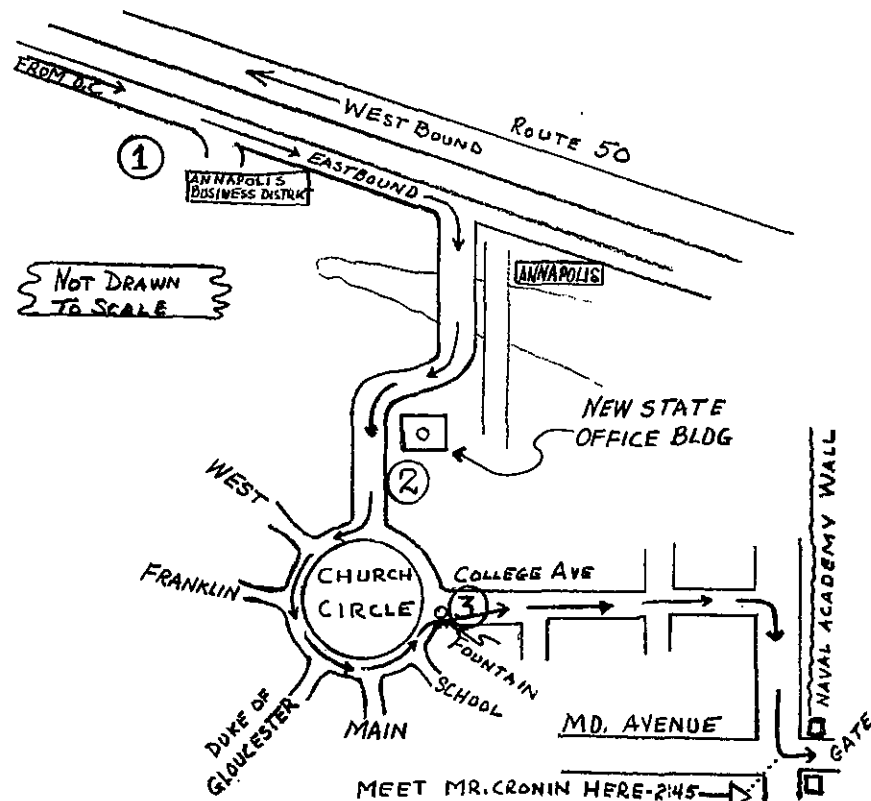


**OUR FIRST VISIT** to the planetarium of the Naval Academy at Annapolis has been arranged by Bill Cronin to begin promptly at 3 o'clock Saturday, February 14th. Route: East Capital Street, Alternate #50, follow Annapolis signs. (1) Go past sign "Annapolis Business District"; follow dual highway to city; pass (2) New State Office Bldg.; continue around Church Circle (3); turn right on College Avenue to Naval Academy wall; right again to main gate at Maryland Avenue. Meet Mr. Cronin there at 2:45. He will conduct us to parking lot and planetarium.

Those who do not have cars, meet at Commerce Department main entrance at 1:30. If you have any questions, call Mabel Sterns, Columbia 5-6078.



**SIXTEEN JUNIOR ASTRONOMERS** attended the organizational convention January 17th. By-laws were adopted and projects under way during the last year were reported. The second general meeting of the Junior Division will be held in April to nominate officers, and elections will take place in June.

Editor: Mabel Sterns, 1833 New Hampshire Ave. N.W. Washington 9.DC  
Production: LtCol. Russell C. White USMC, and Sam C. Feild, Jr.



February, 1959

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## FEBRUARY EVENTS

- 2, 9, 16, 23 TELESCOPE MAKING 7:30-10 p.m. Chevy Chase Community Center, Conn. Ave. and McKinley St., carpenter shop in basement. Hoy Walls and assistant instructors.
- 4, 11, 18, 25 TELESCOPE MAKING 7:00-9:30 p.m. Materials Center, 4800 Webster Street, Bladensburg, Md. Open to Prince Georges County students. William Isherwood, instructor.
- 7 "SURFACE CONDITIONS OF THE NEAREST PLANETS", Dr. E. J. Öpik, 8:15 p.m., Department of Commerce Auditorium.
- 14 JUNIOR DIVISION 2 p.m. Chevy Chase Community Center lounge. "The Inner Planets--Mercury and Venus". Leith Holloway.
- 14 TRIP TO PLANETARIUM at Naval Academy, Annapolis, 3-4 p.m. Cars meet at main gate of the Yard, Annapolis, 2:45.
- 21 DISCUSSION GROUP 8 p.m. Commerce foyer. Topic and moderator to be announced.
- 28 OBSERVATION of Messier objects, 7:30 at the NCA 5-inch scope Naval Observatory grounds. Bill Isherwood, chief observer.

**DR. E. J. ÖPIK**, on leave from the Armagh Observatories of Ireland, is lecturing this year at the University of Maryland. At our meeting, he will discuss some of the new theories concerning the "Surface Conditions of the Nearest Planets". Dr. Öpik was born in Estonia, studied at the University of Moscow and the Imperial Observatory before 1917. After returning to his homeland he worked at Dorpat Observatory until political conditions became untenable. Dr. Öpik conducted research and lectures at Harvard College Observatory from 1930 to 1934.

**NEW TELESCOPE-MAKING CLASS IN BLADENSBURG.** Prince Georges County Schools and NCA jointly are sponsoring a telescope-making class at the Materials Center, 4800 Webster Street. The Class opened January 7th with ten students and room for two more. Since then a waiting list has formed, so admissions must be confined to students of the County schools. Bill Isherwood is instructor, Hoy Walls has helped, and Ferdinand Cardano will be a regular assistant. The entire program is under the direction of Howard B. Owens, Director of the Planetarium.

