

# Stardust

Feb/66

A Monthly Newsletter of the  
Royal Astronomical Society of Canada  
Edmonton, Centre

\*\*\* FEBRUARY MEETING NOTICE \*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

THE MONTHLY meeting of the Edmonton Centre, Royal Astronomical Society of Canada will be held on Thursday, February 10th, commencing promptly at 8:15 p.m., at the Queen Elizabeth Planetarium. President W. J. CABLE will preside.

The guest speaker for this meeting will be Dr. D. VENKATESAN, a visiting professor at the University of Alberta, whose past associates included Dr. Van Allen. His topic will be "Solar and Terrestrial Relationships." Dr. G. L. Cumming will do the introduction.

---

At the January meeting the film "The Mystery of Stonehenge" was presented. The film was thoroughly enjoyed by more than 80 people who turned out, and stimulating discussion groups debated the pros and cons of this controversial subject.

---

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: January was cold and cloudy, and the observer's had little opportunity to get out. The Wates' 9" is now at the site giving greater possibilities for observing. All we need now are some clear nights. Who has seen Echo 1 or 2 lately?

W. J. CABLE, President,  
Edmonton Centre, R. A. S. C.

---

President Cable has announced that the winner of the annual Essay contest has been decided --- the winner being John P. DAY for his essay titled "Little-Known Phenomena in Astronomy" Congratulations John, the Centre is looking forward to your presentation of the essay. Excerpts will appear in a future edition of STARDUST.

---

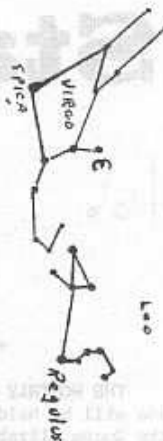
A donation of \$10.00 was gratefully received from Mr. and Mrs. C. H. CLARK of Lethbridge, Alberta. Both are maintaining a lively interest in astronomy and their photographic results have been published in the past. Stardust is looking forward to receiving further news of their latest astronomical endeavours in the future.

