

ATLANTA ASTRONOMY CLUB NEWSLETTER

MEETING: Club President, John Parker 977-2387
The December meeting will be held at 8:00 P. M. on Friday,
December 13, 1985 at Bradley Observatory of Agnes Scott College.

PROGRAM: Program Director, Dr. Joe Gibson 252-3482
This meetings program will be conducted by a member of our club, Mike
Marcus. His topic: "Popular Amateur Telescopes"
COMING ATTRACTIONS!! ... Does Dobsonian ring a bell? Well if it does
then January's speaker needs no introduction. We will have John
Dobson as a special guest speaker! His topic: "Einstein, Physics,
Astronomy"

TREASURY NOTES: Treasurer, Liz Peterson 767-4674

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: President, John Parker
Well, its that time of year. Crisp nights and twinkle stars and wait
what's that I see ... is it a plane, is it a meteor, comet, or nebula
... a sleigh?!

***** RED DOTTED LABEL *****
***** Means It's DUES TIME *****

THE UPPFR HALF: Upper Halver, George Reight 633-1202
New Moon -- Wednesday Dec. 11
Observing Session -- The Barber Observatory Saturday, Dec. 14
Approximate Halley Coordinates = 28hrs 24'+4⁰32'

This month's article is written by Lee Wilson, an enthusiastic
and willing member of the AAC for the last 25 years.

He has served as Recording and Corresponding Secretary; Board of
Directors, Publicity Chairman and for several years a member of the
Nominating Committee.

In spite of his long term interest in the very exact science of
Astronomy, his true love lies in the very inexact science of Fine
Arts. He writes:

Soon we will dedicate a 20-inch Newtonian telescope at our Walter
F. Barber Jr. Observatory. This F4.5 instrument has promise of
becoming one of the finest in the southeastern U.S., and in size is
currently exceeded only by a 36-inch at Fernbank and two 30-inchers -
Agnes Scott College and the University of Florida. The 20-inch mirror
came to us as a gift in 1978 - a NASA surplus that had been used as a
testing tool. So we will be the first people to introduce it to the
stars.

This telescope project actually began when the Atlanta Astronomy
Club began construction of an observatory near Villa Rica. To get the
project started, many members contributed \$5.00 to \$20.00 toward a
construction fund. However, the outstanding effort at that time came
from Jerry Armstrong. In 1976-77 Jerry created astronomical paintings
and donated them to the club where they were sold at auction - raising
over \$800 of sorely needed funds. His paintings along with constant
observing and astrophotography with the 14¹/₄ inch ARCA telescope
easily makes Jerry, (in my mind) the leading amateur astronomer in

Georgia and the southeast.

After we gained the 20-inch mirror, I, along with others, began thinking about how to turn it into an operating telescope. The obstacles included specialized individual capability requirements that had to be found within a diverse club environment. We didn't gain a Telescope Construction Chairman until Don Hall joined the club in 1980. After the committee was formed, George Keight made design drawings; Mark Christensen, George Roberts, Jim Brown and Don purchased parts and material. Ray DeVarney, at Emory University, arranged for machine work on the fork and turning a 6-inch steel rod into a 4-inch by 35-inch telescope shaft.

Those activities were off-stage and out of sight of most club members. During that time, club/sky observing was on the wane. In 1981, I was elected Correspondence Secretary "Newsletter" and I had a club project in mind - sky gazing. In the previous year there had been only two observing parties, 2 or 3 telescopes and 4 or 5 people - same people each time. At our first party that fall there were 7 telescopes and about 15 people. At the next party - about 15 telescopes and over 25 people. Now club observing activity has its own momentum.

Voluntary "Weekend Warrior" type work moves at its own slow pace since most involved members hold full time jobs and have family considerations. In fair weather you are talking about only one or two "Saturdays" a month, if that. And the first thing you do is drive 40 to 50 miles. In an effort to contribute toward completion of the telescope pier I came to the April 1984 club meeting with notes and detail sketches. Our first work detail was in early July. It was 3 times that month, 2 in Aug. and the 3rd trip in Sept. we poured cement. We were over the top of our development program. However, I wasn't able to appreciate that very much then. Only minutes before we poured cement I discovered that the 4 threaded rods, essential to the telescope mount, were loose and out of place. Hastily I rearranged the bolts and tightened down the bolts. During the summer I had made many detailed sketches but the full measure of the 2 big pillowblock bearings was one set of numbers I didn't have.

Some readily remembered people who helped on work details are: Dennis Holmes, Tim Pucket, Terry Morris, Shaun Camp, Jim Colehaur, David Roberts, Rick Clark, John Marsh, Mark Wilkerson, and Wes Bergman. Also, this past summer's great clean-up, repair and paint Saturday when about 30 people came out. Even the HIS and HES got a manicure, courtesy of Liz Peterson and Sharone Franklin. Most club members don't know that when Walt and Cleo Barber gave us the land for our observing site there were hundreds of little rocks lying around and don't know who picked up the rocks. However, everyone going out to observe the wonders in the sky should know and join me in a warm feeling of appreciation toward Mr. Barber for keeping the grass cut short. Oh yes - the pier after removal of the wood form I found that we had space for 2 big bearings and polar alignment was near perfect.

Now that the telescope is near completion, George Roberts is the one making significant effort; complete spider assembly, tangent arm assembly and a myriad of other details. Ask George and Don how many thousand passes with a scribe bit it took to make the lines on the 21-inch and 18-inch right ascension and declination disks.

In a club atmosphere where the ultimate in democratic freedoms

prevail a group of people worked together to accomplish an outstanding achievement. I feel honored and happy to have been part of it... Lee Wilson

LAST MINUTES: Sharone Franklin, Recording Secretary 934-8796
Club member Bill Black gave a slide presentation showing various styles and types of telescopes from the annual convention of Amateur Telescope Makers. This event, called "Stellafane", is held on breezy Hill in Springfield, Vermont.

WANTED:

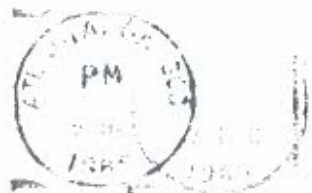
Used C-8 basic tube assembly with fork and drive, willing to pay \$500-\$700. Call R. Brodhead 351-4780

SELLING:

Celestron Comet Catcher, mint condition ... \$250 Call R. Brodhead 351-4780.

Celestron C-8 with tripod, wedge, and accessories. Ready to view. ... \$1000, call Bob Cowart 955-2312.

DYNASCOPE 6" F8.5, 5 eyepieces (30,18,9,6,4mm) variable barlow 2-3x, homemade wooden case included for telescope . . . call Bill Morrison 971-3318



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