

SKY AND TELESCOPE BEGINS IN SEPTEMBER

Next month the NCA will start sending Sky and Telescope to its members as part of their membership. By doing this the Association is providing you with this valuable magazine at half its usual cost. The inclusion of Sky and Telescope in our membership is one of the things that your Association is doing to promote your interest in astronomy.

The August issue contained several articles on the June 30 eclipse of the sun, one on the atmospheres of Jupiter and Saturn by Otto Struve, plus many short notes on, Flare Stars, Power from the Sun, Meteor Flares, Telescope Making, and the supposed Satellite of Venus. Charlie Federer has told us that the September issue will be a humdinger.

All full members will receive the magazine automatically. Junior members may elect to receive Sky and Telescope by paying two dollars a year. However, if you decide to get the magazine you must continue to do so. Since our first issue of Sky and Telescope will be out before our next meeting, Juniors desiring the magazine should notify the Secretary, Mrs. Goerner, at once.

— Leo W. Scott

AUGUST IS THE BEST MONTH for viewing the constellation SAGITTARIUS. It is in the direction of Sagittarius that the center of our Milky Way system is located. Look for it low in the south, a small edition of the Dipper, lying upside down with its handle pointing to the west. The entire constellation is packed with marvels, with or without glasses.

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STAR DUST
National Capital Astronomers

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AUGUST CALENDAR

- Aug. 8 (Sun.) EXPLORING THE SKY. Joint program of NCA and National Capital Parks. Fort Reno Park, 40th and Chesapeake Sts., N. W. 9-11 P. M. Please bring telescopes.
- Aug. 12 (Thu.) PERSEID METEORS. Observing at the 5". Naval Observatory. 9-11 P. M. The moon will be nearly full, but we may be able to see some of the brighter meteors in the shower.
- Aug. 20 (Fri.) OBSERVING AT THE 5". Naval Observatory. 9-11 P. M..
- Aug. 24 (Tue.) EVENING ADVENTURE. Joint program of NCA and National Capital Parks. Picnic Grove #17. Rock Creek Park. Military Road and Oregon Ave., N. W. 7:15-9:30 P. M. Please bring telescopes.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR.

The year 1953-54 has brought, as always, a variety of programs to the NCA. The Astronomical League Convention was held in Washington on Labor Day weekend. The opinion of the delegates to this convention was unanimous. It was an outstanding success. The A. L. has expressed its gratitude to General Chairman G. R. (Bob) Wright and his efficient committees who brought their work of the preceding year to such a successful culmination.

The Speakers Committee--Roger K. Smith, Leo W. Scott and William L. Isherwood--were responsible for the year's lecture meetings. In October our auditorium was well filled for the presentation of Ruroy Sibley's excel-

lent astronomical films relating the mysteries of "The Universe." Among out-of-town speakers were Dr. I. M. Levitt, Fels Planetarium, Philadelphia; and Dr. James C. Bartlett, Baltimore. An exceptional July meeting brought to our members and to many professional research workers Dr. H. Percy Wilkins of London, England, whose dissertation on "Our Moon" gave us the opportunity to hear a world authority discourse on a subject to which he has devoted many years of research. Other lectures dealt with telescope making, Milky Way research, the internal constitution of the earth, astronomy and the tides, atoms and ions in the sun, and the history of optical glass.

Discussion Groups, under the leadership of Bob Wright, have brought the delightful monthly informal sessions that we have all enjoyed so much during the past many years. Some of our members, Robert W. Rhynsburger, Dr. James Q. Gant, Robert H. Dellar, and Morton Schiff, among others, have presented talks at these sessions. The major discussion group of the year was the all-day session on solar eclipse observing. Mr. George V. Plachy, New York AAA, was a guest speaker and told what the amateur can do during a total eclipse of the sun.

The Vice-President, William L. Isherwood, has taken the lead in planning for nine joint sessions this summer in cooperation with National Capital Parks in bringing astronomy to the public. At one session we observed the partial eclipse of the moon and Mr. U. Sherman Lyons explained how this event occurs. In addition to telescope observing each of these events features some discussion of constellations, mythology, planets, etc. that add to the enjoyment of the sessions. Many members have cooperated by bringing their telescopes. Mr. Isherwood has also supervised monthly observing sessions at the 5" telescope at the Naval Observatory.

Miss Irene Warthen was instructor of the Telescope Making Class in Roosevelt High School, as she has been for a number of years. The class continues to provide a source of revenue to the NCA that exceeds all others with the exception of annual membership dues.