---

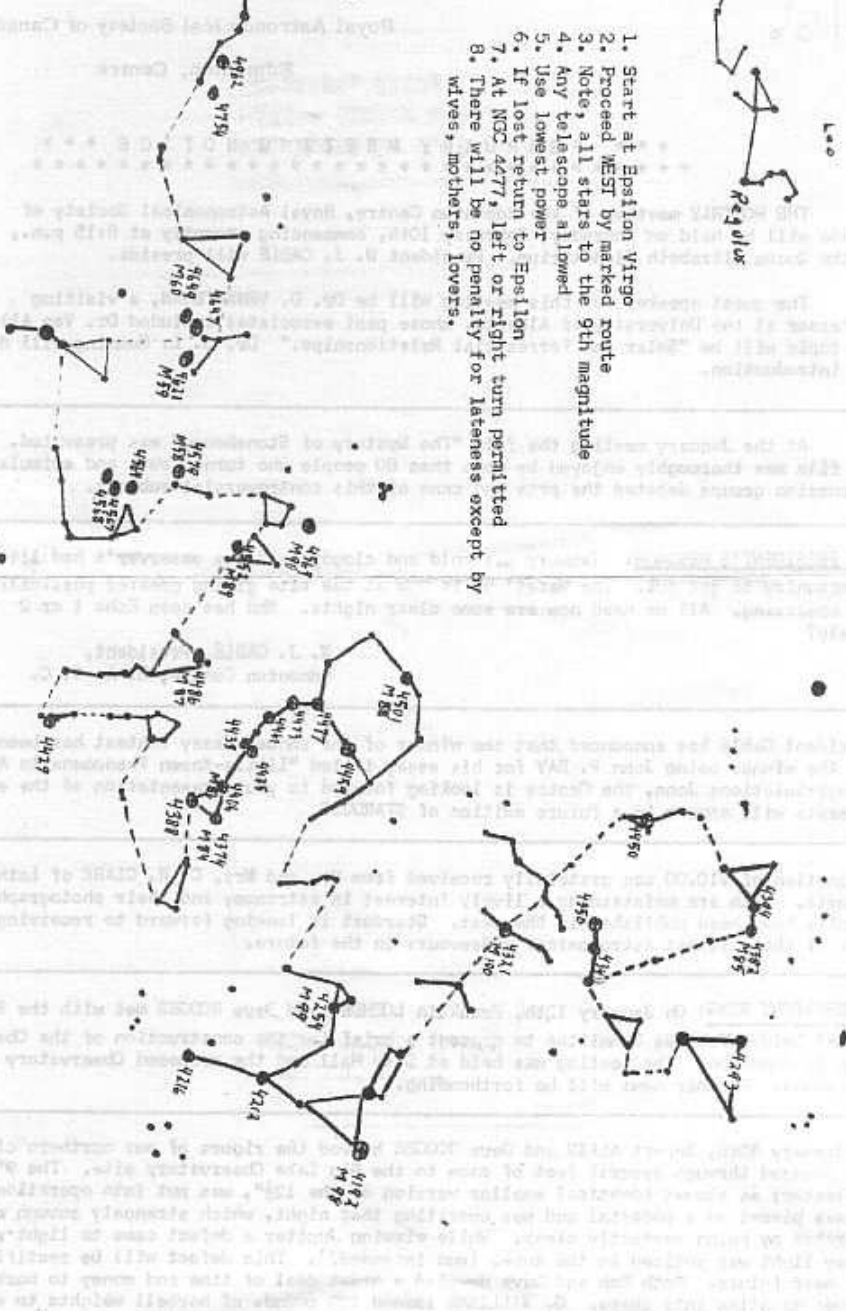
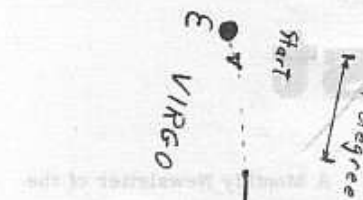
OBSERVATORY NEWS: On January 12th, Franklin LOEHDE, and Dave RODGER met with the ROTARY Clubs' Golden Jubilee Committee to present a brief for the construction of the Observatory here in Edmonton. The meeting was held at City Hall and the proposed Observatory model was shown. Further news will be forthcoming.

---

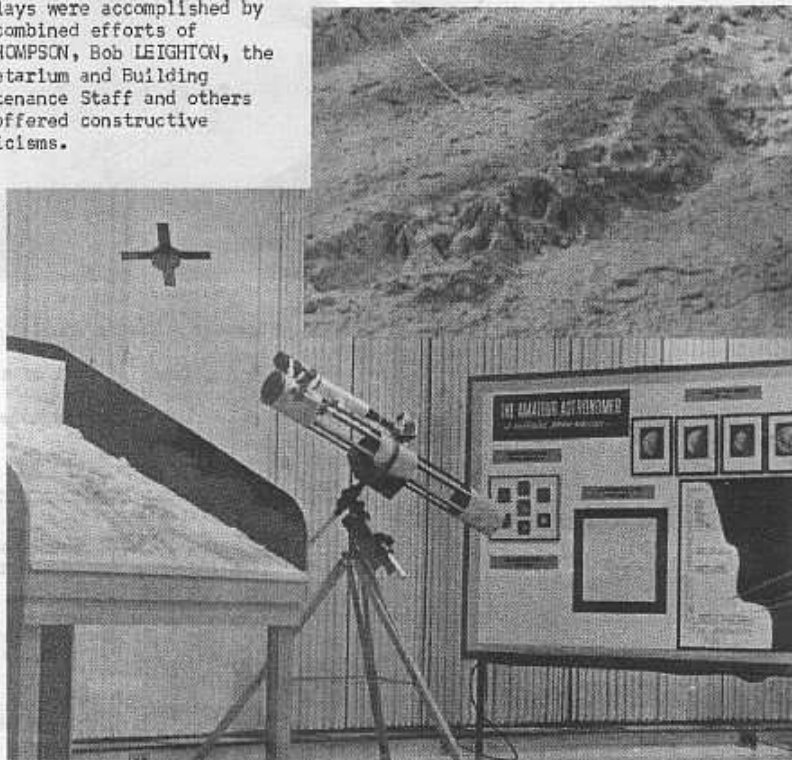
On January 30th, Robert ALLIN and Dave RODGER braved the rigors of our northern climate and plunged through several feet of snow to the Big Lake Observatory site. The 9" reflector; an almost identical smaller version of the 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ "<sup>2</sup>, was put into operation..... it was placed on a pedestal and was operating that night, which strangely enough co-operated by being perfectly clear. While viewing Jupiter a defect-came to light when stray light was noticed in the tube. (pun intended!). This defect will be rectified in the near future. Both Bob and Dave devoted a great deal of time and money to working a proper mounting into shape. G. WILLIAMS loaned 125 pounds of barbell weights to assist this worthy endeavour. Observing results should increase markedly!!



