



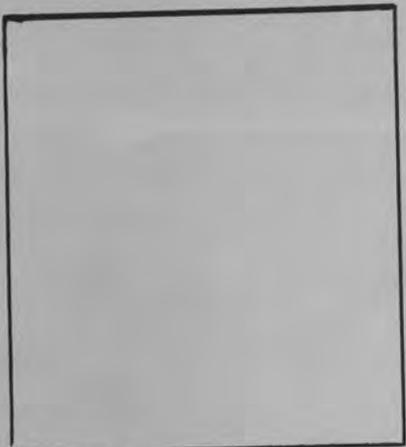
Stardust

Monthly Newsletter
of

THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY
OF CANADA
Edmonton Centre

- January 1965

Dec. 18th Total Lunar Eclipse:



The space at left was reserved for whatever photographic results were obtained by members of the Edmonton Centre on the occasion of the December 18th total lunar eclipse. The blank space pretty well tells the story.

The evening turned out to be a cold, bleak night, with a high mantle of featureless cloud adding the final note of discouragement as eclipse time drew near. Ironically, as it was later learned, a number of otherwise uninterested persons was watching the eclipse in the comfort of an AIR CANADA Viscount airliner on a "Christmas Light Cruise" over the city!

Meanwhile, back on the ground, the evening was particularly disappointing to the many members of the Edmonton Centre who had volunteered their assistance in hosting a public program at the planetarium in connection with the eclipse - as part of

the Centre's long established policy of enhancing public awareness of the heavens. A final touch of irony was the appearance of the moon through a break in the clouds just as the last phases of the eclipse were visible.

There will not be another favourable total lunar eclipse visible over Edmonton until 1966.

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JANUARY MEETING NOTICE:

The regular monthly meeting of the Edmonton Centre, Royal Astronomical Society of Canada will be held Thursday, January 14th at 8:15 pm, in the Queen Elizabeth Planetarium.

Our main speaker on that occasion will be Mr. Charles (Chuck) Tennant, Manager of McBain Camera (Westmount) Ltd., who will speak on Applications of Photography in Astronomy. Although one of the newer members of the Centre, Mr. Tennant's interests in astronomy date back several years. He will review the history of astronomical photography - which now officially spans more than a century; and will present some thoughts on the future methods which astronomers will use in recording their findings and discoveries.

Franklin Loehde will present, for adoption by members in good standing, a revised edition of the Edmonton Centre by-laws and constitution; Ian McLennan will preview the hoped for accomplishments of the Mariner Mars probe; and Professor E.S. Keeping, will present the traditional HANDBOOK TALK.

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A REMINDER:

Members of the Edmonton Centre are again reminded that the General Assembly of the R.A.S.C. will be held in Toronto May 21 - 23, 1965. It will be a combined meeting with the American Association of Variable Star Observers - one of the largest and most active amateur astronomy groups in the world. Many excellent features are being arranged by our Toronto hosts, and it promises to be another memorable week-end. Return air fare, from Edmonton is \$178.00; return rail fair (including lower berth and all meals) is \$107.00. The train trip from Edmonton to Toronto takes 48 hours.

DECEMBER 20th GREEN FIREBALL:

The Edmonton Centre's Honourable Member for Leduc South, Jim Harrington, (right) was one of hundreds of northern Alberta residents who witnessed the fiery plunge of a meteor on Sunday evening, December 20th. Travelling north on Highway 2, near Wetaskiwin, Mr. Harrington witnessed the flare-like fireball coming into view from the top of his car's windshield. The bright green meteor progressed downward and toward the north west, where in turn, it was seen by hundreds more people to the west and north of the City of Edmonton. Since that date, the planetarium and the Research Council of Alberta have been cooperating in the gathering of reports from people who observed the blazing phenomenon. Preliminary calculations made by Dr. Robert Green of the Research Council indicate the meteoroid may have landed in dense, wooded regions west of Valleyview - making recovery of the fragments extremely difficult - if not impossible. Nevertheless, records of sightings from residents in the Peace River - Valleyview area are being solicited in order to more accurately pinpoint the extension of the meteor's trajectory to a landing area.



