



STELLAFANE

The 61st Convention of Amateur Telescope
Makers on Breezy Hill in Springfield, Vermont.
Saturday, August 10, 1996



"For it is true that astronomy, from a popular standpoint, is handicapped by the inability of the average workman to own an expensive astronomical telescope. It is also true that if an amateur starts out to build a telescope just for fun he will find, before his labors are over, that he has become seriously interested in the wonderful mechanism of our universe. And finally there is understandably the stimulus of being able to unlock the mysteries of the heavens by a tool fashioned by one's own hand."

Russell W. Porter, March 1923 -- Founder of Stellafane

The Stellafane Convention is a gathering of amateur telescope makers. The Convention was started in 1926 to give amateur telescope makers an opportunity to gather to show off their creations and teach each other telescope making and mirror-grinding techniques. If you have made your own telescope, we strongly encourage you to display it in the telescope fields near the Pink Clubhouse. If you wish, you can enter it in the mechanical and/or optical competition. There are also mirror-grinding and telescope-making demonstrations, technical lectures on telescope making and the presentation of awards for telescope design and craftsmanship. Vendor displays and the retail sale of commercial products are not permitted.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

A description of events is inside this bulletin.

Friday, August 9th:

- 9 a.m. Registration gate opens.
- 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Shuttle bus operates.
- 2 p.m. - 6 p.m. Telescope making demo under the tent.
- 4 p.m. - 8 p.m. Hartness House museum open.
- 4 p.m. - 8 p.m. Springfield Art & Historical Society open.
- 8:30 p.m. Informal tent talks begin.

Saturday, August 10th:

- 7 a.m. Registration gate opens.
- 7 a.m. - 5 p.m. Swap tables open.
- 8:30 a.m. - 10 a.m. Telescope competition registration.
- 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Shuttle bus operates.
- 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Telescope mechanical competition.
- 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Telescope making demo under the tent.
- 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. Technical talks under the tent.
- 2 p.m. - 5 p.m. Springfield Art & Historical Society open.
- 4 p.m. Informal social hour at the Pink Clubhouse.
- 7 p.m. Evening program begins in the amphitheater.

- 9:30 p.m. - 10 p.m. Registration for optical competition.
- 10 p.m. - 12 Midnight: Optical competition.

Sunday, August 11th:

- 8 a.m. Clean up crew organizes under the tent.
- 9 a.m. - Noon: Hartness House museum open.
- 9 a.m. - Noon: Springfield Art & Historical Society open.

Special Notes:

The INFORMATION BOOTH is located at the t-shirt table next to the Bunkhouse.

The Porter Turret Telescope will operate periodically during the day for solar viewing as well as observing all night, weather permitting. The Pink Clubhouse is open throughout the Convention.

Volunteers are needed to help with clean up beginning at 8 a.m. on Sunday. Please assemble under the tent.

A SHUTTLE BUS will operate between the main camping/parking area and the Stellafane Pink Clubhouse area Friday afternoon and all day on Saturday, making it easy to visit the telescope display area, the Pink Clubhouse and the Porter Turret Telescope.

CONVENTION REGISTRATION

We urge everyone to pre-register before July 31st. Please note that camping permits for the Convention site are issued only through advance registration to people who have also prepaid their admission fee. Mark the appropriate information on the enclosed registration card and mail it with a check for the full amount payable to the Springfield Telescope Makers to: Stellafane, P. O. Box 50, Belmont, MA 02178.

Everyone except family members under 16 years of age must pay to attend the Convention. Advance registration is \$12 per person before July 31st; after that and at the gate the fee is \$15. Note: Please do not send any registration material to the above address that will arrive after August 2nd. All registrations after that time must be handled at the registration gate. The camping fee is an additional \$25. Campsites are limited to one vehicle and one tent. This rule is strictly enforced!! Everyone who returns a registration card to the above address, whether or not they are registering for this year's Convention, will be on the mailing list for the 1997 Convention.

