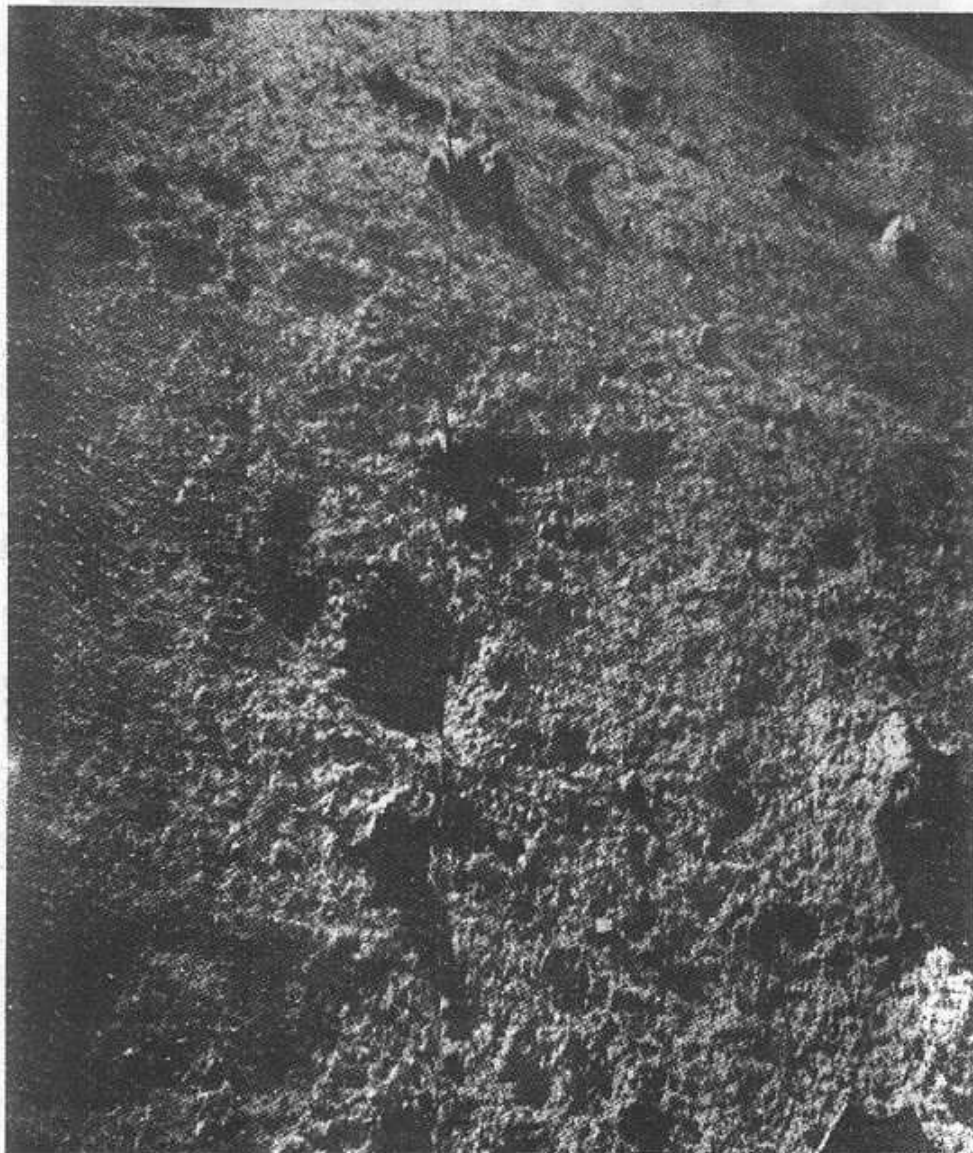


# Stardust

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



WORLD'S FIRST SOFT LANDING - LUNA 9 - THE OCEAN OF STORMS

U.S.S.R. SATELLITE LANDS SOFTLY AND PRESUMABLY INTACT ON MOON

STARDUST 1966

MARCH

STARDUST 1966

MARCH MEETING NOTICE  
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Mr. David A. RODGER

FEATURE SPEAKER FOR  
MARCH MEETING - R.A.S.C.

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

THE FEATURE SPEAKER for this meeting will be Mr. D. A. RODGER, Director of the Queen Elizabeth Planetarium. His talk, "A Tour of Major Planetaria," will detail some of the more important results of his recent visit to five of the world's major planetariums.

