



Stardust

December, 1963.

MEETING NOTICE

The regular monthly meeting of the Edmonton Centre will be held on Thursday, December 12th, at 8:15 pm, in the Queen Elizabeth Planetarium.

The main speaker will be our vice-president, Dr. H.W. Taylor, who has chosen as his topic, "RADIOACTIVITY IN METEORITES."

Dr. Taylor has the unique ability to treat technical matters in such a way that they can be readily understood by all - with a little concentration!

The program will also include a special Christmas 'featurette' entitled "A STAR, AND A BIRTH," by Bill Cable, the Observers' Group Advisor. The featurette will highlight some of the astronomical theories proposed - in attempts to explain the Star of Bethlehem.



Dr. H.W. Taylor

ANNUAL DUES

The R.A.S.C. membership fees for 1964 are now due. Student fees are \$3.00 per year, and the adult fees are \$5.00. In addition, there is a \$1.00 subscription fee to the Edmonton Centre newsletter, STARDUST.

OBSERVER'S HANDBOOK

The 1964 edition of the OBSERVER'S HANDBOOK is now available for distribution to paid-up members. These will be available from our treasurer, Mr. H.J. Montgomery, at the forthcoming December meeting.

TOTAL LUNAR ECLIPSE - DEC. 29 - 30.

If your neighbors catch you out in the front lawn very late at night, close to the end of this month, you may have difficulty in convincing them you're not celebrating New Year's Eve earlier than usual - but you're watching an eclipse of the moon.

On the night of December 29 - 30th, there will be a total eclipse of the moon visible over most of North America. Edmonton is in a particularly favourable position for viewing the event.

Theoretically, the eclipse begins at 1:25 am, when the moon enters the earth's PENUMBRAL shadow. The more interesting phase of the eclipse comes about one hour later when the moon slips into the main portion of the earth's shadow, the UMBRA. Due to sunlight hitting the surface of the moon after being refracted through the earth's atmosphere, the moon turns a coppery-red. The middle of the forthcoming eclipse occurs at 4:07 am, M.S.T., with totality ending 59 minutes later.

At the December meeting, Bill Cable will report to members of the Centre on plans to observe the eclipse in an organized group - possibly at the planetarium. For the benefit of members who may wish to photograph the spectacle, data are available on film and exposures. These may be discussed at the meeting.

ALEXANDER S. STOCKWELL

by Ian McLennan



Alexander S. Stockwell
1900 - 1963

The Edmonton Centre of the R.A.S.C. mourns the loss of one of its most respected members. Alex Stockwell passed away in his sleep about midnight, November 21st, 1963. Born on September 25th, 1900, Alex was a young 63 years of age. His energy and enthusiasm in many different fields were characteristic of a man many years younger. His death came while convalescing from what appeared to be a mild heart attack suffered two weeks earlier.

Those who knew Alex well had deep respect for his keen sense of values and good judgement. Those who had known him for only a short time were attracted by his friendly personality and his willingness to help.

We have not only lost a good friend, but an able director of the Centre's affairs: This was most evident in our recent STAR NIGHT program, when Alex spent many hours helping prepare for the event - and then many tiring hours assisting the public during the program itself.

In 1949, Alex served as president of the Edmonton Centre - a position he filled with distinction. In these later years, as Secretary, his official duties were executed in an equally responsible fashion. He joined the R.A.S.C. in 1942, and had missed few meetings.

In August, 1962, several members accepted the kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Stockwell to hold an informal mid-summer meeting at their cottage on Lake Wabamun. In this setting, we will remember how Alex's genuine sense of humor and friendly manner further endeared him to us all.

The younger members of the Centre will remember Alex Stockwell for his assistance and encouragement. His life was devoted to the betterment of our world through assistance to young people. As young observers, we once looked to Alex for guidance in many ways. It was heart-warming to watch as a new wave of young enthusiasts were benefiting from his sincere desire to help educate youngsters about the wonders of nature. In fact, his guidance always extended beyond the hours, and indeed beyond the walls of the school of which he was principal. For this, many people will be eternally grateful. (Many of Alex's young friends, students from his school, visited with him at his bedside only days before his passing.)

Alex's desire to help those less fortunate than himself was reflected in his association with the Orange Order. He served on the board of directors of the Orange Protestant Home for Orphan Children. His interests in education and astronomy were combined for a period of many years, during which he taught girl guides and boy scouts basic astronomy. He also prepared exams leading to their Starman's badges.

A music lover, Alex once played the trombone in the old Edmonton Philharmonic Orchestra, and in later years, sang in the choir of Robertson United Church, where he served as an elder.

Although we have lost a faithful attendant of the Society's activities, the spirit of Alex Stockwell's personal philosophy will be present for many years to come. It will long serve as a reminder of how concern about the affairs of man combined with an interest in the stars can help our Society attain the objectives for which it was formed.

Our thoughts are with Mrs. Stockwell and the family, in their bereavement.

NEWS NOTES . . .

GENERAL ASSEMBLY: Plans for the 1964 General Assembly of the R.A.S.C. are once again in full swing. The annual event will be held this year in Ottawa, May 15-17. The chairman of the 1964 General Assembly Planning Committee is Dr. Ian Halliday of the Dominion Observatory at Ottawa.

R.A.S.C. PAPERS: Invitations have been extended to the various Centres of the Society to have their members submit papers to be read at the Assembly's Saturday morning paper session on May 16th. The deadline for submission of abstracts is March 15th. The papers should be approved by the local Centre, and then forwarded to Dr. Halliday for inclusion on the programme.

