

STAR DUST
National Capital Astronomers
Washington, D. C.

NEW MEMBERS

- Ambleau, Mrs. Marian L., 1801 16th St., N. W. HO 0576
Dworzan, William, 227 Audrey Lane, S. E. Apt. 104 (20)
LO 3-3468
Weinstein, Allen, 4203 16th St., N. W. TA 3190
*Fetter, David, 1240 N. Stuart St., Arlington, Va.
GL 3244
*Herrell, David J., 4820 Iowa Ave., N. W. (11) GE 5070
*Lunsford, Marjorie, 601 Park Road, N.W. (10) TA 0339
*Reid, James S., 4819 North Capital St., (11) GE 1383
*Salins, Gladys, 4236 8th St., N. W. (11) TA 7954

RECENT ASTRONOMICAL LECTURES HERE

A number of NCA'ers attended the following: The Second Annual Angelo Secchi Lecture of the Georgetown University Graduate School, Department of Astronomy, on "RADIO FREQUENCY RADIATION FROM THE SUN," given by Dr. John P. Hagen, U.S. Naval Research Laboratory; and these talks given at the meeting of the National Academy of Sciences in Washington in April -- "PALOMAR OBSERVATORY," by Dr. Ira S. Bowen, Director of Palomar and Mount Wilson; Dr. Struve, "CAPELLA, THE ANCHOR OF EDDINGTON'S MASS-LUMINOSITY RELATION TIME"; Dr. Kuiper, "EVALUATION OF PROTOPLANETS"; and Dr. Nicholson, "MULTIPLE RECURRENT GEOMAGNETIC ACTIVITY."

ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATIONS IN ITALY will be the subject matter of a book soon to be published by the Italian Ministry of Education. The book also will contain a report on the buildings, museums, instruments and damages suffered in World War II.

NCA ANNUAL DINNER held April 13 at the Kennesaw Cafe was attended by thirty-odd NCA'ers and was a thoroughly enjoyable affair. Miss Heisey wrote and directed an astronomical skit which was put on without previous rehearsal. Both participants and audience enjoyed every minute of it.

Jewell Boling, Editor, 1717 P Street, N. W. NO 9621

May 1951 Vol. 8, No. 8

CALENDAR

- May 5 "OPTICAL INSTRUMENTATION FOR GUIDED MISSILES," Dr. Dirk Reuyl, Chief, Optical Measurements Branch, Ballistic Research Laboratories. 8:15 p. m. Commerce Auditorium. Also election of officers.
- May 6 "EXPLORING THE SKY," National Capital Parks Sun Outing, Fort Reno Park, 41st Street and Chesapeake, N. W. 7:30 to 9:30 p. m. With Bob Wright. Telescopes wanted! (Cloudy weather at 7:00 cancels outing.)
- May 7-10 Lunar Meteoric Phenomenon Observation Dates
- May 9 Observing at the NCA 5" with Jim Crowell. Wed.
- AAVSO Convention Schedule May 11-13
(See additional information inside)
- May 11 Afternoon. Registration in Copley Lounge. Fri. 8:00 p. m. Lecture in Copley Lounge by Dr. John S. Hall of the Naval Observatory on "EFFECTS OF SCINTILLATION OF STARS." Visit to Georgetown Observatory following lecture.
- May 12 Morning. Business session and papers. Photo-Sat. graph on front steps of Copley Hall. Dinner in Maguire Dining Room. Afternoon. Session for papers. Buffet supper on Observatory Lawn. Evening. Visit to Naval Observatory.
- May 13 Morning. Free for sightseeing or a trip to Sun. the Radio Propagation Laboratory, Sterling Field Station, National Bureau of Standards. Afternoon. Trip to U. S. Naval Research Laboratory, laboratory tour beginning 1:00 p. m.

May 16 Observation Night, Naval Observatory.
Wed. (Passes must be requested in advance.)

May 19 ASTRONOMICAL HOBBY SHOW AND PICNIC SUPPER.
Sat. Participating societies, Richmond, Norfolk,
and Washington. Exhibition beginning at
1 p. m. in Commerce Foyer. Informal program
starting at 4:00 p. m. in picnic grove #24
near 16th and Kennedy Streets in Rock Creek
Park, weather permitting, or at Mrs. Norris'
home, 2204 Wyoming Avenue, N. W., in the re-
creation room. Mabel Sterns, Chairman.
(See flyer for additional details.)

May 23 Observing at the NCA 5". Open house,
Wed. Naval Observatory.

May 26 Junior NCA Meeting, Science Service Center.
Sat.

June June STAR DUST will give the details on the
American Astronomical Society meeting at
the National Bureau of Standards.

Tuesdays and Fridays, 7-10 p.m. Telescope Making
Class, Roosevelt High School, Room 319, 13th and
Upshur, N. W. Miss Irene Warthen, Instructor. Tele-
phone LO 5-1237. Miss Warthen is present Fridays.

GUIDED MISSILES is a rapidly developing field of
scientific research, combining the principles of
mathematics, physics, and astronomy. Dr. Dirk Reuyl,
May speaker, will talk on optical instrumentation
developed for full-scale free-flight measurements of
guided missiles. He will attempt to show how astro-
nomical methods of measurement and instrumental
techniques have influenced methods as well as instru-
ment design in the present work.

