



STAR FIELDS

NEWSLETTER OF THE AMATEUR TELESCOPE MAKERS OF BOSTON, INC.

Vol. 1, No. 1

July 1990

THIS MONTH'S MEETING...

PLANNING FOR THE 1991 SOLAR ECLIPSE TRIP is the subject of the July meeting's round table discussion by Dennis DiCicco, George East, and Marlon Hochuli. Ideas as to what to do or expect during the eclipse as well as what films, cameras, and scopes you can use will be explored. The aim is to start you thinking about what is involved so that you can start planning, designing, and building the equipment you will take with you. Since over 170 ATM members and their families plan to observe the eclipse from La Paz or other sight next summer, this meeting should be of particular interest.

As usual the meeting will be held in Phillips Auditorium at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics on Thursday, July 12, 1990 at 8 p.m.

Please join us for dinner before the meeting at the Changsho Restaurant at 5:45 p.m. The restaurant is located at 1712 Mass Ave. in Cambridge, near Linnean St.

LAST MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS...

The June 1990 ATM meeting was opened by our outgoing president, David Aucoin. He asked for a vote on the new slate of officers recommended by the nominating committee. The membership accepted the slate by a unanimous vote. Dave then turned over the meeting to president elect, Marion Hochuli. The chief activity at the meeting, was an auction of member contributed astronomy-related equipment, optics, and books was conducted by Tony Costanzo with the able assistance of Ken Laurie and Tim Solinski. The auction resulted in swelling the ATM's treasury by the sum of \$500 thanks to the special efforts of Steve Mock and John Reed who trucked in many items donated by Dr. Aghassi of Bentley College.

Members were delighted to hear that Tal Mentall has gotten a clean bill of health from his physician. Paul Comba gave a thumbs up to the Star Hill Inn, Sapello, NM as a vacation and observing spot. Ed Dougherty reported that a 6-inch Matzoukov, donated some time ago to the club, is at the clubhouse again and suggested that the club procure a fork mount for it. Ted Poulos distributed the ATM T-Shirts ordered by members. John Reed and Scott Milligan advised of future star parties requested of the ATM's. Greg Chase reported that the new clubhouse conference room (started by John Reed) is essentially complete with the addition of a table Greg constructed. Thanks was extended to Peter Bruckner and his son for being the lone ATM representatives at a recent Boston Parks/Arboretum star party.

ANNOUNCEMENTS...

LA PAZ ECLIPSE TRIP. Mario Motta reports that all details regarding airline travel, hotels, ground transportation, and prices have been finalized. You will be receiving this info shortly via a brochure from the travel agency. ATM members should ignore the prices shown in the brochure because you are receiving a special discount. However, to get the maximum discount, you must select the Hotel La Concha which according to Mario is a five star hotel with all the amenities. The total package prices are \$1159 per adult (double occupancy) and \$759 for children 2 - 11 years of age.

ATM T-SHIRTS. Those who ordered and paid for T-Shirts but did not attend the June meeting can pick up their T-Shirts at the July meeting. Members who signed up for T-Shirts, but have not yet paid for them must do so at the July meeting or the shirts will be sold to others. The total ATM profit from the sale of 70 T-Shirts will be \$360.00.

FUTURE CLUBHOUSE PUBLIC NIGHTS. John Reed reports that an adhoc observing committee meeting was held on June 20 at Roy Rogers on Rt. 128. The committee (S. Mock, B. Volz, J. Reed, and T. Poulos) recommends that the Saturday nights nearest to the first quarter moon be set aside for clubhouse public nights and school or other organization star parties. The rain date would be Sunday night. Starting times would be about 1 hour after sunset. The dates for the remainder of 1990 are:

August 25	9 p.m. EDT
September 29	8 p.m. EDT
October 27	7 p.m. EDT
November 24	6 p.m. EST
December 22	6 p.m. EST

JULY STAR PARTIES. The ATM's are hosting two star parties on the garage roof of the Boston Museum of Science this month (see Coming Events). We need you and your scopes. This is a great opportunity for you to share your love of observing with others. Call John Reed for more information 617-861-8031.