Unlike past years, we are **NOT** mailing camping confirmation cards. You will only hear from us in the event that our campground becomes filled and we have to return your registration fee. Otherwise, your registration materials will be waiting for you when you arrive.

LARGE CAMPERS: Because of limited space, campers and RVs longer than 20 feet require a special camping permit. Only a small number are available, on a first-come basis. If you require such a permit, please check the appropriate box on the registration card. You will be sent the permit by mail before the Convention.

GETTING ON THE MAILING LIST: If you pre-register for the 1996 Convention, you are automatically put on the 1997 mailing list. If you are not pre-registered and would like to be on the mailing list, please pick up the registration post card from the registration or information table and **MAIL** it in with the proper information.

MOTELS AND HOTELS

The following is a partial list of inns and motels in and around the Springfield area. You must make your own reservations, and we suggest this be done as soon as possible since many are filled long before the Convention.

Hartness House	802-885-2115
Castle Inn	802-226-7222
Palomar Motel	802-885-4142
The Abbey Lyn Motel	802-886-2223
Old Town Farm Lodge	802-875-2346
Greenleaf Inn	802-875-3173
Howard Johnson Motor Inn	802-885-4516
Maple Hedge Inn	603-826-5237

MIRROR GRINDING DEMONSTRATION

There will be a HAND-ON mirror-making demonstration Friday at 2 p.m. under the big tent in the main camping/parking area. You can gain first-hand experience working on mirrors at every stage of grinding, polishing, and testing. Experienced ATMs will help explain each step of the process. **JOHN DOBSON**, one of amateur telescope making's most influential personalities in the past quarter century, will be on hand to promote the art of telescope making. There will be a series of short lectures on general topics to help the beginner. The demonstration will continue Saturday at 10 a.m. unless poor weather causes the swap tables to preempt the space under the tent.

FRIDAY EVENING TALKS

Friday evening, August 9th, at 8:30 p.m. Bob Morse of the Springfield Telescope Makers will conduct the informal talks under the tent located in the main camping/parking area. If you wish to contribute a short talk during this session, you must submit a brief description of your planned presentation with your registration form. Talks are limited to 10 minutes and 20 slides. The time limit will be strictly enforced!! A 35-mm slide projector, overhead projector and a VCR will be available for your use.

SWAP TABLES

The swap tables are where Convention participants can trade or sell their surplus astronomical and telescope-related items such as eyepieces, lenses, cameras, mirror-making materials and observing accessories. These tables are not for commercial sales. Participants are allowed a maximum 4-foot-square area on a table and they must be responsible for their own material. The Swap Tables operate all day Saturday from 7 a.m. until 5 p.m. at the NORTHEAST edge of the main camping/parking area. Please consult the map of the main camping/parking area for the location of the swap tables.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON PROGRAM

This year's Saturday afternoon program begins under the tent located in the main camping/parking area at 2 p.m. Scott Milligan of the Springfield Telescope Makers is the master of ceremonies.

"Trials, Tribulations and Techniques in the Construction of a 32 inch Telescope and Observatory"

Mario Motta, Lynnfield, MA.

"Fever, Folly and Feasibility"

Steve Dodson, Sudbury, Ontario.

"Having Fun with Large Optics" or "Hit Me with a Sledge Hammer, Please!"

John Vogt, Huntington, NY

TELESCOPE COMPETITION The Heart and Soul of Stellafane!!

If you have built a telescope, we strongly encourage you to bring it and enter it in the competition. We try to have the judging completed in time for all to attend the Saturday afternoon talks. We welcome all home-made telescopes in the display area: they do not have to be entered in the competition.

