



STELLAFANE

The 64th Convention of Amateur Telescope
Makers on Breezy Hill in Springfield, Vermont.
Friday, August 13th and Saturday, August 14th, 1999



"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

Please take the time to read this entire bulletin, especially if you are a relative new-comer to the convention. We have tried to organize the bulletin in a logical manor but the info that you're looking for might not be exactly where you think it is. 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. **Please pay special attention to the Convention Registration section as the registration deadline has been moved up due to the solar eclipse! Also, be sure to note the Stellafane Lighting Policy section.** Enjoy the convention!!

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

A description of events is inside this bulletin.

Friday, August 13th:

- 9 a.m. Registration gate opens.
- 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Shuttle bus operates.
- 1:30 p.m. Horseshoe pitching contest.
- 2 p.m. - 6 p.m. Mirror grinding demo under the tent.
- 2 p.m. - 5 p.m. Library open in McGregor Obs.
- 3 p.m. - 4 p.m. Astronomy activities for kids.
- 5 p.m. - 8 p.m. Hartness House museum open.
- 8:30 p.m. Informal tent talks begin.
- 10 p.m. Registration gate closes.

Saturday, August 14th:

- 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.

Saturday, August 14th -- continued:

- 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Mirror grinding demo under the tent.
- 11 a.m. - noon. Astronomy activities for kids.
- 1:30 p.m. - 5 p.m. Technical talks under the tent.
- 2 p.m. - 5 p.m. Library open in McGregor Obs.
- 2 p.m. - 3 p.m. Astronomy activities for kids.
- 4 p.m. Informal social hour in the Pink Clubhouse.
- 4 p.m. - 6p.m. Optical competition registration.
- 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 15th:

- 9 a.m. - Noon: Hartness House museum open.

A SHUTTLE BUS will operate between the main camping/parking area and the Stellafane Pink Clubhouse area Friday afternoon and all day on Saturday.

HORSESHOE PITCHING CONTEST

The 2nd-Annual Stellafane Horseshoe pitching contest is scheduled to begin at 1:30 p.m. near the McGregor Observatory. "Astro" prizes will be awarded. For more info contact: stm-secretary@home.com.

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. 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.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

There are several astronomy related activities for children which will take place in the McGregor Obs. Please consult the schedule of events for the times.

HARTNESS HOUSE

The Hartness Museum of Amateur Telescope Making is located in the underground rooms of the Hartness Turret Telescope at the Hartness House in Springfield. Convention-goers can plan a visit to the recently expanded museum on *Friday* or *Sunday*. Please consult the map on the back page for directions and follow the signs in town. Admission is **FREE**. Many of the items on display are by or about Russell W. Porter, founding father of Stellafane and the ATM movement in the U.S. Included are 'scopes of his design like the Springfield and Garden telescopes. His artwork traces his arctic exploration years to his work on the 200" Palomar telescope, culminating in his famous cutaway drawings. Other items of interest are 'scopes and other equipment built by early STM members. The 10" refracting turret telescope can also be inspected.

FRIDAY EVENING TALKS

Friday evening, August 13th, 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. If possible, you are encouraged to submit a description of your talk to Bob Morse at: bmorse@keene.k12.nh.us

SUNDAY MORNING CLEAN-UP

Please report to the Bunkhouse if you can help Sun. a.m.

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. **Please Note:** Parking at the Swap Tables is **VERY LIMITED**. Please walk to the Swap Table area if you can. Thanks!

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 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 comp. between 8:30 and 10:00 Saturday morning in the Pink Clubhouse. You can also register for the optical competition between 4:30 and 6pm Sat. You can drive up to the Pink Clubhouse area anytime Fri. or Sat. 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 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. You should attend your telescope until the end of the competition is announced via the loud-speaker!!!** 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 Sat. 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.

1999 Judging Committee:

David Kelly & Scott Milligan; Co-chairmen

STELLAFANE ATM LIBRARY

The Stellafane ATM library will be open from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. both Fri. and Sat and in the eve if it's cloudy.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON PROGRAM

This year's Saturday afternoon program begins under the tent located in the main camping/parking area at 1:30 p.m. Karl Hricko is the master of ceremonies.

Bob Gent Rep. the Int. Dark Sky Asso. and V.P. Astro. League
"Preserving the Beauty of the Night Sky"

Steve Beyer of Staten Island, NY
"Amateur Telescope Making – Looking Forward"

Lonny Buinis of Parsippany, NJ
"Life IN Europa"

Barry Malpas of Warren, NJ
"Spectroscopy – Amateur Astronomer's Abandoned Child"

Bob Royce and Dick Parker of Hartford, CT
"Optical Flat Making – Not as Hard as You Think"

SATURDAY EVENING PROGRAM

The evening program will begin at 7 p.m. Saturday in the hillside amphitheater in the main camping/parking area. Bob Morse will be master of ceremonies.