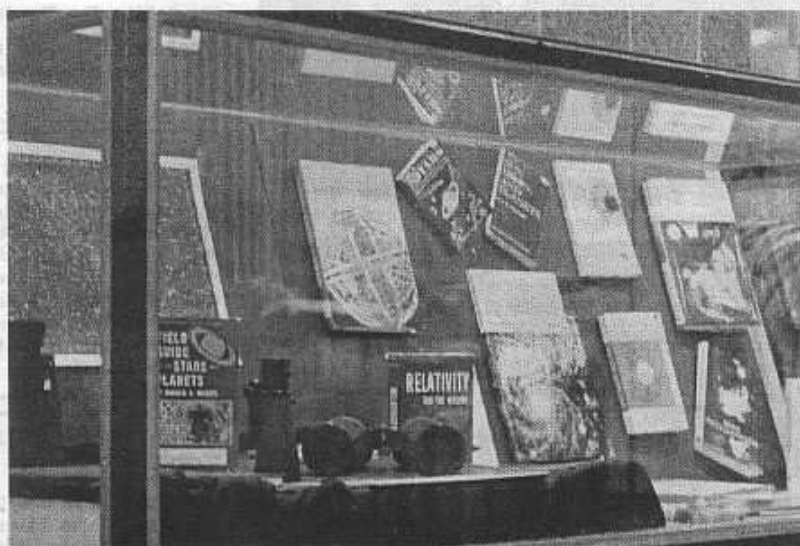
1. Start at Epsilon Virgo
2. Proceed WEST by marked route
3. Note, all stars to the 9th magnitude
4. Any telescope allowed
5. Use lowest power
6. If lost return to Epsilon
7. At NGC 4277, left or right turn permitted
8. There will be no penalty for lateness except by wives, mothers, lovers.



**NEW PLANETARIUM DISPLAYS:** For the first time in five years a major changeover in display material has been completed, under the direction of Dave Rodger. The new displays were accomplished by the combined efforts of Al THOMPSON, Bob LEIGHTON, the Planetarium and Building Maintenance Staff and others who offered constructive criticisms.



MARTIAN SURFACE MODEL -- MARINER 4 -- AMATEUR ASTRONOMY DISPLAY

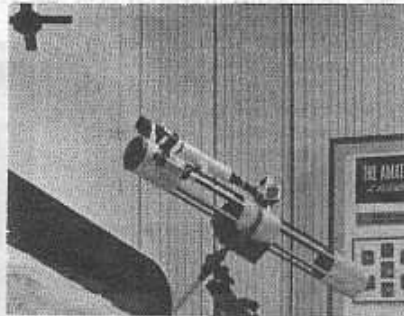


BOOK DISPLAY COURTESY OF M.G. HURTIG BOOKSELLERS --- BINOCULARS -- McBAIN CAMERA Ltd.

