

OBSERVATIONAL DATA AND LUNAR OCCULTATIONS

Mercury is an evening star and reaches greatest eastern elongation August 31st. The planet is in conjunction with Jupiter on the 9th at 8:03 E.S.T. Venus is a brilliant object in the east for several hours before sunrise and reaches greatest western elongation on the 31st. Mars is a brilliant object in the constellation Aquarius. It rises a few hours after sunset and is visible for the rest of the night. It is stationary in right ascension on the 11th and then begins to retrograde. Jupiter is too low in the west at sunset for easy observation. Saturn is well past the meridian at sunset and sets before midnight. The date of maximum intensity for the PERSEID meteor shower is August 11. This shower averages 50 meteors per hour.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Star</u>	<u>Mag.</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Phase</u>	<u>E. S. T.</u>
July 31-Aug. 1	14 Tau	6.3	24.1	R	1:21.4 A.M.
Aug. 17-18	226 B. Sgr.	6.4	11.7	D	12:09.9 A.M.
Aug. 28	224 B. Tau m	6.1	22.8	R	11:51.6 P.M.
Aug. 30-31	Nu Gem	4.1	24.9	R	2:15.7 A.M.

--A. L. White

NEW MEMBERS

Billy Gene Callan, 4 John Roberts, Alexandria, Va.  
 Joseph E. & Mrs. Marie L. Jacques, 1635 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington 6, D.C. HU 3-6564  
 David Bernstein, 64 Tuckerman St., N.W., Washington, D.C. TA 9-7269  
 Billy M. West, Jr., Apt. 6, Bldg. 3-13, Andrews A.F.B., Md. RE 5-8900 Mailing: 1401st. Flt. Oper. Sq., Andrews A.F.B., Washington 25, D. C.

SECRETARY'S REPORT ON MEMBERSHIP - It pleases me to report that the NCA membership stands substantially higher than at any previous time. We now have 215 members. 159 of these are regular and 56 are juniors. Last year the total membership was 160. It has been a pleasure to serve as your secretary during the past year. --Tove Neville

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 Jewell Boling, Editor, 1717 P Street, N. W., NO 7-7693

## STAR DUST

National Capital Astronomers

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## AUGUST CALENDAR

- Aug. 5 (Sun.) EXPLORING THE SKY, Joint program of the NCA and the National Capital Parks, Fort Reno Park, 40th and Chesapeake Sts., N. W., 9:00 P.M. Do come and bring your telescope or binoculars if you have them.
- Aug. 14 (Tues.) EVENING ADVENTURE, Joint program of the NCA and NCP. There will be a showing of the movie, "Destination Moon". In addition the public will look at the heavens through NCA telescopes. Come and bring your telescope if you have one.

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MEMBERS

Our membership embraces people of diverse occupations. Though all NCA members have an interest in astronomy, that interest, too, varies among us; from mythology to cosmology, from an active day-to-day interest by some members to attendance at an occasional lecture by others. The club's program aims to serve all.

The No. 1 activity which appeals to the greatest number is perhaps the monthly lecture meeting. The monthly discussion groups appeal to a smaller but more vocal group. Junior activities, the telescope-making class, group observing sessions, and an occasional picnic or trip provide further opportunity for pursuit of our group and individual interests in astronomy.

We owe thanks to a lot of those among us who have put in a little extra effort to serve on the various committees; to those who have served as officers; to those who have contributed to STAR DUST; yes, and to those members who participate in the business meetings.

The program committee which planned the lecture and discussion groups consisted of your president, as chairman, with Ben Adelman, Betty Fazekas, Dr. Gant, Bill Isherwood, Lyle Johnson, Bob Rhynsburger, Grace Scholz, Leo Scott, Mabel Sterns, Hoy Walls, Larry White, and Bob Wright.

The mid-month discussion groups were led by Roger Smith, Glenn Neville, Leith Holloway, and Bob McCracken, in addition to various members of the program committee. Many others participated in the discussion groups but special thanks are in order for Drs. Kendall and Walker for assistance with illustrated talks.

The do-it-yourself telescope making crowd was led by master craftsman Hoy Walls with assistance from Bill Isherwood, Joel Lubar, and Bob Moore. Hoy Walls and his telescope-making lieutenants also repaired the club's 5" at the Naval Observatory and conducted monthly group observing there.

Many members brought their scopes to one or more of the public service outings with the National Capital Parks but the reliable backbone of these outings was provided by Ellis and Marion Marshall, Bill Doying, Glen Neville, and Bill Isherwood.

Ben Adelman conceived and organized a new type of Junior program with neighborhood meetings for youngsters under 12 sponsored by adult members. In addition to Mr. Adelman, groups were sponsored by Mr. Robinson, assisted by Morton Schiff, Mr. and Mrs. Neville, and Mr. Law. Ellis Marshall and Paul Davis held some sessions with Juniors over 12.

Thelma Cressy as Special Events Chairman arranged a delightful picnic-observing session.

NCA played host to the Middle East Regional Convention in May with Mabel Sterns as General Chairman and many NCA members helping to make it a success. Under the leadership of Bob Wright the club has taken initial steps towards organizing a satellite observing team. Leith Holloway has headed a special committee to keep the club informed of other phases of IGY.