His discourse will also help to emphasize more strongly than ever, the urgent need for an Observatory-Space Museum complex to be built in Edmonton.

On the lighter side, he mentions a strange cult which has developed in major planetaria in the United States; which I have called: PPEWS -- i.e.: Planetarium Projection Equipment Worshippers Society!! It promises to be a very interesting and informative talk.

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Dr. D. VENKATESAN - Guest Speaker for February



One of many informative slides shown by Dr. Venkatesan



Miss Deepa Venkatesan

AT THE FEBRUARY meeting, Dr. Venkatesan gave a most interesting and informative talk on Solar and Terrestrial Relationships. His natural humour and deep wisdom of his subject made it a thoroughly enjoyable evening for all. The meeting was so well attended, that some members ended up sitting in the planetarium hallway. This problem of space is something the Edmonton Centre will have to deal with in the very near future. (Another good reason for a Observatory - Space Museum complex!). Following the meeting, refreshments were served, and members had an opportunity to meet his charming daughter, Deepa.



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A part of the increasing number of young members of the Edmonton Centre

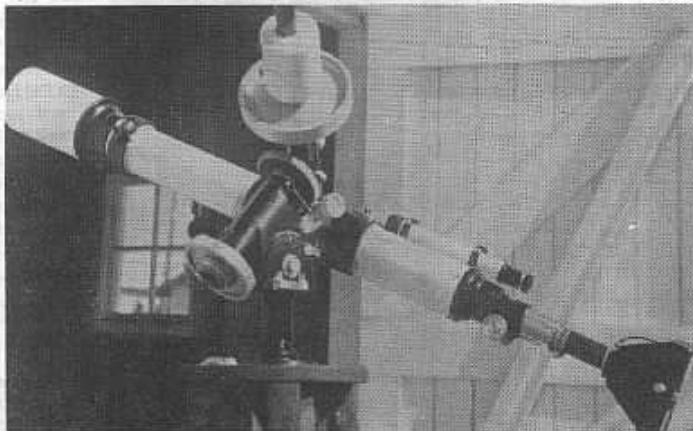
And speaking of younger members, it was noticed that many of them ensured themselves of suitable seating accommodations, while many of the more mature members had to either stand or sit on the steps. It is hoped that this situation will also be changed. We certainly don't want to discourage anyone from attending these meetings, but until we do get a larger place - (Another good reason for a Observatory - Space Museum complex!) - there are certain discomforts we must tolerate, and it is customary for youth to give way to age.

**OBSERVATORY NEWS:** The Rotary Club seemed to be "favourable" towards the Observatory-Space Museum complex, but apparently the City refused to finance the maintenance of it. Thus, when Vancouver, Calgary, Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, Winnipeg, etc., open their huge, and beautifully equipped planetariums, Edmonton will still be echoing that we had the first planetarium (public) in Canada. Never mind, that without the Observatory-Space Museum complex, it will be the most compact planetarium in Canada. And you want to see our storage and lecture space if you think we're kidding there! However, all is not lost yet.....Mr. Franklin LOEHDE, AND Mr. D. RODGER have taken immediate action to rectify this myopic attitude of those concerned. The results of their action will be made known as soon as feasible.

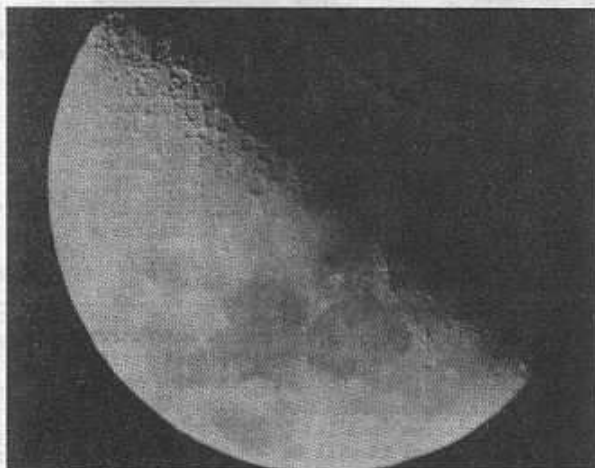
**THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:** How many have taken the time to view the sky recently. With binoculars you are able to spend a worthwhile half hour or more. There is the Pleiades and the Beehive, the double cluster in Perseus, Orion nebula, M-31, plus others in Auriga. Jupiter and its moons and Mercury. Step out and watch winter give way to spring.(?).

