

# Stardust

A Monthly Newsletter of the

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada

Edmonton, Centre

DECEMBER, 1967

## Presidential Visit December 5th

We are most fortunate in having a distinguished visitor with us for our Monday, December 5th meeting. Our guest speaker will be R.A.S.C. President W. Thompson from the Dominion Observatory in Ottawa. Mr. Thompson, in his second year of office, is touring Canada addressing many of our Society Centres. He brings to us a long and noted career in astronomical timekeeping and years of devoted service to the Astronomical Society.

Of special interest is the fact that Mr. Thompson started his interesting career with an early education right in Edmonton before eventually moving to the Dominion Observatory.

We all welcome Mr. Thompson to Edmonton after a too-long absence.



President Thompson

Mr. Roles and Astronomical Photography An interesting and most thorough talk on astronomical photography was delivered by Mr. David Roles at our regular November meeting at the University. Unlike many 'experts' Mr. Roles was very able to back up his good advice with proof of its results. Many black and white and colour slides were shown illustrating what can be done by the amateur astronomer.

We certainly hope that our members will have learned that with a little know-how that even a Kodak Brownie can be used to capture astronomical sights.

A History of the Edmonton Centre Prof. E.S. Keeping and Dr. D.R. Crosby have agreed to expose(?) the colourful history of the Edmonton Centre at our regular January meeting. There promises to be some very interesting and humorous anecdotes to recall together with many old photographs depicting people, places and events. Don't miss this meeting!

Occultation of Saturn One of the highlights of observing this year occurred on the evening of November 12th. Although this was the second occultation of Saturn this year the previous one on October 16th did not allow us to see the immersion as it was in the late afternoon and only visible from Eastern Canada. The immersion of Saturn is a great sight to watch even when you are taking pictures as fast as you can. And to see Saturn majestically glide off the edge of the moon has to be rated as one of the most beautiful sights in observing.

Angus Smith



Here is part of the sequence of photographs that Angus took of the Saturn occultation. The top two show the moon's dark edge just in the act of slipping over Saturn. The photo on the left shows Saturn moving clear of the moon's bright limb. The sequence was shot at 1/15 sec with Tri-X

Trials and Tribulations One evening in mid-October our three intrepid occultation observers were simultaneously ready to time the reappearance of a star. With sweaty hands and pounding hearts they saw the star! But something was wrong- it was too faint. Jaws sank. Had they goofed by not pressing the stopwatches? Gentle commentaries filled the air but no, they were right in waiting. Three good times but not without doubts!

Attention Red-Blooded Observers A STAR PARTY will be held on Friday, December 8th at the Devon Observing Station. President Allin asks that members meet at the Planetarium at 7:00 p.m. before moving off to the site. For more details contact Mr. Allin at 434-7185 or at our next meeting on the 5th.

FEEs ARE DUE FEEs ARE DUE FEEs ARE DUE FEEs ARE DUE

## Capsule Comments

Montreal- This most active Centre is on the verge of completing its Centennial Project-- that of achieving 100 successful timings of lunar occultations in one. As you read this some Montrealer is probably huddled at his telescope with stopwatch in hand warily glancing, out the side of his eye, at that threatening cloud. Tune in next month for the good (or bad) news.

Toronto- Not only is Canada having a Centennial but so shortly will the RASC. Toronto's newsletter SCOPE reminds us that our Society's predecessor, the Toronto Astronomical Club, was founded on December 1, 1868. Happy 99th everyone!

Kitchener-Waterloo- An old friend and member of the Edmonton Centre, Dave Marven, is the president of the young and active K-W Astronomical Club. Congratulations and hope you lead your group into the RASC eventually.

Calgary- Flash! Comet Hunters Relax! Observation Chairman of the Calgary Centre, John Howell, reports that Comet Howell discovered in October was a false alarm. He denies that it was a UFO, rather, he suspects it was a bit of scattered light from the bright star Capella. Don't give up John as we're sure you'll turn one up yet. Sparked a lot of observing too!

Moffat Field, California- A note from Dr. G.W. Hodgson at NASA's research station indicates that his work there has turned up the possibility that chlorophyll residues might originate on planets before life actually starts.

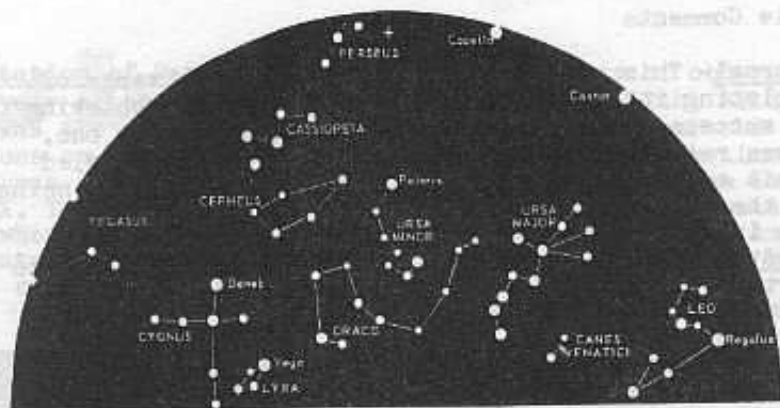
Rochester, New York- Ian McLennan reports that the Strassenburgh Planetarium is coming along fine with every expectation that it will open by next September. A feature of the ultra-modern planetarium, Ian says, will be the extensive use of computerized shows.

Card Trick- Our 1968 membership cards certainly got a strange deal before landing in our treasurer's hands. They were first sent to our past president Dr. Cumming in Edmonton except he wasn't here but in England. And that's where the cards ended up-- until he sent them on to George Williams at the Planetarium. Fortunately Bill Cable found them and us.

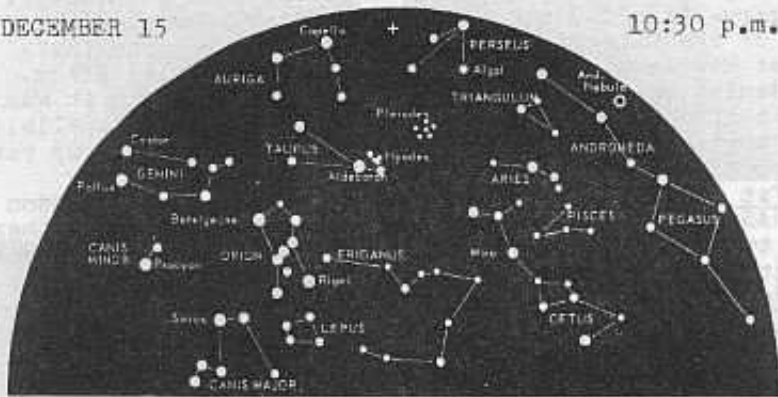
### Sky Watchers' Calender for December

Wed 6th	-18°6037 occulted	19:07.3 MST
Sat 9th	Saturn and Moon in conjunction	
Mon 11th	73 Pisces occulted	01:30.9
	+9°206 occulted	21:46.1
Tue 12th	300 B Pisces occulted	00:57.2
Wed 13th	Geminid Meteor Shower	
Thu 14th	54 Aries occulted	17:54.8
Mon 18th	76 Aries occulted	22:20.3
Fri 22nd	Winter Solstice	06:17
Sat 23rd	Ursid Meteors	

Planets: Venus high in south at sunrise  
Mars low in south-west at sunset  
Jupiter rises at midnight  
Saturn due south at sunset



DECEMBER 15 10:30 p.m.  
 Observer facing North



Observer facing South

Meeting  
 Monday, November 5th  
 Room V107 Physics Bldg.  
 University of Alberta