A satellite viewing device assembled, or should I say invented? by Hoy Walls and Robert Dellar was exhibited during the satellite session. Benjamin Adelman sent in a good report on junior activities, parts of which were read to the audience. Mabel Sterns' paper on "High Lights of the League's First Ten Years" was rescheduled for the Wednesday afternoon session, the morning session having passed too quickly to permit showing the slides which accompanied it. Advance publicity from the platform was that it was outstandingly good, and I am sorry I missed it, as I had to leave for DeLand, Florida, at noon. (Incidentally we had two fine lectures from Dr. Harlow Shapley.)

For outside activities, most of us took the 2-1/2-hour boat trip on Monday night. We had a choice of that or visiting the time station on the Weather Bureau. After the Tuesday night banquet we were invited to look through telescopes in Bayfront Park across from the hotel. Will it make you feel any better to know that every star we saw can be seen in Washington:

For other Washingtonians attending the convention not mentioned above, let's not leave out the youngest person to view the exhibits--Susan Wright. Janet Wright was there, and a young man arose with our delegation during roll call. I saw his back only and am sorry I do not know his name. Dr. Edward Lilley of the Naval Research Laboratory was there also and lectured on "Research Trends in Radio Astronomy." You will get the high lights of the Convention elsewhere, but I thought you might like a few extras about our own group. If you had been there, you would have been as proud of them as I was.

--Thelma Cressy

PAY YOUR DUES PROMPTLY WHEN BILLED - We have all received notices from SKY AND TELESCOPE to pay our club dues when billed to ensure continuance of subscriptions. Mrs. Dellar the new NCA treasurer will probably mail bills to members around the second week of August. It will facilitate her work if you pay promptly upon receipt of your bill.

An active organization needs money, records, publicity, and equipment. John Lund, our Treasurer, has ably collected and distributed our funds. Stanley Davis and Abe Robinson of the Audit Committee vouch for this. Tove Neville, our Secretary, has kept our records of meetings, membership, and been the club's official correspondent. On the membership committee, she was ably assisted by Elizabeth Goerner and U. S. Lyons. The activity which serves to tie the club together is STAR DUST, which has been edited by Jewell Boling and distributed by Ione Alston, assisted by Pauline Friedland. Many members have contributed to STAR DUST but special thanks are due Ben Adelman and Larry White for their regular features on the monthly lecture and observing information.

Ben Adelman has also provided publicity write-ups for our public lecture meetings. Lyle Johnson has operated our projector and Bob Dellar has provided operation and maintenance of the club's public address system.

The trustees have ably guided the affairs of the club. Dr. Gant, the Vice-President helped carry the administrative duties of the president. To end on a personal note, I want to take this opportunity to state that it was a privilege and a real pleasure to have served as your president. I wish to join with the other out-going officers in congratulating the new officers, Mr. Neville, Mr. McCracken, Mrs. Dellar, and Miss Dimick, and the new trustee, Mr. White.

--Dana K. Law

FIRST LECTURE MEETING FOR THE 1956-57 SEASON will be held Saturday, September 8 at the Commerce Department Auditorium. Subsequent lecture meetings will be on the first Saturday of the month.

DR. HELEN HOGG, Program Director for Astronomy at the National Science Foundation, gave an extremely interesting lecture on globular clusters to the NCA on June 2. She traced the work done on globular clusters from the 17th century, described Messier's and Herschel's work, and discussed the latest researches in this field of astronomy.

--"Rikki" Heisey

MIAMI, FLORIDA, ASTRONOMICAL LEAGUE CONVENTION NEWS

I began my safari to the Convention on the Astronomers' Special, otherwise known as Atlantic Coast Line East Coast Champion train. There were ten of us convention bound, and it was good to see old friends. I did not see any other NCA members on the train. The rest arrived by airplane or automobile. The Convention Welcoming Committee met us in Miami at the station and took us and our baggage to the McAllister Hotel, Convention headquarters. This involved higher mathematics, getting 13 people and one or more bags apiece for ten people into two automobiles, but we made it. We noticed the cool breeze as we stepped off the train, and the hotel was air conditioned. We arrived at the hotel shortly before 6 P.M., Sunday. The rest of the evening was devoted to a social hour, eating, registering, and resting, except for Council members. The last I heard no one was able to state positively that any Council member had any sleep during the entire convention.

The Monday opening session found President Grace Scholz on the platform with the General Convention Chairman. E. Downey Funck; Gabriel Heatter; the Mayor of Miami, Randall N. Christmas; and others. Grace's guiding hand was evident throughout the convention. She was always being called upon to say a few words. Her opening talk stressed our responsibilities and opportunities. It was a fitting keynote for the convention. Dr. James Gant graciously led the lunar and planetary session and showed slides of drawings by H. P. Wilkins. Dr. Gant also had part of his Washington Middle East Regional Convention exhibit there. The Tuesday afternoon session was devoted to the artificial satellite tracking program. Bob Wright presided. He gave a well-paced, businesslike talk on the subject. He introduced his three speakers--Dr. Fred L. Whipple and Dr. J. Allen Hynek, Director and Associate Director, respectively, of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, and Dr. Armand N. Spitz. This was "one of the most important sessions of the League and longest scheduled session of any convention of the Astronomical League" to quote one of the speakers.