

Stardust

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

APRIL 1967

ECLIPSE SEASON BEGINS

The first of three eclipses to be seen during 1967 will occur on April 24th, when the Moon passes into the shadow of the Earth.

The Observer's Handbook mentions the eclipse briefly, but lists only the time when the Moon is behind the Penumbra of the shadow. Here in Edmonton we will see a good deal more of the eclipse than that, although the Moon will be low in the southwest during much of the total phase.

The Moon enters the penumbra at 2:28 am Monday morning. This is a difficult part of the eclipse to detect. About an hour later, the Moon will start to edge into the dark part of the Earth's shadow, the UMBRA, signalling the beginning of the eclipse proper. The middle of the eclipse occurs about 5:06 am, but by that time the Sun will be about to rise, so for our purposes here, the spectacle will nearly be over. The Moon sets at 5:20 AM.

Photographs of the eclipse will be welcomed for inclusion into the MAY issue of STARDUST.

And don't forget the Partial eclipse of the Sun two weeks later on May 9th; More about that in the next issue.

For further information about eclipses and how they are caused why not take in THE DAY OF THE CRESCENT SUN, the current presentation at the Queen Elizabeth Planetarium. Shows are Tuesday to Friday at 8pm, Saturdays at 3pm, and Sundays and holidays at 2pm, 3pm, 4pm, and 8pm.

If the snow ever leaves us, many of you will be taking advantage of the clear evenings before summer twilight to carry out your Spring observing program. Perhaps in all the hustle of getting telescopes and observatories ready for use, you may have overlooked one field that amateur astronomers can make great contributions in: Variable Star Observing. The ability to distinguish between tenths of magnitudes is one that can be learned in a fairly short time. On the other hand, photoelectric photometers have been

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successfully used by many amateurs for more precise measurements of the magnitudes of stars. This is to be the general topic at our April meeting, when President G.C. Cumming discusses the book, " PHOTO-ELECTRIC ASTRONOMY FOR AMATEURS " by Frank B. Wood.

As usual, the REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF THE EDMONTON CENTRE, ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA, WILL BE HELD ON THE SECOND MONDAY, APRIL 10TH IN ROOM 262 CAMPUS TOWERS. THE TIME..... 8: 15 PM. EVERYONE IS WELCOME.

THE CENTRE EXTENDS IT DEEPEST SYMPATHIES TO PROFESSOR AND MRS. D.R. CROSBY ON THE TRAGIC LOSS OF THEIR SON, KIM, IN AN AUTO ACCIDENT IN LATE MARCH.

SIDERIUS NUNCIUS

This is the month of Mars for 1967, as the red planet will swing to within 55,800,000 miles of Earth in mid-month. Due to the slight inclination in Mars' orbit compared to Earth's the dates of Opposition and shortest distance rarely co-incide. Opposition falls on Saturday the 15th, and Mars is nearest the Earth on Friday the 21st.

During the week of April 16th to 22nd, the ten inch reflector at the Planetarium will be out on clear pleasant evenings. You are welcome to come over for a look at Mars and Venus that week. Angus Smith, Ralph Haeckel, Tommy Owen, Dave Bruner, Robert Allin, and many others will be studying the red planet during these few precious weeks. Why not join them ?

Dave Rodger, Planetarium Director, has announced his resignation effective August 1st of this year. He has been appointed Curator of the new Planetarium being built in Vancouver.

On the following page are printed three striking photographs of Auroral displays seen recently in Edmonton. The photos, by Gary Finlay, are from Kodachrome slides shot with an Asahiflex 58 mm. F / 2.4 camera.