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

**OBSERVING REPORT:** On February 24th, four furtive figures were making their way out of town in great stealth. Our secret agent informs us that they were agents 580077, 00 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 0, and -2/3; aliases: Robert ALLIN, Dave RODGER, Walter FRANKEL, and Gary FINLEY. In the course of their spy efforts the shadow of Io was seen to cross the disc of Jupiter, with the moon itself reappearing when the shadow was a little more than half way across. Uranus was spotted first with the 6", then all saw it with the NAKED eye. A dormant aurora brightened up and displayed its best red lower border to bid three secret agents farewell. 580077 continued investigations and by three a.m., 25 Messier, 28 NGC objects, and 20 variable stars had been sieved out of the sky. The Coma-Virgo rally being the most productive as all the objects plotted were seen, and in not the darkest sky that has been over the site. Smersh (?) finally caught up with 580077 by blowing up a tire on the return trip to Edmonton. 580077 wants revenge!



3" Telescope of Charles and Mona Clark of Lethbridge



First Quarter Moon taken with above telescope - camera arrangement - Mr. & Mrs. Clark - Lethbridge

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and add 4 to each number giving us 4, 7, 10, 16, 28, 52, 100, etc., gives us the approximate distances of the planets. When Uranus was discovered, it seemed to assure that Bode's law holds water (Uranus = 96) since Uranus was where it was supposed to be. But Neptune should have an equivalent of 388, and it has one of 201. Things get worse with Pluto: its theoretical equivalent was 772, but its real one is 3901. Whats wrong? Our second question is: "Do we have the slightest ideas on how many asteroids there are and how large they are?" Estimates of the number of asteroids range from 2,000 to 50,000. Things get even more confusing when their total mass is estimated; estimates range from 0.1% of the earth to 12.5%. Ores' diameter is estimated from 420 to 490 miles (difference of 15.7%), Pallas' 248 miles to 304 (difference of 10.5%), and Vesta's and Juno's size are agreed to. The third hypothesis is that Venus has a moon; Jean-Dominique Cassini, who discovered 4 of Saturn's moons, happened to observe Venus on 18 of August, 1686. He saw clearly a small object to the east of Venus and in the same phase as Venus. He was confirmed by English optician, James Short, who in 1740 described it as, "clear and well defined; its diameter being one-third that of the planet itself". The French observer Montaigne saw a small crescent-shaped object near Venus several times between May 3 and May 11, 1961. Could it be a flying saucer? It would have been there at least 75 years. (THIS IS THE END OF PART ONE. PART TWO WILL APPEAR IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF STARDUST).

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CLAIMS DEPARTMENT: Dave RODGER claims to be the first person ever to see the planet Mercury through a rear-view mirror!!!-----anyone else??

Page 4 March 1966 (Substitute through for in? - ed.) S T A R D U S T

Walter FRANIEL received a very nice letter from our friends, the Clarks' of Lethbridge. These are two of some of the photographs they sent us. Anyone wanting further information regarding their telescope, camera, etc., may write to them at: 1728 - 10th Avenue, South, LETHBRIDGE, Alberta. \*\*\*\*\*

AS promised in a previous issue of STARDUST, the winning essay in the essay contest will be published in serial form. Here is the first of four parts of the winning essay "Little-Known Phenomena in Astronomy and Meteorology", by John P. DAY.

PART 1 - A number of theories that are either unknown or have been sent to the dustbin abound in Astronomy or closely related to it in Meteorology. I am not going to discuss their merits, except one or two of them, but rather present them and their arguments. The first assertion is that something is wrong with Bode's law (or rather J.D.Titius' law. Bode stole the credit; it was Titius who discovered it.) Bode's law works like this: Take the series 0, 3, 6, 12, 24, 48, 96, etc.,

On February 28th the Planetarium commenced what will be an annual program for pre-school age children. The program, after years of discussion, was experimented for the first time last year by the previous Director, and was such a success that after further development it has become an annual offering of the Planetarium. After more than adequate publicity, the response not only from playschools, but various kindergartens and grades 1 - 3 in the public school system; has been overwhelming.

Mr. Sid LANCASTER, News Director of CFRN-TV, announced that publicity for this will be placed on the national CTV network.

