

STELLAFANE

1926-1988

Saturday, August 13, 1988

The 53rd Convention of Amateur Telescope
Makers on Breezy Hill in Springfield, Vermont.



Friday evening, August 12th, at 8:30 p.m., Doug McGregor of the Springfield Telescope Makers will conduct the informal program under the tent behind the Stellafane clubhouse. 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. A 35-mm slide projector is available. Following the informal talks there will be observing (weather permitting) with the Porter Turret Telescope in front of the clubhouse.

The Hartness-Porter Museum of Amateur Telescope Making is located in the underground rooms of the Hartness Turret Telescope at Hartness House in Springfield. Convention-goers can plan a visit to the museum on Saturday or Sunday. Light meals and snacks are available at Stellafane Friday evening and throughout the convention on Saturday. Barbequed chicken dinners are available for Saturday's lunch and dinner. Cooking is allowed in the camping area, and drinking water will be provided at the camping site beginning Friday afternoon. Camp stoves, charcoal grills, and the like are allowed, 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 also enter it in the competition. Awards are 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 begins at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, so please register your telescopes at the clubhouse and have it on display as early as possible. Registrations will not extend beyond noon. We try to have the judging completed in time for all to attend the afternoon talks. Judging for optical excellence begins immediately following the evening program (weather permitting). Only telescopes that are operative both mechanically and optically will be accepted in the competition. However, telescopes do not have to be judged in both categories. We also welcome all home-made telescopes in the display area; they do not have to be entered in the competition. The Porter Youth Award acknowledges the junior exhibitor (under 16 years of age) who shows the most promise for a career in science and technology.

SWAP TABLE

The swap table is where convention participants can trade or sell their astronomical and telescope-related items such as eyepieces, lenses, cameras, mirror-making materials, and observing accessories. This table is not for commercial sales. Participants must be responsible for their own material at the table, which is located near the clubhouse and operates all day Saturday until 7:30 p.m.

CAMPING/PARKING AREA

This year will be our tightest ever for parking and camping. We no longer have use of the old camping field, and though land clearing at our new site is proceeding, it will be several years before we will have available the amount of camping and parking space that we have enjoyed in the past. People interested in camping must read the special instructions in the camping registration section of this mailing. Convention officials at the registration gate will direct participants to the appropriate camping and parking areas. Controlled traffic is allowed to the clubhouse for unloading and picking up telescopes. Unless otherwise allowed by a convention official, there is no parking around the clubhouse. There is no assurance that light-free conditions will be maintained in the camping area. If you must avoid lights, especially car headlights, please bring your telescopes and cameras to the display field by the clubhouse. Furthermore, since there will also be observing from the camping area, we ask everyone to be considerate of others and avoid any unnecessary use of bright lights at night.

AFTERNOON PROGRAM

This year's Saturday afternoon program begins under the tent behind the clubhouse at 2:00 p.m. Scott Milligan of the Springfield Club and the Amateur Telescope Makers of Boston is the MC. He and others in the Boston ATM's are working on a Schupmann telescope, which will be the largest operational instrument of its kind when completed.

Computer Controlled Polishing Machine -- Charles Enz

Mr. Enz is co-builder of a computer controlled polishing machine first exhibited at Stellafane last year. During the past year the award-winning machine has been improved. Mr. Enz will talk about his progress and the machine's current capabilities. The topic will be of interest to "CN's" as well as "TN's" (that's computer nuts and telescope nuts).

An Almost Perfect Eyepiece -- Richard Buchroeder

Well known in the professional and amateur optical communities, Dick Buchroeder of Tucson, Arizona, has spent several years working on an eyepiece design for telescopes. Now more than ever, amateurs are accepting the fact that eyepieces are just as important as other optical components in a telescope. This talk is sure to be of wide interest.

The Amateur Telescope Maker's Shop:

Common Problems and Solutions -- David Kelly

A master machinist by trade, David Kelly has a great deal of experience turning odds and ends into finely crafted telescopes. Sometimes the difference between a brilliant success and an outright failure at making a particular telescope part is a simple "trick of the trade" in the shop. Everyone who has made (or is making) a telescope will enjoy Mr. Kelly's presentation.

EVENING PROGRAM

Welcome

Presentation of Awards

Stellafane Shadowgram -- Walter Scott Houston

The evening keynote speaker is Dr. Clyde Tombaugh, a man who needs little introduction to convention-goers. In the 1920's, Dr. Tombaugh's skill as a telescope maker and planetary observer while a farmboy in Kansas earned him a job at Lowell Observatory searching for "Planet X." In 1930 he discovered the planet Pluto circling the Sun at the outer edge of the solar system. The rest, as they say, is history.

In recent years Dr. Tombaugh has been on a speaking tour to raise money for the Clyde Tombaugh Scholars Program at New Mexico State University. For a \$20 tax-deductible donation to the program, Dr. Tombaugh will sign a special poster commemorating his discovery of Pluto. Consider obtaining one for yourself or bringing one home to a friend. On August 12th and 13th the only place where you can obtain the signature of a person who discovered a major planet of our solar system is at the top of Breezy Hill in Springfield, Vermont.

A Statement on Commercial Exhibits

To maintain the strict spirit of amateur telescope making unique to Stellafane, no commercial exhibits are allowed at the convention site (this includes the camping field). A commercial exhibit is interpreted as a display of any commercial product that is the property of the parent company. Handing out of any company literature, and solicitations for periodical subscriptions and other business ventures are also not allowed.