ATM MEMBERSHIP DUES is due a bit earlier this year, August 24, because of Sky & Telescope's accelerated publishing schedule. Remember to include your S&T notice if you receive one.

A.S.P. MEETING REGISTRATION at BU will be in Stone Science Bldg. Rm 50 (675 Commonwealth Ave.) on July 12 & 13 and in Stone Lobby, George Sherman Union (775 Commonwealth) on July 14, 14, & 16. The Universe Unfolding lectures and seminars are on Saturday, July 14 and Sunday, July 15 from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

CLUBHOUSE STORE...

The following items can be purchased at the clubhouse from our Workshop Committee Chairman, Greg Chase:

- Astronomical photographic prints, 16"x20" \$8.00 ea
- Tirion Star Atlas (deluxe), 2 southern hemisphere charts missing \$8.00 ea
- Sky & Telescope, 1980-1990 \$1.00 ea
1970-1980 \$2.00 ea
1960-1970 \$3.00 ea

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK...

I hope you noticed that what we have generically referred to as "the bulletin" now has a name -- STAR FIELDS. This is to give it individuality and hopefully a new character so that it encourages you to use it to communicate to all ATM members. I hope, with your help, to make STAR FIELDS into a real newsletter that not only chronicles club activities and local events of interest but also your projects, interests, and thoughts about your hobby. In addition to the usual announcements or information on items you want to buy or sell, I hope you will supply new inputs such as:

- Observing, telescope using, or making tips, techniques, and pitfalls.
- Comments, good or bad, about some astronomical item you purchased such as a telescope, accessory, or software.
- Reports on an astronomical observatory or other institution you visited or event you attended.
- Astronomical trivia--a piece of unusual technical or historical info that you came across that others might find interesting.
- An important article or book you read that you would recommend to others.
- Poems, cartoons, or other philosophical reflections about astronomy.

If you don't like to write, just call me (617-566-5127) and give me the information and I write it for you. Also, remember that announcements you might make at a meeting will have triple the punch if you submit them to STAR FIELDS because only about one third of our membership attends any given meeting.

--Ted Poulos

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE...

The 30th of this month is the deadline for items to be included in next month's STAR FIELDS. Mail or telephone your contribution to Ted Poulos, 18 Cushing Rd., Brookline, MA 02146, 617-566-5127.

LATEST ATM NEWS...

ATM member, Henry Hopkinson, of Derry, NH is undergoing surgery early this month. We all wish him a speedy recovery so that he can get back out observing with his 16-inch scope.

* * *

The 42nd annual NERAL convention at Mount Holyoke College was attended by four ATM members: Mark Bruckner, Ed Los, Ted Poulos, and Bernie Volz. The Springfield Stars Club and the Amherst Area Amateur Astronomers Association were cordial hosts and are commended for their well planned and well run convention. The speakers were varied and particularly thought provoking. Observing was clouded out, but the banquet and keynote speaker, Owen Gingerich, were great.

* * *

The comet observers might be wise to check with SKYLINE 617-497-4168 over the next month or so in case the new Comet Levy becomes a real performer.

THE MARKETPLACE...

WANTED: Unimat lathe; preferably with accessories. Call Fred Miller 508-369-0528.

NEW MEMBERS...

A cordial welcome is extended to new ATM member Chris Kent of Dunstable, MA.

OUR FINANCIAL POSITION...

Our treasurer, Tony Costanzo, submits the following financial statement for the period from June 1, 1989 to June 1, 1990:

INCOME

Balance 6-1-89	\$7524
Net Membership Income	4137
Stellafane & Clubhouse Income	<u>2078</u>
Total Income	13740

EXPENSES

Printing	\$3076
Water & water	487
Refreshments	205
Astronomical League	486
Optical supplies	1342
Dobson books	275
Misc. expenses	<u>1016</u>
Total expenses	6887

BALANCE 6-1-90 \$6853

Bank balance (checking)	\$5620
Bank balance (membership)	1233

ATM PROFILES...

