



# STAR FIELDS

NEWSLETTER OF THE AMATEUR TELESCOPE MAKERS OF BOSTON, INC.

Vol. 3, No. 5

May 1992

## OUR MAY MEETING...

Friday, May 15, 1992, 8 p.m.  
Phillips Auditorium, Harvard-Smithsonian  
Center for Astrophysics

**WEATHERWISE AND OTHER WHYS** is the title of this month's talk by Bruce Schwægler, BU professor and WBZ-TV meteorologist. Join New England's favorite weatherman on a humorous flight through the greatest show off Earth. But fasten your seatbelts because the turbulence above is sometimes matched by the wackiness below. Unexplained phenomena raining down from above can be as mystifying as the behind the scenes highjinks common to television newscast. Its hot and cold, wet and dry, polluted and convoluted!

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Join us for a 5:45 p.m. pre-meeting dinner with fellow members at the Changsho restaurant, 1712 Mass Avenue, Cambridge.

## APRIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS...

Some 63 members and guests attended our April meeting. Reports were given by the Secretary, Treasurer, Observing, and Workshop (via Phil Rounseville) chairmen. The president selected the following individuals as candidates for the Nominating Committee: Gary Walker, Ed Wallner, Steve Mock, Dick Koolish, Burno Nardelli, and Kevin McCarthy. From this group, the membership elected a three member committee consisting of G. Walker, chairman, E. Wallner, and R. Koolish. They will present a slate of club officers at the May meeting. The president announced that she has obtained permission from Dr. Joseph Salah, Director of the Haystack Observatory, to build an observatory for our 20-inch on the clubhouse grounds. Ed Knight indicated that he is working on the plans for the observatory. Returning from a recent trip to Italy, Mario Motta reported that he had visited the University of Rome's observatory on, of all places, Mt. Mario. Gary Walker announced that he finally got three successive clear nights at his observatory in central NH. Jack Costello made a motion to make Johnny Carson a honorary member of the ATM of B. After a brief discussion, the motion was passed. Vice President, Bernie Volz, reminded us of the Astronomy Day activities at the museum. Richard Koolish gave the Secretary a marked-up copy of the By-Laws which corrected certain typos. The Executive Committee approved the expenditure of \$55 a professionally made ATM of B sign that can be used at club exhibits.

## ARUNAH HILL SCIENCE & NATURE CENTER...

Arunah Hill, West Cummington, MA, is a 2000 ft. hill in the heart of the Berkshires. It has the darkest skies in southern New England as confirmed by naked eye sightings that include M6, M7, M13, and M33. Thanks to the Springfield STARS Club, the Amherst Area Amateur Astronomers Association, and the donation of land by amateur astronomer and 5A member, Joe Zuraw, an observatory and nature center will soon adorn Arunah Hill. The center is being incorporated as a non-profit organization. Members of the above clubs have begun clearing the observing site and carving a road through the rugged hillside. Boy Scout Troop 550 of Hadley have been building new trails and maintaining old ones. A 5-inch equatorially mounted refractor and a 24-inch blank have been donated to the center, and a 17-inch Dobsonian is on semi-permanent loan. The Arunah Hill Optical shop (see below) has completed two 12-inch mirrors and has started work on the 24-inch. The 24-inch should see first light on the hill by October 1, 1992. Future plans include a huge 38-inch reflector and observatory building for the site. When fully completed in 1994, the Arunah Hill will host star parties and astronomical camp-outs. Memberships will be available at a very nominal fee to any amateur wanting further access to the center's resources.

The Arunah Hill Optical shop was established by 5A President and award winning optical craftsman, Bob Douglas. It sports a Perkin-Elmer polishing machine capable of polishing a 24-inch lens or 38-inch mirror. To help raise funds for the Arunah Hill center, Bob is offering to refigure optical surfaces or provide finished lenses or mirrors at very competitive prices. For more information, call him at 413-527-5138.

Arunah Hill is bracketed by State Forests and Reservations. Temperatures average 10 to 15 degree cooler than the surrounding area, and snow can fall from September through May. It was named after Arunah Bartlet, who lived there in the mid-1800's. A true New England Yankee, Arunah was a stone worker, farmer, builder, and accomplished musician who made his own instruments. His home was a stop-over in the Underground Railroad helping escaped slaves to freedom. The land reflects his touch in the miles of stone walls, foundations, levees, and the spruce forests that he left for posterity.