WANTED: Volunteers for the WALK-NIGS to be held
on July 10 and August 21. Duties will be some com-
mentary, pointing out constellations, and expediting
telescopes. Call Ted Jones, DE 3171.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT: Chairman Leo Scott
reported the following slate nominated for the year
1951-1952. Further nominations may be made from the
floor at the May meeting. President: Mr. Edward H.
Jones; Vice-President, Mr. Hoy J. Walls; Secretary,
Miss Louise Horton; Treasurer, Mrs. Ione Alston;
Trustee, Mr. James D. Crowell.

DR. EMBERT A. LELACHEUR in his lecture on April 7
set forth the contrasting theories of tides held by
the British and the Americans. The British tend to
go along with Whewell on the progressive wave theory
which holds that tides originate in the southern
ocean and spread westward and northward around the
world. The Harris theory of the Americans is that
tides do not constitute a world but a local phenom-
enon of any given region due primarily to the sta-
tionary wave oscillation of that region set up and
maintained by the periodic tidal forces of the sun
and moon. The American theory more nearly concurs
with observational data.

MR. THOMAS R. HENRY, Science Editor of the Evening
Star, led a Discussion Group of 23 persons April 21.
His subject was "The Place of Astronomy in Newspaper
Writing." He mentioned the style of scientific re-
porting most likely to have popular appeal, the astro-
nomical stories of the year arousing most popular
interest, and the relative standing in interest of
medicine, astronomy, and physics. The great popular
appeal of astronomy is due to its mystery and sublim-
ity, he feels. There has been great popular interest
in the flying saucer and worlds-in-collision ideas.
He pointed out however that there may be a real basis
for our preoccupation with such fantastic concepts
as these, because there exist truly fantastic un-
solved mysteries. As one of the top physicists told
him only a couple of days before, none of the offi-
cial explanations of the flying saucers explained all
the phenomena observed; and a great oceanographer
stated recently that there is strong evidence that at
some time in the earth's past its water supply doubled
suddenly.

NEWS RELEASES on ANNULAR ECLIPSE CONVENTION, Labor Day, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, grow more exciting. Read all about the convention in the LEAGUE BULLETIN accompanying this issue of STAR DUST. You never see Bob Wright, Mabel Sterns, and Grace Scholz these days without their heads together convention planning.

AAVSO CONVENTION STORY

Convention Chairman is Father Heyden. Convention site is Georgetown University, 37 and O Streets, N.W. Take the No. 20 trolley or the P Street bus line. Registration takes place on Friday afternoon, May 11. NCA'ers who are also AAVSO members should register as members. Other NCA'ers register as guests. Let Father Heyden know by postal card as far in advance as possible if you wish reservations made for the dinner and buffet supper (price \$2.50) and if you plan to go to the Sterling Field Station, or the Naval Research Laboratory, or both, and your transportation needs. State whether or not you are an American citizen. Noncitizens will need special permits to enter the Laboratory. Dr. John P. Hagenof of the Radio Astronomy Section of the Naval Research Laboratory has invited the group to see the new fifty foot parabolic reflector for radio observations of the sun and stars.

There is a need to furnish transportation to AAVSO visitors and others making these trips. It is urged that all NCA members who possibly can take cars and passengers on these trips. The AAVSO is depending on us. The only other assistance expected of NCA is with registration. The following NCA members comprise the committee to assist: Arthur Wubnig, Chairman, Dana Law, Nettie Mansker, Janet Perkins, Irene Warthen, Robert Greene, Donald Miller, Mabel Sterns, Grady Whitney, Edward Jenkins, and Richard McCabe. ALL NCA'ERS are requested to help provide transportation, if they can, however. Contact Father Heyden DE 5356.

LYLE JOHNSON REPORTING ON LUNAR METEORIC phenomena observation program: "In the November and January issues of STAR DUST I requested observations of the dark hemisphere of the crescent moon to detect possible lunar meteoric phenomena. The moon must occasionally be struck by meteors which are large enough to be seen through a telescope. If the moon had a thin atmosphere they usually would be seen as moving bright specks but sometimes, also as impact flares. A lunar atmosphere with a density of 1/100,000 to 1/1,000,000 that at the Earth's surface would be dense enough to show meteor trails yet would be too tenuous to be detected in any other way. The ALPO has data on a number of such objects seen by various observers but simultaneous observations by two or more persons are needed to get conclusive proof that they actually are lunar meteors.

"In January, March, and April I spent a total of ten hours watching the dark side of the moon and suspected several very faint flashes but could not be positive they were real. Another observer might have confirmed some of these but apparently no one else was observing. Now that the weather is more conducive to observing I hope some of you will join me in this program on the following dates: May 7-10, June 7-9, July 7-8, and August 6-7. The first night of each series is most favorable but observing must start as soon as it gets dark. The moon sets much later on the last night of each series so there is more time to observe but the increased light of the moon is a handicap. I will be glad to furnish more information to anyone interested in this program." It is hoped several NCA'ers will get started on this observation program as Lyle wishes. It is just too bad that there were no simultaneous observations made of this ten-hour period he put in.

BOB WRIGHT IS OCCUPYING HIS NEW HOUSE NOW!!

The last stick of furniture, radio equipment, and astronomical paraphernalia has been moved. Congratulations, Bob !