OBSERVING SHELTER:

Good progress is reported being made by members of the Centre's Observers' Group, in the construction of an improvised observing shelter which will be transported to a good observing location away from city lights within the next few weeks. The shelter is to cost the Centre in the neighborhood of \$100.00. Construction of the shelter has been taking place in the garage at the home of Dr. E.S. Allin. Members of the Centre will anticipate many hours of fruitful observing from the shelter while negotiations continue toward acquisition of funds for the establishment of a major public observatory in Edmonton.



The two photographs reproduced here are examples of the continuation of fine amateur observing being conducted by our Ottawa friend and member, Rickey Salmon. On the left is a picture taken through his telescope, of the famed Orion Nebula, M42, an incandescent cloud of dust and hydrogen gas 19 trillion, 500 billion miles across. The picture on the right is a time exposure, enlarged five times from the original negative, of the Double Cluster in Perseus, an open cluster of stars bordering on the constellations of Perseus and Cassiopeia. There are about 500 such open clusters in a region relatively close to the sun.

Our congratulations, Rickey, on some fine photography.

NEWS NOTES:

- * Our congratulations and best wishes for a successful year are extended to Robert (Bob) Nelson, who, on December 9th, was elected president of the Calgary Centre, R.A.S.C. Bob has been a faithful member of the Centre for several years, is an enthusiastic amateur astronomer, and is widely travelled to places of astronomical significance. He was elected president at the Centre's Annual banquet meeting which featured an excellent talk by Harold Bacon of the N.A.S.A., who spoke on the Flight of Ranger Seven, and the Orbiting Astronomical Observatory.
- * A meeting of representatives of both the Calgary and Edmonton Centres of the R.A.S.C. has been tentatively called for Saturday, January 16th, at Red Deer. Foremost in the discussions will be plans for a major combined effort on STAR NIGHT for 1965. Members of either Centre wishing to participate in these meetings should contact Franklin Loehde (Edmonton), or Sieg Weiser, (Calgary).
- * The Queen Elizabeth Planetarium's program for January is "1965 - CELESTIAL PREVIEW." Among new effects designed for use in the presentation by Bill Cable, are a satellite passage and a recreation of a total solar eclipse - similar to that which will be seen across the south Pacific from New Zealand to Peru on May 30, 1965.
- * Quote from the Edmonton Journal: "... The Hayden Planetarium in New York each year stages a most impressive show, the Star of Christmas. This beautiful presentation features various explanations for the appearance of the Star of Bethlehem."
- * The national council meeting of the R.A.S.C., held on January 9th in Toronto, is being attended by Ian McLennan. A brief report of the session will be presented at the January 14th meeting of the Edmonton Centre.
- * We are pleased to announce two new arrivals brought to our attention recently: Thomas Condon Laviolette was born to Edmonton member Tom Laviolette and his wife, Irene. Young Thomas arrived the same day as the December 20th fireball, (page two) and is now one of two boys and three girls in the Laviolette household. We have also received word that active Edmonton observer Robbie Drinnan, of Wetaskiwin, owns an adopted three-month old baby girl, Mary Louise Drinnan. There should be some late-night aurora reports coming in from Wetaskiwin, soon.
- * We are encouraged by two new developments in the local news reporting scene: The acquisition of Dave Rodger by CFRN-TV, and Dick Cross by the Edmonton Journal. Many members of the Centre have already met Mr. Rodger, who is a member of the Centre himself, having come to us from the Saskatoon Astronomical Society. Mr. Cross is a newer arrival, and was active in astronomical affairs in Toronto and at the Lakehead. The worth of both these gentlemen was proven on two different occasions recently: When Mr. Cross reported plans for observing the December 18th lunar eclipse, and when Mr. Rodger was announcing the sighting of the December 20th fireball. It is refreshing to hear astronomical news reported by people who know what they are talking about.
- * We have received word from ex-Edmonton member Dick Henry that he is on his way to work at the world famous Kitt Peak Astronomical Observatory in Arizona. Members of the Centre will watch with continued interest, the promising astronomical career of Mr. Henry.



The Stars, with icy unconcern,
Look down upon the earth tonight
And give no sign that prayers are heard
Or hint that things will come out right;
But something in their being there,
Unchanged, through all the change men fear,
Is in itself the mystic word
That hope has stilled itself to hear.

- B. H. Grenville.

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Editor, Ian C. McLennan,

Edmonton.

Production, Walter Franke.

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