If you want to contribute to the Arunah Hill center with labor, funds, or want more info, contact Joe Zuraw, Rt.

116, Lantern Ct., Apt. 8E, Sunderland, MA 01375,  
413-665-8563.

### THINGS YOU MAY WANT TO KNOW...

A SYMPOSIUM ON CAREERS IN ASTRONOMY, earth and planetary sciences will be held for high-school students by the Harvard-Smithsonian CfA on Saturday, May 16, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Part of this event will include a panel discussion entitled "Space for Women: A Focus on Careers in the Physical Sciences" in which our President, Marion Hochuli will take part. The event is free and open to interested students and teachers, but attendance is limited and advance registration is required. For more info, call Patricia Buckley at 617-495-7042.

MARIA MITCHELL OBSERVATORY, Nantucket, is no longer under the directorship of Emilla Belserene. Since she had extended an invitation to the ATMoB to visit the observatory, this invitation is now on hold. You cannot simply knock on the observatory door and expect admission since it is not open to the public. If you really want to visit and are will to pay for a weekend on the island, the Museum of Science is offering a tour on May 22-25 entitled: "From the Sea to the Stars - Science on Nantucket." The tour includes a round-trip bus trip from Boston to the Cape, ferry service, logging, and meals, etc. Price for nonmembers is \$399. Registration deadline: May 15. For more info call 617-589-0340.   
--Anna Hillier

"COSMIC QUESTIONS: Astronomy from Quark to Quasar" is a set of eight 45-min. lectures by Dr. Robert Kirshner (our March speaker) that are available on audio or video tapes. Order Course SC-B145, Video: \$149.95 or Audio: \$89.95 + \$5 S&H. Rental available. The Teaching Co., P.O. Box 3370, Dubuque, IA. 1-800-832-2421.

"ON ROBOT WINGS -- A Flight Through the Solar System" is a 30-min. video tape with 7 video segments produced from JPL processed data from Voyager, Magellan, Galileo, Viking and Landsat. Price: \$25 + \$3.75 S&H. Space Craft International, P.O. Box 61027, Catalina Station, Pasadena, CA 91116-7027.

TELESCOPE TUBE SOURCES. In a search for a replacement tube for my scope I gathered the following info which may be of help to others: Cadillac Plastics, 130 Canal St., Malden (324-8889) can supply most kinds of plastic tubing. I obtained a 36" long clear acrylic tube, 5.5" O.D. with 1/8" wall for \$36. Sonotubes are available from building suppliers, but are not made smaller than 6". ATM'er John Shea found me a piece of cardboard shipping tube 5.5" O.D. with 1/4" wall at Marshall Paper Tube Co., Randolph (963-5555). They make tubes in quantity to order, but frequently have scrap pieces available. Robert Nelson of the North Shore Amateur Astronomy Club advises that they purchase aluminum tubes from Stearns Irrigation, 790 Federal Furnace Rd., Plymouth, MA (508-746-6048). They stock thin-walled (0.058 - 0.090") welded,

aluminum tubes in stock diameters in even inches from 2"-8", 10", and 12" and will make others to order.

-- John C. Willett

SPECTROSCOPE KITS. Some of you have asked me how you can get one of these kits. Learning Technologies, 59 Walder St., Cambridge, MA 02140 (800-537-8703) sells them (PS-14) in lots of 10 for \$30. However, for \$15 you can purchase their PS-13 Kit which contains a spectroscope, a celestial sphere, and refracting telescope.   
-- Ted Poulos

### ATMoB ACTIVITIES...

OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHIES are extended to Marion Hochuli on the death of her mother on April 24.

A 'SOLAR ALPHA-HYDROGEN ORGY' and pot luck supper will be held at the Clubhouse on Saturday, May 23. Come and set up your solar scopes in early afternoon. We will observe prominences, flares, plague, and spots until about 4 p.m. From 4 to 6 p.m. we'll hold our pot luck supper. From 6 p.m. on we will set up for an evening of night sky observing. This is your chance to meet with, trade notes, ideas, equipment info, and experiences with our best equipped and experienced solar observers. For those of you who have never observed the sun through an Ha filter, a whole new experience awaits you.