- Greetings, announcements and raffle drawing.
- Stellafane Shadowgram, by David Levy (via video).
- Presentation of Telescope Competition Awards.
- Stellafane Keynote talk: "The Dark Matter"

By John Dobson. One of amateur telescope makers most influential personalities in the past quarter century, John Dobson will, once again, be spreading the word about telescope making and speaking at our Sat. eve. Program!

CONVENTION DEDICATION

The 1999 Stellafane convention is dedicated to Peg and Harty Beardsley for donating the 45-acre plot of land adjacent to the east boundary of Stellafane East.

POST-CONVENTION NEWSGRAM FUND-RAISER

The post-convention Newsgram will contain highlights of the convention. The Newsgram will be mailed out by the end of October. All proceeds from this donation to be dedicated to convention site maintenance. To receive the Newsgram do one of the following:

- 1) If you're pre-registering for the convention just check off the appropriate box on the registration card and add \$10 to the registration cost.
- 2) If you're attending the convention but are not pre-registered please pick up a registration post card at the t-shirt or registration tables, check off the appropriate box and **MAIL** it in with \$10 by Sept. 30th.
- 3) If you're not attending the convention but would still like the Newsgram please **MAIL** \$10 to *Stellafane, P. O. Box 50, Belmont, MA 02478* by Sept. 30th.

CONVENTION SURVEY

You'll receive a survey when you arrive. Please fill it out as it helps us determine what improvements to make!!!

1998 COMPETITION WINNERS:

MECHANICAL DESIGN:

- 1st Gary Frishkorn: 10" f10 Herschelien
- 2nd Jack Gelfand: 16" f5 Suitcase 'Scope
- 3rd Robert Novak: 9" f11 Yolo
- 4th Martin Lee: 4 1/4" Newtonian

MECHANICAL DESIGN -- JUNIOR AWARD:

- 1st Robert Teeter: 8" f6 Newtonian
- 2nd Emily Orzech: 6" Salad Bowl 'Scope
- 3rd Ben Bruckner: 6" f7 Newtonian
- HM Kristin Tiffant: 4 1/4" Newtonian
- HM Elizabeth Ward: 6" f8 Newtonian
- HM Amy Ward: 4 1/4" f10 Newtonian
- Special Tim Dolan: 6" f10 Newtonian

CRAFTSMANSHIP:

- 1st Robert Novak: 9" f11 Yolo
- 2nd Joe Castoro: 4" Brass Refractor
- 3rd Marc Pepin: 12 1/2" f4.9 Newtonian
- 4th Tom Blahovici: 10" f6.6 Newtonian

OPTICAL EXCELLENCE – Category I: Under 12 1/2":

- 1st Dick Parker: 12" Newtonian
- 2nd NH Astro. Society: 6" f7 Newtonian
- 3rd Todd Mackenzie: 8" f6.2 Newtonian

OPTICAL EXCELLENCE – Category II: Over 12 1/2":

- 1st John Vogt: 32" Newtonian

OPTICAL EXCELLENCE – Category III: Compound

- 1st Dick Mayer: 8" f6 Jones-Bird

OPTICAL EXCELLENCE – JUNIOR AWARD:

- 1st Patti Vogt: 4 1/4" Newtonian
- 2nd Robert Midiri: 6" Newtonian

SPECIAL AWARD:

- 1st Mike Heliba: Binocular Mt.
- 2nd Michel Daigneault: Camera Mount
- 2nd Keith Love: 10mm Galilean 'Scope

INNOVATIVE COMPONENT:

- 1st Clu Fabi: Spherical Truss Mount

HELP THE STELLAFANE WWW PAGE

If you are interested in contributing to the Stellafane www page please do so! Send articles, reports and especially IMAGES from the convention. Thanks!

www.stellafane.com

QUESTIONS REGARDING CONVENTION

Check out the FAQ section of the Stellafane home page.

www.stellafane.com

VOLUNTEER TO HELP AT CONVENTION

Would you like to volunteer to help at the convention? There are many jobs at all levels available. If so please include a note when you register or contact Natalie Dodson: dodson@iname.com Thanks!

OPTICAL COMPETITION REGISTRATION

You can register for the optical competition Sat. 8:30 to 10 a.m. and 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. in the Pink Clubhouse.

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. 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.

CONVENTION SITE INFORMATION

The INFORMATION CENTER is located next to the Bunkhouse in the main camping/parking area coincident with the t-shirt table.

PHONE SERVICE: There is a pay telephone located in the Bunkhouse that that is available for use by Conventioneers.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE: There are several doctors at the Convention site on call at all times. They can be contacted at the Pink Clubhouse or the Information Center. There are first-aid kits located at both locations in addition to telephones to contact the local hospital. Please report to either location with any medical emergency.

CONVENTION STAFF AND SECURITY: Convention Staff are identified by their **light-blue** t-shirts with the Stellafane logo on the front and "*Springfield Telescope Makers*" on the back. Locations that are continuously staffed by Convention personnel are the Pink Clubhouse, the Registration Table and the Bunkhouse in the main camping/parking area. Please report to any of these locations with questions.