CALGARY ANNUAL MEETING: The Calgary Centre of the R.A.S.C. holds its annual dinner meeting on Wednesday, December 11th. Members of the Edmonton Centre, as usual, are welcome.

PLANETARIUM SLIDE COLLECTION: The Queen Elizabeth Planetarium has accumulated more than 3,000 35mm transparencies covering all aspects of astronomical research. Many of these can be made available on a loan basis to R.A.S.C. members for lecturing purposes. The major categories are: ASTRONOMICAL HISTORY; THE SUN; THE PLANETS; THE MOON; THE MILKY WAY; EXTERNAL GALAXIES; OBSERVATORIES AND PLANETARIUMS; R.A.S.C.; ASTRONOMICAL ART; TERRESTRIAL; and the SPACE AGE. Members wishing to avail themselves of this service are invited to phone the planetarium to discuss the nature of their presentation, and illustrations required.

WINNIPEG OBSERVATORY: A recent letter from Miss J. Anderson of the Winnipeg Centre indicates that group has just acquired an observatory for use by its members. Miss Anderson is corresponding with various R.A.S.C. Centres in hopes of establishing a regular exchange of information on the operation of Canada's amateur observatories.

EDMONTON OBSERVATORY: ?

EARL MILTON: Our good friend in Regina is now out of hospital after suffering a serious attack of bronchial pneumonia. Earl is professor of astronomy and physics at the new Regina campus of the University of Saskatchewan.

STAR OF CHRISTMAS: The annual planetarium show is once again proving to be very popular. The show encompasses a number of the points to be highlighted by Bill Cable at the December meeting - regarding the scientific clues on the appearance of the Star of Bethlehem. The show has received a 'lift' through the installation of new projectors in the central area of the star theatre. In order to make room for the improvement, a bank of seats had to be removed from the theatre. It is hoped that projection equipment will someday occupy the entire theatre, leaving no room for the public.

OBSERVERS' GROUP MEETINGS: These meetings are now held every SECOND Saturday evening, commencing at 7:00 pm. All members are welcome. Art Pederson is the newly-elected Observers' Group representative on the Centre's Council, while Bill Cable and Franklin Loehde act as advisors to the group. Next meeting, December 14th - at the planetarium.

NOVEMBER STARDUST: Those who did not receive the November issue may pick up a copy at the meeting Thursday evening. If desirable, it can be mailed to you. Phone GL5-0119.

"A GLOW REMAINS" - by Grace V. Watkins.

In the dark immensity of night
I stood on a hill and watched the light
Of a star,
Soundless and beautiful and far.

A scientist standing there with me
Said, "It is not the star you see,
But a glow
That left the star decades ago."

Men are like stars in a timeless sky:
The light of a good man's life shines high,
Golden and splendid,
Long after his brief earth years are ended.

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THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA



ADMINISTRATION BULLETIN NO. 10
6 December, 1963

252 COLLEGE STREET TORONTO 2B, ONTARIO

Miss Ruth J. Northcott and Mr. J. E. Kennedy attended the annual dinner meeting of the Niagara Falls Centre on Tuesday, 12th November, 1963. Miss Northcott delivered the after dinner address on "Astronomy in Canada", which was illustrated with many excellent colour slides. The retiring President, Dr. J. F. Booth, and Mrs. Booth entertained the members and guests in their home at the close of the meeting. At the regular meeting on 17th December, an account of the life and work of Charles Messier will be presented as well as slides on the recent total solar eclipse.

The Hamilton Centre has issued a most interesting "President's Year" programme for the 1963-64 session. On Thursday, 5th December, Past-President T. M. Norton presented a paper on "Robert Hooke, M.D., F.R.S.".

Dr. G. Herzberg, Director, Division of Pure Physics, N.R.C., addressed members of the Ottawa Centre of the R.A.S.C. on Wednesday, 20th November, 1963, on the topic "The Interstellar Medium".

The Halifax Centre held a meeting on 27th November entitled "A Miscellany", including an eclipse film and discussion, colour views of astronomical objects and the sky for December shown on the planetarium projector.

A few reminders! Nominations for the Chant Medal, Service Award or a Membership Certificate must be received at the National Office not later than 31st December, 1963. Papers for the 1964 General Assembly should be submitted to the Executive of your Centre for approval before the abstracts are forwarded to Dr. Ian Halliday, Chairman of the Committee on Papers, Dominion Observatory. Reports from Secretaries and Treasurers together with a list of Council for 1964 will be requested shortly for inclusion in the Supplement to the JOURNAL.

Centres should take note that additional 35mm. slides have been added to the National Library for loan. Included are 12 coloured slides of astronomical objects and four sets of 20 slides each in black and white. These are:

Set "A" - General

Set "C" - Nebulae

Set "B" - Galaxies

Set "E" - Moon, Planets and Comets

Our sincere thanks to Mr. Kurt Frenkel of the Toronto Centre for donating his time in putting these slides into permanent mounts for protection.

On Thursday, 5th December, 1963, the Committee on Constitution and By-Laws met at the National Office at 4:00 p.m. After a brief dinner break, several of these officers reconvened for a meeting of the Executive Committee starting at 7:30 p.m.

The 1964 OBSERVER'S HANDBOOK was ready for distribution on 28th November and copies were dispatched immediately to the Centres from the Press. An added feature included in this issue is the drawing of Jupiter made by Geoffrey Gaherty, Jr. for his article in the JOURNAL. Each Centre is asked to promote outside sales of the OBSERVER'S HANDBOOK.

Marie Fidler, Executive Secretary

J. E. Kennedy, National Secretary.

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Marie Fisher, Executive Secretary