Although a stove, refrigerator, and water is available at the Clubhouse, please bring everything else you will need: FOOD, drinks, plates, eating utensils, folding chairs, etc. Call me at 508-458-8857 for details on anything except food. Call Steve Mock at 617-625-5870 for pot luck supper information.

-- Ed Dougherty, Observing Chairman

MEADE INSTRUMENTS CORPORATION of Costa Mesa, CA has graciously donated one of their state-of-art computer controlled drive systems to the ATMoB. Meade has proven to be one of, if not the most progressive and conscientious suppliers of fine astronomical telescopes and accessories in the world. I believe that as individuals and as a club we should



certainly consider their products first for any future purchases. The donated CAT will, of course, be initially installed on our Maksutov. This project has been delayed because of personal illness and difficulties obtaining the proper CAT. The projected completion date and the start of training sessions will be announced later.

-- Ed Dougherty

TWO FOLDING DISPLAY PANELS for displaying astronomical photos and other info have been constructed by BARRY DeCHRISTOFANO and TED POULOS. One is for the Exhibitor Interpreter program of the Museum of Science, and the second one has been donated to the ATMoB. It will be used on Astronomy Day, at other exhibitions, and at our monthly meetings.

ATMoB BY-LAWS AMENDMENTS. In addition to voting on the correction of typographical errors in the By-Laws pointed out by Dick Koolish and Marlon Hochuli, I would like to propose the following changes to bring the By-Laws into line with our actual practices:

Article VIII, Executive Board, Section 3, Meetings: A regular meeting of the Executive Board may be held, at the behest of the President, immediately after each regular meeting of the members of the corporation provided an Executive Board quorum is present.

Article IX, Committees, Section 1, Permanent Committees: There shall be two permanent committees of the corporation as follows: Workshop and Observing Committee.

--Ted Poulos

OUR ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS will take place at our June meeting. At this month's meeting, the nominating committee (Gary Walker, Chairman, Ed Wallner, and Dick Koolish) will announce their selection of candidates for club officers and other members of the Executive Board. According to our By-Laws, members may offer additional nominations from the floor at the June meeting provided that written notice of the name(s) of the person(s) to be nominated, and signatures of at least seven members is filed with the Secretary by not less than 10 days before the June meeting.

THE ATMoB WELCOME the following new members:

Richard Nugent	Framingham, MA
Tania Ruiz	Cambridge, MA
Patrick Singleton	Chestnut Hill, MA

### **ATMoB MEMBER PROFILE...**

Ken Launie has been a very active member of the ATMoB having served as President in the early 80's, Shop Committee Chairman, VP, and Secretary. His chief interest is in collecting and refurbishing antique refractors and studying the history of American made telescopes and their makers, many of whom started as amateurs. He owns several fine Clark refractors including a recently obtained 8.25-inch one that was originally owned by Levi Fuller, Governor of Vermont in the 1890's. It had been stored in a barn by its former owner for some 80 years. Ken observes with another

4-inch Clark that is semi-permanently mounted on a roof deck of his home. With a background as a mechanical engineer doing camera design for Polaroid, Ken is also interested in building modern scopes. In fact his interest in astronomy began in 1970 in High School when he and some friends decided to finish an 8-inch mirror started by a previous class. Sitting in his workshop is a partially completed MMT scope designed to use five mirrors that he and Hal Robinson have started. It is a f/7 or f/8 Schmidt-Cassegrain with an effective aperture of 14-inches. This scope will be finished someday when the task of raising two boys (2 and 5 years old) becomes less demanding. Also Ken and his wife can then pursue another pastime, that of Scottish country dancing.

### **EDITOR'S NOTE...**

Would you like to be profiled in *STAR FIELDS* as a means of introducing yourself to fellow club members? In the past, I have randomly chosen members to be profiled, but have decided to formalize this effort more. I have created a short questionnaire that will be available at the May meeting or by mail if you'll send me a SSAE. Filling out the questionnaire provides me with basic information about you and makes my later telephone interview faster and easier. All members, new and old, are welcome to take part.

-- Ted J. Poulos

### **MARKETPLACE...**

FOR SALE One early brass Huygens eyepiece, 1-1/4" dia and about 1-1/4" in length. Barrel stamped: J.W. Flecker. Joseph Field, 5037 Netherstone Ct., Columbus, MD 25045.

FOR FREE Sky & Telescope back issues from 1977 thru 1989 with only Nov. '83 missing. Contact Bob Ribokas, 617-335-0881.