From what I understand, the Queen Elizabeth Planetarium is the only planetarium in the world offering a special program for pre-school age children. And we are one of the few planetariums offering specialized school programs for all grade levels. (We again may be completely unique here!). (A special thanks to all news media involved in the above program. - ed.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you in reply to a quote that I read in the past issue of Stardust concerning one of our own planets, that's not to say mine or yours but one of that happy go lucky group the Solar System. I think the idea of expelling one of our own is downright barbaric it's just not done. Now if it were the black sheep of the family and had committed some dastardly deed such as absconding with asteroids it would be a different matter but all it has done is taken its time to do a few orbits which is all that is expected of it. If we did manage to expel dear old Pluto wouldn't the Solar System be a rather dull place after all variety is the spice of life.

Yours truly,  
 Ian Smith,  
 6064 - 106 Street,  
 Edmonton, Alta.

(Thanks for the added spice -- ed.)

Dear Sir:

I have a Royal Astronomical Telescope, Model AE60 II = 60 mm; F = 900 mm, which I would like to sell. It cost without extras \$149.00. I would like to get \$110.00 for it. It is in new condition.

I have three reasons for wanting to sell it: (1) Due to a death in the family I am in present need of money. (2) I live in the North Garneau district, and expect to have to move this summer, and will be going to Vancouver. (3) Later on I hope to be able to get a bigger one, of the reflector type.

If you know of anyone that would like to buy this one I would greatly appreciate it.

Yours truly,  
 B. A. GRIFFIN-BEALE,  
 11131 - 89th Avenue,  
 Phone - 439 - 6608.

STARDUST assumes no responsibility for statements made in ads, solicitations, etc., nor for the quality of the merchandise advertised, solicited, etc. (ed.).



WHO SAID  
 THE  
 RUSSIANS  
 ARE  
 AHEAD???

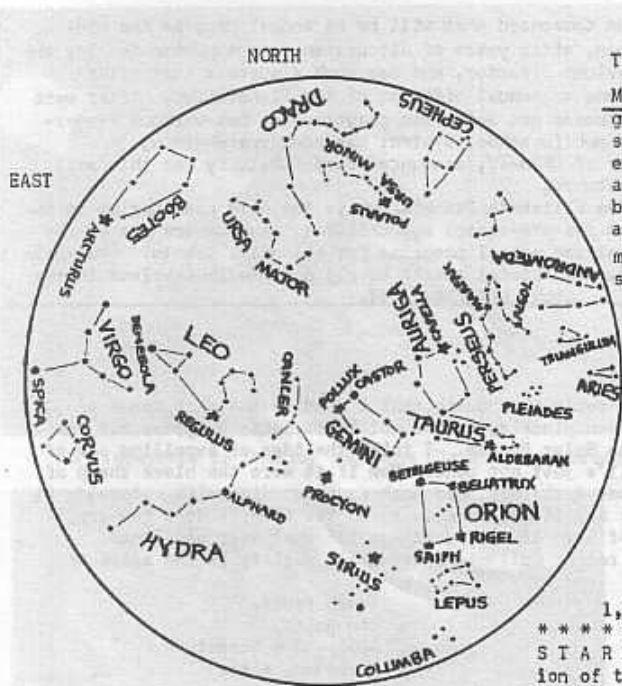
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Letters to the Editor are welcome and should be addressed: Editor, Stardust, Queen Elizabeth Planetarium c/o Parks and Recreation Dept., City Hall, Edmonton, Alberta.

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Some man of yore  
 A nomenclature thought of and devised,  
 And forms sufficient found.....  
 So thought he good to make the stellar  
 groups, That each by other lying  
 orderly, They might display their  
 forms. And thus the stars At once  
 took names and rise familiar now.  
 ARATOS.

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THE night sky in March -- 40° N. Lat. (Adjust accordingly for more northerly latitudes.). About 9 p.m.  
**HIGHLIGHTS:** the Pleiades and the Constellation of Taurus.

**The planets for March, 1966:**

**Mercury** - On the 4th it is at greatest eastern elongation and stands about 16° above the western horizon at sunset. For about a week at this time it may be seen low in the west just after sunset.  
**Venus** - It is a morning star visible low in the south-east for about an hour before sunrise. Greatest brilliancy is on the 1st.  
**Mars** - Too close to the sun for observation.  
**Jupiter** - In Taurus, it is about on the meridian at sunset and sets about an hour after midnight.  
**Saturn** - Too close to the sun all month for easy observation.  
**Uranus** - Opposition is on the 8th, at which time its distance from the earth is 1,606,000,000 miles.

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**STARDUST** is a monthly publication of the Edmonton Centre, R.A.S.C.  
 EDITOR - G. E. WILLIAMS  
 PRODUCTION - Walter FRANIEL  
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