PLANETARIUM DISPLAYS CONTINUED:



PHOTO 1



4" Reflector - Camera mount

- No. 1 - A glimpse of part of the Jupiter display
- No. 2 - The Lunar Orbiter model by Bill Cable
- No. 3 - Information Board

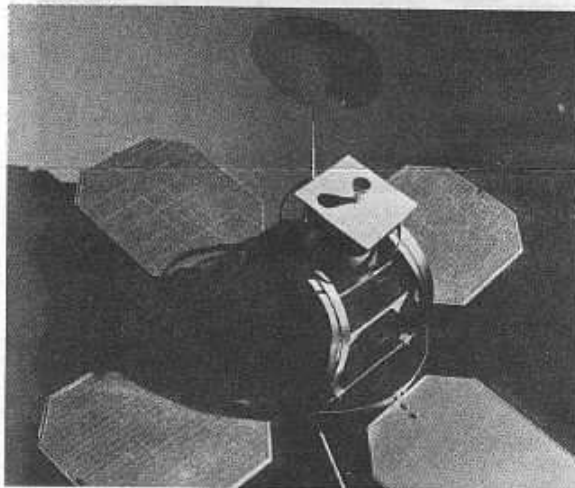


PHOTO 2



PHOTO 3

Dave RODGER announces new schedule for "UNIVERSE" series:

Now seen Saturdays at 6:15 p.m. on CFRN-TV Channel 3

February 12th: Follow the Moon

February 19th: Backstage at the Queen Elizabeth Planetarium

February 26th: Venus, Mercury, Mars.

March 5th: The Sky for March

March 12th: Meteors and Meteorites

Dave will be leaving on an eastern tour of planetariums, including the Charles Hayden at Boston, Fels at Philadelphia, Buhl at Pittsburgh, Hayden at New York, and the Dow at Montreal among others. The Edmonton Centre will be waiting to hear about his adventures on his return.

Walter FRANIEL (and Joy of course!) are pleased to announce the arrival of Valerie Lyra on the 25th of January. 5 lbs 12 oz., a sister to Rosemary and Andromeda. Congratulations!

MARINER 216 MILLION MILES AWAY; SIGNALS SHOW ITS OPERATING: Radio contact with Mariner 4 indicates that the space-craft which photographed Mars July 15, 1965, is still operating after more than a year in space. When radio contact was made January 4, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration spacecraft was about 216 million miles away, the greatest distance it will reach before gradually returning to within 30 million miles in 1967. Mariner 4 was launched at Cape Kennedy November 28, 1964. Tuesday's radio contact was made with the 85-foot antenna at the Venus Site of the Goldstone Tracking Station of the NASA Deep Space Network (DSN) in the Mojave desert of California. The station tracked a carrier signal from the spacecraft. No attempt was made to receive data because of the extreme distance involved. The DSN will continue attempting to contact Mariner 4 once a month to see if it is still operating. Daily engineering and scientific data from Mariner 4 was suspended last Oct. 1, by a ground command that set a new space communications record of 191,059,922 miles--more than twice the distance from the Earth to the Sun. At that time, the spacecraft's radio transmitter was switched from one antenna to another to prepare for possible tracking and data retrieval in 1967 when Mariner 4 will be nearer the Earth. The Mariner project and the Deep Space Network are managed by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, Calif. Mariner 4 made its closest approach to Mars July 15, 1965. The encounter results showed no measurable Martian dust belt, magnetic field or radiation belt and disclosed an extremely thin atmosphere and a heavily-cratered surface much like the Moon. In covering a total distance in orbit of 418,749,386 miles before the Oct. 1 cut off, Mariner 4 returned 13 million engineering and 23 million scientific measurements.