EDWARD LOS, our quite, efficient Membership Secretary, 11 year ATM member, and our Astronomical League correspondent, began his interest in astronomy in high school. Ed has built both a 4.5-inch RFT and a 12-inch Dobsonian. As AAVSO member, he makes some 25 variable star observations a year. A graduate of MIT, Ed currently works as a Software Engineer for Digital Equipment. Fiddling the kind of music that the old New Englanders (and some current ones) dance the Contra to is Ed's second hobby. His third hobby is as a licensed radio amateur.

GREG CHASE, our Workshop Committee chairman and dedicated general clubhouse custodian, learned astronomy on his own as a boy under the dark skies of Norway, Maine. The first telescope he used was the largest north of Boston at the time, a 13-inch scope at his high school. Later he studied Chemistry at the U of Maine and used a 8-inch Clark while acting as director of the observatory. Greg is an ardent swimmer and works out in the Bentley College pool, a benefit of his part time work in the observatory. Professionally Greg is employed by W.R. Grace where he works as a technician in a research lab.

ASTRO-TRIVIA...

THE WORDS "BIG BANG" were first used by Fred Hoyle as a sarcastic response to a theory that he didn't like. The theory was put forth by an obscure Belgian priest and mathematician, Georges Lemaitre, around 1927. It suggested that the universe might have begun from a single point, but Lemaitre used the words "Big Noise" to describe the process.

WILLIAM HERSCHEL discovered infra-red radiation in 1801 by placing a thermometer in the spectrum beyond the red. The thermometer showed a rise in temperature. In the same year ultra-violet radiation was discovered by the German physicist Johann Ritter. He showed that the light sensitive compound, silver nitrate, darkened when exposed to the spectral region beyond the violet.

WHAT IS THE NEAREST STAR (other than the sun) that can be seen with the naked eye from Boston?

COMING EVENTS...

JULY 13-18 Astronomical Society of the Pacific meeting at BU.

JULY 14 ATM hosted A.S.P Star Party at the BMOS, 9 - 11 p.m.

JULY 19 CfA Monthly Observatory Nights, "Astrophysics in Antarctica", by T. Weeks, Whipple Observatory

JULY 20 ATM hosted SPACE WEEK Star Party at the BMOS, 8:30 - 10 p.m. Rain date July 21.

JULY 28 Stellafane

JULY 31-AUG.4 ALCON, St. Louis, MO. St. Best, 6943 Amherst, St. Louis, MO 63130

AUGUST 11-19 Mt. Katahdin Dark Sky trip, Baxter State Park, Maine

AUGUST 25 ATM Clubhouse Cookout with observing/slide show (tentative date)

Thru SEPT. 23 Soviet Space exhibit, BMOS

EXECUTIVE BOARD 1990-91

PRESIDENT

Marion Hochuli, 28 Taschereau Blvd., Nashua, NH 03062, 603-888-0141

VICE PRESIDENT

Scott Milligan, 843 Boston Rd., Groton, MA 01450

SECRETARY

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MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Edward Los, 7 Cheyenne Dr., Nashua, NH 03063, 603-880-6219

TREASURER

Anthony Costanzo, 4 Lafayette St., Haverhill, MA 01832, 508-521-4209

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Mario Motta, 806 Lowell St., Lynnfield, MA 01940, 617-334-3648

Bernard Volz, 36 Hastings St., Stow, MA 01775, 508-897-0822

PAST PRESIDENTS

1989-90 David Aucoin, Derry, NH 03038

1987-89 Gary Walker, Dover, MA 02030

1985-87 E. Talmadge Mentall, Lynn, MA 01902

COMMITTEES

OBSERVING

John Reed, 1437 Mass Ave., Lexington, MA 02173, 617-861-8031

WORKSHOP

Greg Chase, 69 Lake Shore Rd., Natick, MA 01760

STELLAFANE

Dennis DiCicco, 60 Victoria Rd., Sudbury, MA 01776, 508-443-8493

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 NEROC sign at the Groton town line. Proceed to the farmhouse on the left side of the road. Clubhouse telephone 508-692-8708.

AMATEUR TELESCOPE MAKERS OF BOSTON

c/o Edward J. Los
7 Cheyenne Drive
Nashua, NH 03063

FIRST CLASS