FOR SALE 4-inch, f/12 B&L SCT with tripod, wedge, & case, \$295. 3.1-inch, f/11.4 refractor tube assembly, \$195. 4-inch, f/15.5 refractor tube assembly, \$350. 8-inch, f/20 Dall-Kirkham tube assembly, \$450. Edmund German equatorial mount with 1-inch shafts and two pedestals, \$75. Ronald C. Tanguay, home 617-231-1558, work 508-250-8648.

FOR SALE Celestron Comet Catcher 5.5", f/3.6 OTA. Includes custom designed wooden case with brass fittings, felt lined cradle, and shoulder strap; 18 mm otho eyepiece, 2 camera adapters (needs T-ring); Tuthill dew shield in wooden case. \$350. Celestron

### **ATMoB OBSERVER GUIDES**

Members who have volunteered to provide one-on-one observing assistance to anyone requesting it are: DICK KOOLISH, Arlington, MA (617-646-8088) STEVE MOCK, Somerville, MA (617-625-5870)

C85, 85 X 815 mm, 22 mm eyepiece and vinyl case. Excellent condition. \$100. Lumicon H-Beta filter 1-1/4". \$50. Ken Fye, 617-353-4120 (days) 527-9161 (evenings).

FOR SALE Craftsman 6-inch metal working lathe, \$400. John Reed, 617-861-8031.

**COMING EVENTS...**

Thru June MYSTERY OF THE DARK MATTER and NIGHTSCAPES: A TOUR OF THE NEW ENGLAND SKY at the Hayden Planetarium. For more info, call 617-723-2500.

May 9 ASTRONOMY DAY at the BMOS from 9 a.m. thru the evening star party.

May 16 A SYMPOSIUM ON CAREERS IN ASTRONOMY, CfA. See page 2.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD 1991-92...**

- PRESIDENT: Marion Hochull, 603-888-0141
- VICE PRESIDENT: Bernard Volz, 508-881-3814
- SECRETARY: Ted J. Poulos, 617-566-5127
- MEMBERSHIP SEC: Edward J. Los, 603-880-6219
- TREASURER: Anthony Costanzo, 508-521-4209
- MEMBERS AT LARGE: Mario Motta, 617-334-3848  
Anna Hillier, 617-861-8338
- PAST PRESIDENTS: 1989-90 David Aucoin  
1987-89 Gary Walker  
1985-87 E. Talmadge Mental

**COMMITTEES...**

- OBSERVING: Edward Dougherty, 508-458-8857
- WORKSHOP: Greg Chase, 617-272-9394

**FIRST CLASS**

- May 21 CfA MONTHLY OBSERVATORY NIGHTS, "Astronomy in the Age of Columbus" by Owen Gingerich, CfA, 8 p.m., Phillips Auditorium, CfA, Cambridge, MA. For more info call 617-495-7461.
- May 23 SOLAR A-HYDROGEN ORGY and Pot Luck Supper at the clubhouse from noon. See page 2.


**JUNE STAR FIELDS DEADLINE...**

May 28th is the deadline for items to be included in the June issue of *STAR FIELDS*. Mail or phone your contribution to Ted Poulos, 18 Cushing Rd., Brookline, MA 02146 (617-566-5127).

**HOW TO FIND US...**

MEETINGS: Held the second Thursday of each month (September to July) at 8 p.m. in Phillips Auditorium, Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, 60 Garden St., Cambridge, MA. Parking available on the grounds.

CLUBHOUSE: Open every Saturday from mid-afternoon to late evening. It is the white farmhouse on the grounds of MIT's Haystack Observatory in Westford, MA. Take Rt. 3 north from Rt. 128 or 495 to exit 33 and proceed west on Rt. 40 for 5 miles. Turn right at the MIT Lincoln Lab, Haystack Observatory sign at the Groton town line. Proceed to the farmhouse on the left side of the road. Since clubhouse attendance varies with the weather and other activities, it is wise to call ahead: 508-692-8708.



● ASTRONOMY DAY  
BOSTON MUSEUM OF SCIENCE  
SATURDAY, MAY 9

● OUR MEETING THIS MONTH  
FRIDAY, MAY 15

AMATEUR TELESCOPE MAKERS OF BOSTON  
c/o Edward J. Los  
7 Cheyenne Drive  
Nashua, NH 03063