NASA New Release No.: 66-7

---

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

quote: At the end of the January issue of Stardust I noticed your invitation to write you. I am mainly going to offer criticism and I hope I don't hurt your ego for.....this publication. (sic) I noticed immediately the change of format, the book form, when you succeeded your predecessor and thought it rather novel. I felt at the time that it was an improvement that had to sink in. However, I prefer the 8 1/2" by 11" format (sic) stapled in the corner as this fits into my file of Stardust most conveniently (sic) and is not as clumsy to handle when I refer to some article in the past. Another beef I have is the change of type, its smaller, maybe it saves postage but its harder to read and gives a page that concentrated, difficult look some very old manuscripts have. I appreciate your greater use of pictures recently, however I take offence by the fake on page 6 of January's (sic) issue. I realize you..... although we are amateurs (sic) we consider ourselves part of the scientific set. If you don't have the original please caption the picture appropriately, for example (simulated). It was a splendid job however. The new feature of the night sky for each month is a wonderful addition to Stardust and .....etc.

Yours truly,  
James Williams

end of quote

Thank you for your letter James, points are duly noted, and I hope others will offer their criticisms as well. (Ed.)

---

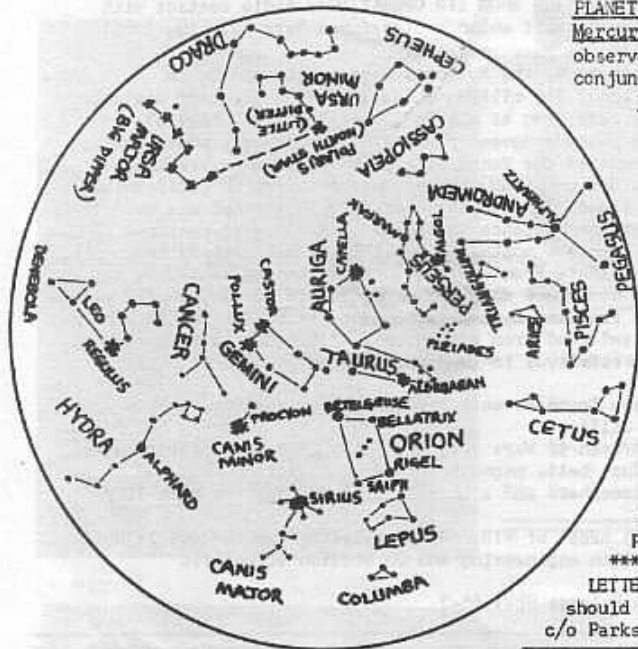
The Mailing List of Stardust has again been revised. It has now been brought down to a more realistic number and any that don't receive their copy will be because they have not paid the subscription rate of \$1.00 (one dollar).

---

CRAZY QUOTES: " I believe that Mercury is a true planet "  
Ian Smith

---

QUOTABLE QUOTES: "We should expel Pluto from the Solar System; any planet that can't make up its mind as to size deserves this." Dave Rodger



The night sky in FEBRUARY - 40° North - about 9 p.m. Highlights: the Big Dipper and the North Star, Polaris.

PLANETS for February, 1966:

Mercury---Too close to the sun for observation until month-end; superior conjunction is on the 5th.

Venus---Towards mid-month it begins to be observable as a morning star very low in the south-east just before sunrise.

Mars---Too close to the sun for observation.

Jupiter---In Taurus, it is high in the eastern sky at sunset and is visible most of the night.

Saturn---In Aquarius, it is well down in the west at sunset.

\*\*\*\*\*

**STARDUST** \*\* A monthly publication of the Edmonton Centre, R.A.S.C.  
Editor - G. E. WILLIAMS  
Production - W. FRANIEL

\*\*\*\*\*  
LETTERS to the Editor are welcome and should be addressed: Editor, Stardust, c/o Parks and Recreation Dept., City Hall, Edmonton.

\*\*\*\*\*ALL photography in this issue by W. FRANIEL\*\*\*\*\*