ENTERING THE COMPETITION: You must register for the mechanical competition between 8:30 and 10:00 Saturday morning in the Pink Clubhouse. You can drive up to the Stellafane Pink Clubhouse area anytime Friday or Saturday to drop off and pick up your telescope but there is no parking as space is very limited. The telescope judging for mechanical excellence will begin at 10 a.m. so please register your telescope at the Pink Clubhouse and have it on display as early as possible. Only telescopes that are operative, both mechanically and optically, will be accepted in the competition. Telescopes do not have to be entered in both categories. The judges will visit the telescopes in several small groups so you should attend your telescope throughout the competition. Be prepared to describe any special construction techniques and components to the judges. Awards for mechanical design, craftsmanship, special gadgets, restoration of historical instruments and junior telescopes, made by persons under 16 years of age, will be awarded at the Saturday evening talks. Judging for optical excellence begins immediately following the Saturday evening program, weather permitting. Optical judging will be broken into categories according to telescope aperture and optical design. Telescopes entered in the optical competition must be fitted with an eyepiece that will provide at least 30x per inch of aperture.

1996 Judging Committee:

George East	Scott Milligan	Gary Walker
James Flood	Philip Rounsville	Berton Willard
Chris Houghton	Thomas Spirock	Ron Woodland
David Kelly	Paul Vallengli	

SATURDAY EVENING PROGRAM

The evening program will begin at 7 p.m. Saturday in the hillside amphitheater in the main camping/parking area. Please note that this is 1/2 hour earlier than in previous years!

- Greetings, announcements and raffle drawing
- Presentation of Telescope Competition Awards
- Twilight Talk by John Dobson
- Stellafane Keynote talk: "The Search for ET"

By Paul Horowitz. A professor at Harvard and a driving force in the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence, Paul Horowitz will discuss advancements in SETI technology and the progress of the continuing search..

1995 COMPETITION WINNERS:

OPTICAL EXCELLENCE -- UNDER 12 1/2"

- 1st -- Eric Allen, 8" f/5.4 Newtonian
- 2nd -- Bruce McDonald, 8" f/7.9 Newtonian

OPTICAL EXCELLENCE -- OVER 12 1/2"

- 1st -- Steve Eldridge, 16" f/6.4 Newtonian

MECHANICAL DESIGN:

- 1st -- Peter Wraight, 6" Reflecting Binoculars
- 2nd -- Joe Castoro, 25" Newtonian
- 3rd -- Roy Diffrient, 18" Newtonian
- 4th -- Eric Allen, 8" Newtonian

CRAFTSMANSHIP:

- 1st -- Roy Diffrient, 18" Newtonian
- 2nd -- Joe Castoro, 25" Newtonian
- 3rd -- Mike Ward, 12.5" Newtonian
- 4th -- Richard Loiselle, 14.5" Newtonian

SPECIAL AWARD:

Real Manseau & Francois St. Martin, Replicas of Newton's original reflector, Galileo's original refractor and cross & back staff.

INNOVATIVE COMPONENT:

Jim Vail, Clock driven camera mount.

STELLAFANE EAST: MAIN CAMPING/PARKING AREA

Work continues on the land purchased several years ago for the Stellafane Convention by the Springfield Telescope Makers. After a decade of limited space we can now accommodate almost all the campers who request a site and we hope this will continue. Nevertheless, camping and parking space will still be tight. People interested in camping must read the special instructions in the camping registration section of this mailing. Convention staff at the registration gate will direct participants to the appropriate camping and parking areas. Controlled traffic is allowed to the Pink Clubhouse area for unloading and picking up telescopes. Unless otherwise allowed by a Convention official, there is no parking around the Pink Clubhouse. There is no assurance that light-free conditions will be maintained in the main camping/parking area. If you must avoid lights please bring your telescopes and cameras to the telescope fields by the Pink Clubhouse. We ask that Conventioneers who are not camping please try to park in the Day Parking sections. Please see the site map of the main camping/parking area for camping and parking locations as well as the locations of specific events. Campfires are not permitted on the Convention site.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

Please ask at the Registration Gate or the Information Table for times and locations.