The Sidereal Times

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALBUQUERQUE ASTRONOMERS

PRESIDENT: WYNNIE WOOD  OCTOBER 1976  EDITOR: DEREK JALLENTINSEN

OUR NEXT MEETING will be on Saturday, October 28 at 7:30 PM at the Albuquerque Federal Savings and Loan, 4901 Central NE (see map). Our special speaker will be Senator Harrison H. Schmitt, who will recount for us his experiences on the last and longest lunar visit, that of Apollo 17 in December 1972. Senator Schmitt was the first and only scientist/astronaut (a geologist) to land on the moon during the Apollo Program.

OUR LAST MEETING. We had a fine turnout to hear Dan Fenstermacher (an "almost charter member" of the club) give a slide show of his astrophotographs and Chesley Bonestell spacescapes. Everyone enjoyed the presentation. We will have him back to continue his show at a future meeting. Dan also brought his HP-97 to the meeting, with which he demonstrated several programs dealing with eclipse dates, Julian dates, and other calendrical matters.

Wynne welcomed a number of newer members and guests to our September meeting. She called our attention to a picture of the Albuquerque Astronomers group visiting the VLA last April that is in the September Sky and Telescope (p. 220, be sure to see it) and then unnecessarily praised your editor for his efforts with the club newsletter and post of secretary, which was followed by approval from the membership.

The release form regarding club liability is nearly ready to present to the membership for approval.

From the mailbag. Wynne told us about the following publications (contact her for details): TELESCOPE NEWS, $5/yr. for six issues, it is mainly astronomical exchange advertisements; TELESCOPE MAKING, $8/yr. semitechnical quarterly, descriptively titled; WHAT'S UP, individualized hourly ephemeris, $2.50/yr.; RUSSELL W. PORTER: ARCTIC EXPLORER, ARTIST, TELESCOPE MAKER by Berton C. Willard (see review Nov. 1976 S&T, p. 367), now available at a 20% discount. Finally, GRAZE OBSERVER'S HANDBOOK, now available for $4.31 postpaid from the author, Harold Pavenmire, 408 25th St. West, Bradenton, FL 33505 (it has sold over 1000 copies).

Details of the Flagstaff trip were discussed (see Eric Pearce's account of the trip below).

The date of the next meeting was announced and greeted with some dismay. Almost two months between them! (Blame the moon!) We scheduled a star party for September 23, but had bad weather. (Another has been scheduled for October 21; see below.)

STAR PARTY. There will be a star party (sky permitting!) on October 21 at Jim Tolle's lot on the east side of the Sandias (see map on reverse). It will begin at twilight. Jim now lives at the site in a trailer (no phone; his office number is 293-5252). He asks that clock drive users bring plenty of extension cord.

WANTED: Used cement mixer. Please call Jim Tolle at 293-5252.
WANTED: Small telescope for under $200, 3-in. refractor, altazimuth or equatorial mount, preferred. Call John Ingro 298-8232.
WANTED: 1" focal length 1½" outside diameter eyepiece for finder. Also: will give ham radio miscellany to interested person. Call George Tolle 296-8193.

NEW MEMBER: Adam Sherman, 13213 Cedarbrook Ave. NE, S7111. 293-1678. Welcome!

(over)
NEW ADDRESSES: Dr. Robert G. Babb II, 17256 139th Pl. SE, Renton, WA 98055.
Merv Seay, 2912 Dakota NE, 87110, 883-4279.
Bob Britton, c/o Occidental Systems, 5 Greenway Plaza East, Houston, TX 77046.
Rich Reif, 225 Alamosa NW, 87107, 344-9516.
Alan Lampson, 9515 Apache NE, 87112, 293-4113.
Ralph Thorman, 4401 Longmerry NE, Apt. 183, 87109, 863-5037.

TELESCOPE CURATOR is now Paul Browinski, 7320 Christy NE, 87109, 821-7852. Please contact him about borrowing the club telescope. Remember, it is $2 for a month’s use when you sign out the 8-in. reflector. We thank Paul for his willingness to be "caretaker of the telescope."

FLAGSTAFF TRIP. The recent club field trip to Flagstaff was a great success. Approximately 15 members and their guests left Winrock Shopping Center only a few minutes past 8 AM on the 9th of September. Upon arrival in Flagstaff the members quickly checked into their hotel rooms at the Regal 8 Inn and prepared for their tour of the U.S. Naval Observatory west of town. After a photographic session outside of the main dome, the group viewed a short film and asked Joe Robert, our guide, many questions about the observatory. Following the question and answer period, all were led up the steep concrete stairs into the dome where the optical and mechanical workings of the 61-in. astrometric reflector were briefly discussed. A silvering chamber and parts of an old reflecting telescope were also seen. After a slightly rushed dinner, our group, led by Fred Ream, drove up the steep road leading to Lowell Observatory. After browsing through the museum, the club, with Charles Canep of the observatory, hastily viewed the first quarter moon through the 24-in. refractor, the 12-in. auxilliary instrument, and the 6-in. finder. A lecture concerning the history of Lowell Observatory followed. After the lecture, we discovered that the 40-in. reflector at the Naval Observatory was available until 3 AM. Thus, our group, along with several tourists disappointed by the quick glimpse of the lunar surface, made it back to the USNO for four hours of enjoyable deep-sky observing. (Incidentally, the 40-in. is an interesting telescope, with a mercury flotation suspension.) On the return trip to Albuquerque the next day, many of us (individually) stopped along the highway to admire the Meteor Crater. For some, it was the first view of the unusual formation, and all were amazed by the impact structure. Afterwards, members of the group made their own way back to Albuquerque. I will show slides of the trip at a future meeting.

---Eric Pearce