

STELLAFANE

1926-1981

Saturday, August 1, 1981

The 46th Convention of Amateur Telescope Makers on Breezy Hill in Springfield, Vermont



On Friday evening, July 31st, at 8:30 p.m., Doug McGregor of the Springfield Telescope Makers will conduct the popular informal program under the tent behind the Stellafane clubhouse. If you wish to contribute a short, interesting talk at this session, you must submit a description of your planned presentation with your registration form. These talks are limited to 20 slides and 10 minutes speaking time. A 35-mm slide projector and 16-mm movie projector are available for your use.

Following the informal talks there will be observing (weather permitting) with the Porter Turret Telescope at the site.

The *Hartness-Porter Museum of Amateur Telescope Making*, located in the underground rooms of the Hartness Turret Telescope at Hartness House in Springfield, will be open for visitors on Saturday morning, August 1st, from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon, and Sunday morning, August 2nd, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Light meals and snacks are available at Stellafane on Friday evening and Saturday. Barbequed chicken dinners are available for Saturday's lunch and supper. Cooking is allowed in the camping area, and water will be provided at the site beginning Friday evening. Camp stoves, charcoal grills, and the like, are acceptable, but no open fires are permitted anywhere at the convention site.

TELESCOPE COMPETITION

This is a convention of amateur telescope makers. If you have built a telescope, we encourage you to bring it and enter the competition. Awards will be presented for mechanical and optical performance. There are also awards for the best junior telescope (made by a person under 16 years of age) and other special categories. Judging for mechanical excellence will begin at 12:00 noon on Saturday, so please have your project registered and on display by that time. We hope that judging will be completed in time for all to attend the afternoon talks under the tent. Judging for optical excellence will begin immediately following the evening program. Only telescopes which are operative, *both* mechanically and optically, will be accepted in the competition. However, telescopes do not have to be judged in both categories. We welcome homemade telescopes in the display area; they do not have to be entered in the competition.

A special *Porter Youth Award* will be presented to the junior exhibitor (under 16 years of age) showing the most promise for a career in science and technology.

JUDGING COMMITTEE

Berton Willard and Dennis di Cicco, Co-chairmen

Ralph Dakin

George East

Diane Lucas

Jean Paul Prideaux

George Scotten

Roger Tuthill

Donald Dilworth

George Keene

Tom Madigan

Alan Rohwer

Walter Singer

Paul Valleli

SWAP TABLE

The swap table, so successful in recent years, will be continued. Here convention participants may trade or sell their astronomical and telescope-related items such as eyepieces, lenses, cameras, telescope-making materials, and observing accessories. This table is not for commercial sales (any item belonging to a parent company or prepared specifically to be sold). Although participants must be responsible for their own material at the table, a convention official will be on hand to help keep an eye on things. The table, located near the Stellafane clubhouse, will operate all day Saturday until 7:30 p.m.

William C. Schneider's 6.3-inch Maksutov took the 1st prize for Mechanical Construction last year.



AFTERNOON PROGRAM

Steve Siok of North Kingstown, Rhode Island, will monitor the afternoon talks beginning at 2:00 p.m. under the tent behind the clubhouse. Mr. Siok is a well-known member of Skyscrapers, Inc., in Rhode Island, and he played a major roll in restoring that club's Seagrave Observatory where the annual Astro-Assembly is held each fall.

The Making of a REBEL — David Hibner, Colchester, Connecticut.

Mr. Hibner has been designing and building telescopes for nearly 30 years. He will describe the construction of an observatory-quality mounting, made primarily of parts rescued from a local scrapyards, for an 8-inch f/10 semi-apochromatic refractor. A three-element, air-spaced lens by R. E. Brandt is the heart of this *Eclectic Light-gatherer* which is designed for both visual and photographic purposes. Specific features that enhance the stability and practicality of the telescope will be highlighted.

Sub-Diameter Tools: No Small Matter — Paul Valleli, Burlington, Massachusetts

The current popularity of "Dobsonian" telescopes has added new dimensions to amateur observing. However, many mirror makers have been humbled by the challenge of working large, fast, thin mirrors. Mr. Valleli, a professional optical engineer, will review the art of using small polishers to correct stubborn surface defects.

A Conic Null Test — Tom Waineo, Chelmsford, Massachusetts

This test won the "Most Innovative Optical Design" at the 1980 Stellafane convention. Using a concave spherical mirror of smaller diameter than the one being tested, it is possible to perform a reflecting null test for parabolic mirrors. Mr. Waineo will hand out an information sheet containing the equations needed to evaluate the test. They can be solved on many programmable hand calculators.

Panel of Experts

Culled mainly from the Stellafane judging committee, this group will be ready to handle your questions on telescope making, observing, photography, and more. Should a question fall beyond the realm of the panel's expertise, perhaps members of the audience can provide some answers. This "talk" will certainly hold something of interest for everyone.

EVENING PROGRAM

George East, Jr., of Randolph, Massachusetts, the Master of Ceremonies, will preside over the Twilight Talks beginning at 8:00 p.m. Saturday evening in front of the clubhouse. Mr. East, a noted telescope maker and astrophotographer, is no stranger to Stellafane. He has exhibited a number of telescopes at past conventions, and has won awards for both mechanical and optical excellence.

Words of Welcome

Stellafane Shadowgram — Walter Scott Houston

The NASA Space Telescope — John Spina, Eastman Kodak Company, Rochester, New York

Kodak is currently grinding a 2.4-meter (96-inch) mirror for the Space Telescope. This instrument, once free of the Earth's atmosphere when the Space Shuttle carries into orbit in late 1983, will become the world's most powerful telescope. In addition to a description of the instrument and its mission, Mr. Spina will detail the special lightweight mirror blank made by Corning, and the grinding, polishing, figuring, and testing being performed by Kodak. Mr. Spina is project manager for Kodak's involvement with the Space Telescope mirror.

CAMPING/PARKING AREA

Non-campers are asked to park in orderly lines in the designated space marked on the map at right. Controlled traffic is allowed to the top of Breezy Hill for unloading and picking up telescopes in the competition and display area. Telescopes not entered in the judging are also welcome in the camping area. In the past, for every telescope at the top of the hill, there have been two or three in the camping field.

PLEASE NOTE: There is no assurance that light-free conditions can be maintained in the camping field. If you must avoid lights, bring your telescopes and cameras to the clubhouse. Since observing will still be done from the camping area, please be as courteous as possible to others in the area. The site has been arranged to help keep lights of cars exiting the area from interfering with observers.

