

NEW MEMBERS

Cracroft, James M., 1248 North Taylor Street, Washington, D. C. CH 0808

Dwyer, Mary J., 1432 Girard Street, N. W., Apartment 206, AD 1091

Gibb, Thomas F., 431 Randolph Street, N. W., Washington 11, D. C. RA 6330

Heisey, R. F., 332 Seaton Place, N. E., Washington 2, D. C. DU 0574

Horton, Louise, 2100 N Street, N. W., Apartment 36, Washington 7, D. C. DI 0439

Malitsky, Irving, 3637 Van Ness Street, N. W., Washington 16, EM 3637

Milkey, Robert George, 118 South Woodrow, Arlington, Virginia, OW 5886

VARIABLE STAR GAZING. Several members of the National Capital Astronomers have been engaged in variable star observation with the help of our 5" refractor telescope located in one of the small buildings in the Naval Observatory grounds. This is one of the definite contributions that amateur astronomers make in the field of astronomical research.

All results are sent to the Association of Variable Star Observers at Harvard Observatory. You are invited to join the National Capital Astronomers and assist in the observations. For information come to the meetings or call Miles Davis NOrth 7724  
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Jewell Boling, Editor, 1717 P St., N. W. DU-2969 \* \*

STAR DUST  
National Capital Astronomers  
Washington, D. C.

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DECEMBER CALENDAR

Dec. 3 Sat. "Why Observe a Solar Eclipse," by Francis J. Heyden, S. J., 8:15 p. m., Commerce Auditorium.

Dec. 17 Sat. Technical Discussion Group, 8:00 p. m. Department of Commerce Foyer.

Every clear Wednesday night, open house Naval Observatory, 8 till 11 p. m.

Every Friday night, 7-10 p. m. Telescope making class, Roosevelt High School, 13th and Upshur, N. W. Room 313. Miss Irene Warthen, instructor. Telephone SH 9451.

Note: Telescope making class will not be held during the Christmas holidays when the school is closed.

"WHY OBSERVE A SOLAR ECLIPSE?" Because of its brief duration and the very limited area in which it is visible, a total eclipse of the sun is a phenomenon which many persons never see, although, taking the earth as a whole, such eclipses are not rare. The majesty of the spectacle of a total eclipse is such that it seldom fails to silence the chattering crowds of spectators.

Astronomers go to remote parts of the earth to observe solar eclipses, often to be disappointed by cloudy weather after traveling thousands of miles. Such an occasion affords a unique opportunity for many important investigations by astronomers.

Our speaker for Saturday, December 3, will be Francis J. Heyden, S. J., who will cover the main scientific results which astronomers have been trying to find in a solar eclipse, since the first efforts at a precise observation were made.

Father Heyden is a graduate of Harvard Observatory; was former Chief Astronomer of Manila Observatory; Assistant Director of Georgetown Observatory, and is Director of the Observatory since 1948. He participated in the National Geographic Society Eclipse Expeditions to Brazil in 1947 and to China in 1948. Father Heyden will try to secure some National Geographic films for the lecture and if this is not possible, he will have slides to illustrate most of what he has to say.

Three years ago Father Heyden gave a lecture to NCA, "Looking Through the Milky Way." It is with keen anticipation that those who heard him then are looking forward to hearing him again and those who have not heard him have an unusual astronomical treat in store.

VISITORS ARE INVITED to attend our monthly lectures which are held on the first Saturday of each month in the Department of Commerce Auditorium. Our January meeting, however, has been changed to Saturday, January 14, so that we may hear Dr. Bart J. Bok, noted astronomer from the Harvard Observatory. Please feel free to attend these lectures and bring your friends.

SEVERAL MEMBERS ARE IN DANGER of losing their memberships. According to the by-laws those whose dues have been in arrears since September will be dropped from the list in December.

THE JUNIORS met in the Science Service Building on November 16. Fifteen members attended and the Chairman of Junior Activities, Mr. Jones. Officers were elected. Miles Davis was reelected Chairman. Miss Eloise Monroe was elected Secretary. Various ones gave reports on their special fields of interest, such as meteors, planets, nebulae, and variable stars.

MILES DAVIS has gone to Mexico for a week. Lucky Miles.

TELESCOPE MAKING CLASS reports three new members.

CLEAR SKIES contributed to the success of Mr. Jones' picnic observation given at Hillandale Picnic Grounds. About twenty people attended and five telescopes were set up.

Telescope observations were made of variable stars, planets, nebula, galaxies, and star clusters.

Constellation observing was also carried out.

Hot dogs were roasted between observations.

TAURID METEOR count, held on the night of the 18th at Barnard Hill Park, was attended by eleven people, mostly juniors. Mr. Jones, Chairman of Junior Activities, lead the group.

The count was not as successful as it might have been had it not been interrupted by a rally of McKinley High School students, necessitating the group's moving to another location where the sky was partly obscured by trees. Some observations of meteors were made however.