Publicity Chairman, Benjamin Adelman, prepared bulletin board material for each lecture which attracted many prospective members to our meetings. He also pre-

OBSERVATIONAL DATA FOR AUGUST

Mercury is in superior conjunction on the 21st and is poorly placed for observation all month. Venus dominates the western sky for about two hours after sunset and is in conjunction with Spica on the 31st. Mars remains in Sagittarius. On the 15th the planet is about on the meridian at sunset and prominent in the southwest until about midnight. Jupiter is a morning star in Gemini rising about two hours before the sun. Saturn is low in the southwest at sunset and sets about three hours later. The date of maximum intensity for the PERSEID meteor shower is August 12. This shower averages 50 meteors per hour.

LUNAR OCCULTATIONS FOR AUGUST

Date	Star	Mag.	Age	Phase	E. S. T.
7	CD-24 ^o	12275	7.5	9.1	D 8:48.6 P.M.
12	Sigma	Capr	5.5	14.2	D 7:39.0 P.M.
12-13	Pi	Capr	5.2	14.3	D 12:42.7 A.M.
12-13	Rho	Capr	5.0	14.3	D 1:39.4 A.M.
20-21	104 B.	Taur	5.5	22.4	R 2:18.7 A.M.
22-23	132	Taur	5.0	24.4	R 1:22.4 A.M.
24-25	209 B.	Gemi	6.1	26.5	R 4:15.5 A.M.

NEW MEMBERS

- *Roberta D. Gregor, 3937 S Street, S. E., Washington, D.C. IU 2-4956
- Elsa Dimick, 1426 Longfellow Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. RA 6-4165

*Junior member

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

- Sylvia Bertolini, 4115 Cottage Terrace, Cottage City, Maryland, UN 4-3344
- Michael J. Wright, 714 Parkway Terrace, Alexandria, Va. KI 8-1286
- R. A. Soucy, Woodside, Broad Run, Virginia

pared a publicity pamphlet describing the NCA and entitled "Would You Like to Know More About the Stars?" He delivered talks on astronomy to a number of groups during the year and assisted in the preparation of several astronomical exhibits.

Miss Mabel Sterns has ably performed as Membership Committee Chairman, a job requiring continuous performance and regular attendance, but no glory. Net increase in membership during the year was 17 regular and 7 junior members. This increase has been effected through publicity, telescope making class, and many other media, but we should not fail to mention the publicity that Bob Wright secured for us in the Times Herald Weekender during the fall of 1953.

Miss Thelma Cressy arranged and conducted two visits to the Planetarium at Fort Belvoir--the closest Spitz Planetarium to Washington. Both trips drew a fine attendance. An annual dinner was held at the Kenesaw Apartments, the extensive planning and preparations carried out by a committee under Miss Cressy's guidance. Another trip was conducted to the International Latitude Observatory in Gaithersburg, Maryland. Mr. Earl Williams demonstrated the type of observations made of the wanderings of the geographic pole, and explained the workings of the world-wide system of observatories in analyzing this information.

Miss Jewel Boling has, as for many years past, edited Star Dust, and met the many trying deadlines that confront any editor. Mr. A. Larry White has performed ably and well as Observing Chairman in bringing to Star Dust the types of observing information that have been helpful to all of us.

More than a dozen members of the NCA journeyed to the path of totality of the total eclipse of the sun on June 30 and met with varying success in viewing the total phase. In Washington many rose early to see the partial phase visible here and the televised view of the total phase.

Mr. Lyle T. Johnson has handled general facilities and brought the all-important smoothness of operation to each lecture meeting.

Mr. Robert H. Dellar, Chairman of Junior Activities, conducted junior sessions monthly for one hour preceding the regular discussion group. Mrs. Ione Alston has carried on the voluminous task of mailing publicity and Star Dust month after month. Mr. Paul S. Davis has been our Parliamentarian. Mr. Abraham Robinson and Mrs. Joan E. Davis will audit the financial records.

The Trustees have had four meetings to discuss the business of the NCA and to provide for coordinated planning of activities for our members.

Negotiations with the Editors of Sky and Telescope have finally made possible group subscription to that magazine beginning in September 1954. Many of our members now subscribe to this magazine at regular subscription rates of \$4 a year. Hereafter it will be made a part of membership privilege. To make this service possible, the dues for regular membership will increase from \$3 to \$5 a year. Junior members and life members may subscribe to the magazine if they wish. (Discussion of this matter appears elsewhere in this issue of Star Dust.)

Thanks and appreciation are extended to the officers--William L. Isherwood, Elizabeth M. Fazekas, Elizabeth L. Goerner; the Trustees--Bob Wright, Lyle T. Johnson, Dana K. Law and Hoy J. Walls; and the committees mentioned heretofore, who have given complete support and assistance on every occasion. Thanks are also extended to the many members; not mentioned specifically in this report; who have volunteered special help, and to all who have cooperated in the club's activities. No President could ask for more. --

Grace C. Scholz, President.

AN AUDIT COMMITTEE composed of Mr. Abraham Robinson and Mrs. Joan E. Davis has been appointed to audit the financial records.