

Sidereal Times

Newsletter of the Amateur Astronomers Association of Princeton, Inc.

JANUARY 1980

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JANUARY MEETING

The January meeting of the AAAP will be held on Tuesday evening, January 8, 1980 at 8 p.m. in Peyton Hall of Princeton University on Washington Road in Princeton. A film from the Kitt Peak National Observatory entitled, "Journey into Light," will be shown.

The pre-meeting dinner will be held at the Rusty Scupper Restaurant on Alexander Road in Princeton beginning at 6:00 p.m. Members generally meet upstairs in the bar for drinks at 5:45 p.m. before dinner.

FEBRUARY MEETING

Dr. Gareth Williams of the Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory of NOAA in Princeton, will speak on the weather on Jupiter and Saturn at the February 12th AAAP meeting.

DECEMBER MEETING

Mr. Jeremy Goodman, a Princeton graduate Student, spoke on cosmology at the December AAAP meeting. Of man's scientific disciplines cosmology ranks as having the greatest space and time scales, contrasted with the study of subatomic particles dealing with the smallest space and time scales. The greatest complication lies in the middle range of scales of time and space where most scientific investigations operate. The fundamental measure of the expansion of the Universe is Hubble's constant which for many years has been taken to be 50.3 km/sec/megaparsec although a recent study suggests that it may be closer to 100 in these units. Its reciprocal (20 billion years) is the age of the Universe under the questionable assumption that this constant does not vary with time.

BOARD MEETING

The AAAP Board of Directors will meet at 8 p.m. on Sunday, January 6th at Roxanne Peery's home in Lambertville. Any member may attend but only board members may vote. Please call Roxanne (397-3140) for directions.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Rick Clark has resigned as AAAP secretary, and Harry Johnson has volunteered to serve in this office. The AAAP Board of Directors confirmed his appointment to this post at its December 4th meeting. Several members complained about not receiving Sidereal Times last month. If you did not receive your December issue, please let the editor know. The Observer's Handbooks for 1980, published by the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, are now available for sale at \$4 a copy. See Doug Wurzler at the next AAAP meeting.

Further work on the Observatory has been suspended until warmer weather next spring. The last item accomplished there was to remove the wooden bar below the door and to replace it with a plastic flexible strip to close the gap. There was concern that the floor would heave up again this winter and prevent the door from being opened far enough to allow access to the building. This would have even more serious consequences this winter because the burglar alarm is enabled even if the door is only cracked open.

Regular Friday members observing sessions will be discontinued on a formal basis this month although every Friday night which is clear will probably bring a member or two out to the Observatory. Weather and road conditions in the Park may make access to the Observatory difficult at times this month. Since the Park management has put a second gate on the Phillips Farm Road, it is now necessary to reach the Observatory via Brick Yard Road from Church Road on the north. Our padlock has been moved to the Brick Yard Road gate near the Nature Center. Any member not having an Observatory key may call a keyholder and arrange an observing session at their mutual convenience. A list of keyholders and their telephone numbers follow:

Leith Holloway	924-2480	Rick Clark	771-0096
Roxanne Peery	397-3140	Doug Wurzler	799-0250
Kurt Goepfert	882-2978	Harry Johnson	882-2680
John Church	799-0723	Pat Kane	882-1275
Bill Phillips	921-2732	Dave Brown	466-2696

ASTRONOMICAL RETREAT AT BLAIRSTOWN

Dave Brown says there is still a chance for the AAAP to reserve a weekend in April for an astronomical retreat at Princeton University's camp at Blairstown, N. J., near the Delaware Water Gap. (See November's Sidereal Times.) If clear, observing should be great from this location, and the camp has boating and other sports activities for daytime fun. We need definite commitments by January 10th, two days after the meeting. If we can sign up 20 members, guests or family for this outing, the cost would be only \$10 per person per day. If less go, the charge per participant will be proportionately greater. If you cannot attend the January meeting but still wish to sign up for this excursion, please call Dave at 466-2696 by January 10th.

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