Manor, East 107th at Park Lane, Cleveland 6, single rooms, \$5.50, double rooms \$7.50 to \$9.00. Tudor Arms Hotel has all double rooms with twin beds from \$7.00 to \$10.00. There are numerous tourist homes in the vicinity; also arrangements can be made to stay in private homes. Reservations must be made directly, not through the Cleveland Society. Except for the Sunday dinner, delegates may select any of several restaurants near the convention site. Free parking on the Physics Building parking lot.

Exhibit fees. Large exhibits such as telescopes exhibited by amateurs should be registered at \$1.00 each; smaller exhibits such as photographs, etc., 25 cents to 50 cents, depending on size. Although safety of exhibits is not guaranteed, the building houses much valuable equipment and is well guarded at all times. Leo Schoenig, 825 Tripoli Street, Pittsburgh 12, Pennsylvania, is in charge of reservations for exhibits.