**PLANS FOR A NATIONAL PLANETARIUM** at Washington have been announced by Watson B. Rulon, Jr., and his twin brother, Joseph K., owners of Hogate's Restaurant. They will build a planetarium of modern design at the foot of the South Mall which is undergoing redevelopment. When the project has paid for itself through ad-

mission fees, it will be given to the federal government. Dr. Armand Spitz has been appointed the first director. He expects the new cultural center to be open within two years. An amphitheater will be available for NCA public lectures, and an astronomical museum and book corner also will attract visitors.

SEVERAL MESSIER OBJECTS should be visible in the 5-inch on the 28th when the moon is dark. Admission to the grounds is by membership card for those over 12. Seven meteors were counted in one hour during the observation in January; good attendance; attempts were made to photograph meteor trails by long exposure.

#### NEW MEMBERS:

Mrs. W. E. Heise, 2730 Richmond Highway, Alexandria, Va. SO 5-6947  
 Louise Lindmeyer, McLean Gardens, Washington 16, D.C.  
 Jerome Schnall, 2801 Quebec St. N.W., Washington 8, D.C. EM 2-8872  
 Stephen T. Kecskemethy, 3376 Stuyvesant Place N.W., Washington DC  
 EM 3-9351

#### Junior Members

Peter Young, 6143 30th St. N.W., Washington 15, D.C. EM 2-9394  
 Howard Lotenberg, 2722 Washington Ave., Chevy Chase, Md. JU 8-9540

#### LUNAR OCCULTATIONS FOR FEBRUARY

Date	Star	Mag.	Phase	Age	Time (EST)	Position angle
12	263 B. Psc	6.4	D	5.2	7:08.8 PM	98°
18	21 Gem f.	7.2	D	11.3	10:37.7 PM	82°
18-19	BD+17° 1306	7.4	D	11.4	12:51.1 AM	63°
19-20	68 Gem	5.1	D	12.5	2:51.2 AM	115°
19-20	67 Gem	6.7	D	12.5	3:10.0 AM	173°

A. L. White, Astronomy Editor.

#### ASTRONOMERS IN ACTION

Ben Adelman arranges programs for high school students and teachers at Prince Georges County Planetarium...Dr. Gant and Lyle Johnson are watching lunar crater Alphonsus for changes reported to have been seen by a Russian astronomer. Notify Dr. Gant of any phenomenon observed...Bob McCracken presented two programs of astronomical pictures at the Nature Center on behalf of NCA...Morton Schiff gave a 20-minute talk on "Star Legends of the Ancient Hebrews" at the Young Peoples Synagogue...Hamid Mahdy located a star on one of his photographs that is not shown on the usual star maps....Larry White, Bill Cronin, and a few others observed the new American satellite.

"DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLANETARIUM in the United States", by J. M. Chamberlain, is a report available free while the supply lasts from the Editorial and Publications Division, Smithsonian Institution, Washington 25, D.C. (1958; 17 pages, 6 plates.)

MR. McCRACKEN AND DR. GANT took part in the AAAS program December 26th with their discussions of "Objectives and Problems in Amateur Astronomy", and "Achievements of Amateurs in Astronomy". Lyle Johnson's lunar photographs and two particularly fine aureal pictures in color were exhibited; also on display were optical glass, a mechanized model of the earth with an artificial satellite, the prototype moonwatch telescope, and a recording of telemetered signals from the first Explorer.

MR. WALTER MUNN from Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory inspected the NCA moonwatch station at Bob Dellar's December 19th and entertained the group with pictures of a variety of equipment and stations around the country.

#### SUMMARY OF THE ASTRONOMICAL LEAGUE PROGRAM

The Astronomical League is a federation of about 120 societies of amateur astronomers embracing about 8,000 individuals including each of us in NCA. In fact, 15% of each of our dues goes to the League. Perhaps most important of the League's activities are the annual conventions, both national and regional, where amateurs greet old and new friends, hear about what they have accomplished, get new ideas, enjoy the exhibits, and see renowned institutions as part of the programs. The national convention will be held in Denver this year August 28-31, and in 1960 it will be in Philadelphia. The Regional convention (five nearby states and D.C.) will take place in or near Wilmington, Del., May 9-10.

Through the League you can buy astronomy books at 10% discount. Name the book, author, and publisher, and send payment to cover list price less 10%, together with your name, address, and statement that you belong to NCA, to Mrs. W. Henry Kobs, 5215 NE. 30th Avenue, Portland 11, Oregon.

The League is trying to establish a lending library of tapes and slides for program material. George Keene of Rochester is chairman of a clearing house for ideas and questions about instruments. "The Reflector" is the official bulletin of the League, but publication this year has been delayed. "The Junior Astronomer" enjoyed popularity under sponsorship of the League, and when the organization could continue it no longer, Ben Adelman assumed its publication as "Space Science". Another publication every year is the proceedings of the convention. NCA receives a copy.

The junior division, now under the leadership of Kay Grosse, Fort Worth, has been an active group for many years.

At the request of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, the Astronomical League undertook to organize the moonwatch network of amateur astronomers. The League also cooperates with AAVSO and ALPO by including them in convention programs and promoting interest in them among society members. Our own nova search is part of the AAVSO program. As a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the League has participated for several years in its annual session of astronomy.

In January the Middle East Region issued a news letter of society activities within that area. NCA has a copy on file.

Hoy Walls and Bob McCracken are on the Regional Council, Lewis Acker is Regional Junior Coordinator. Grace Spitz, Betty Lipscomb, Mabel Sterns, Bob Wright, and Lyle Johnson are active in the League, and the writer is serving his second term as chairman of the Region.

---Dana K. Law.