RAFFLE DRAWING: There is a raffle drawing Saturday evening just before the keynote talk. Astronomical prizes are donated by noted vendors from across the country. You can find out what prizes will be raffled off and purchase tickets at the t-shirt table.

WHERE IS THE STELLAFANE SITE MAP??

You'll receive a map of the convention when you arrive.

FOOD SERVICE & COOKING

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are available throughout the Convention at the food tent next to the Bunkhouse. There is also limited ice available. If you choose not to make use of the food service you must make provisions for your own food -- there are supermarkets downtown. Cooking is allowed in the camping area and drinking water is available at several locations. Camp stoves, charcoal grills and the like are allowed but **no camp fires!**

STELLAFANE PINK CLUBHOUSE AREA

The Stellafane Pink Clubhouse and the Porter Turret Telescope are located at the summit of Breezy Hill. The shuttle bus will operate between this area and the main camping/parking area to aid you in your visit to the summit. The Porter Turret Telescope will be operating during the day for solar viewing as well as observing all night. You can also visit the Pink Clubhouse throughout the Convention. Telescopes, some of which will be participating in the mechanical and/or optical competition, will be set up in the observing fields throughout the Convention. The mechanical competition will take place Saturday morning starting at 10:00 and the optical competition will begin that evening at 10:00. There will also be several historical telescopes set up near the Clubhouse, including Stellafane's original solar projection telescope.

PARKING NEAR THE PINK CLUBHOUSE

Parking at the Pink Clubhouse is **VERY** limited. We try to reserve the few spots that there are for those who are unable to walk up the hill or can not take the Shuttle-Bus. If you are entering a telescope in the competition and must drive up to deliver your 'scope please drop it off and move your car to the main camping/parking area as quickly as possible. We very much appreciate your cooperation in this area.

PORTER TURRET TELESCOPE

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.

STELLAFANE LIGHTING POLICY

Stellafane does not allow open white lights, on clear nights, during the hours of darkness, except for ½ hour after the Fri. and Sat. talks. Vehicular travel after dark is strongly discouraged and is done only at the risk of the operator. We thank you for your cooperation.

LOST AND FOUND

The Lost and Found for the main camping/parking area is located at the t-shirt table next to the Bunkhouse. On Breezy Hill it's in the Pink Clubhouse.

A NOTE TO FIRST-TIMERS

If this is your first visit to the Stellafane Convention, especially if you are camping, there are several things you should know. First, our camping is very primitive. We have limited drinking water and only portable chemical toilets. There are no showers, no electrical hookups and no isolated campsites. You are likely to be camping back-to-back with others and while this usually makes for good friendships, it can cause other side effects. The Convention site is often hot and dusty. Furthermore, the land is all carved out of a rugged Vermont hillside. Bring comfortable clothes and walking shoes. Sunscreen by day and insect repellent by night should be the first order of business and always be prepared for a possible thunder shower. White lights are not permitted on the grounds after dark as there will be people observing, weather permitting, throughout the Convention site. Bring a **RED FILTER** for your flashlight! If you forget to bring a red filter you can stop by the t-shirt table or the Pink Clubhouse to get one. Please see the Food Service & Cooking section for food accommodations. We do our best to see that everyone has a happy and comfortable Convention but don't be surprised by our rustic conditions -- they are part of the Stellafane tradition.

YOUR SUGGESTIONS FOR THE BULLETIN

What info would you like to see in this bulletin that's not here? Please let us know. Write to: Stellafane Secretary, PO Box 601, Springfield, VT 05156 or email tom@solar.njit.edu. Thanks!

STELLAFANE WWW HOME PAGE

<http://www.stellafane.com>

THE ULTIMATE STAR PARTY?

Although the oldest and perhaps best known, the Stellafane Convention is but one of the growing number of astronomy conventions in North America. Our reputation and the fact that publications list the Stellafane Convention along with star parties in their calendars of events causes some people to arrive at the meeting expecting the ultimate observing experience. In truth, the Stellafane Convention began in the 1920's as a meeting of amateur telescope makers. There has always been observing, but it does not have the emphasis that it does at gatherings such as the Texas Star Party or Florida's Winter Star Party. The Convention is on the outskirts of town and minor light pollution is visible in the sky over Stellafane.

DIRECTIONS FROM I-91:

Take Exit 7 to Route 11 West. Staying on Route 11 for 4.5 miles, you'll come to the Springfield Plaza and McDonald's in the center of town [See map below]. One and one half miles past McDonald's on Route 11, look for a sign that will point to the left turn at Breezy Hill Road which will take you up to the Convention site. Note that the Breezy Hill Road turn off of Route 11 is directly across from "Green Mountain Classic Cars." If you see the Palomar Motel on the right, you've gone too far on Route 11. Head straight up the hill. The road will come to a "T" just past the end of the pavement -- make a right. Then, make the first left. You'll quickly come to a SHRAP RIGHT turn -- be careful! Go up the hill to the registration booth.

HAVE A GREAT CONVENTION!!!

The Springfield Telescope Makers

