

PeGASus
Newsletter of the
Royal Astronomical Society of Canada
Prince George Centre

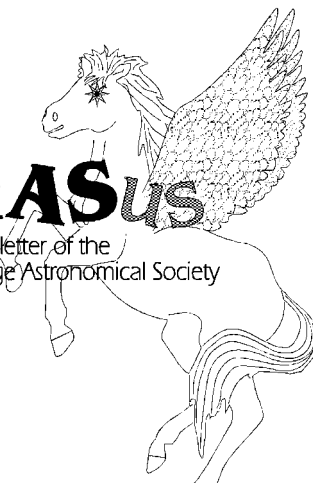
MARCH 2005

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PeGASus
Newsletter of the
The Prince George Astronomical Society



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Month;*

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**The RASC-PG meets next at 7:30 pm
Wednesday March 30, at The Observatory**

This Month's meeting

— Astronomy Down-Under — & — Constellation of the month —

Important notice

National President Peter Jedicke will be here on May 17. 7:30 pm at the Observatory

Peter will talk about why Hawaii is the centre of the astronomical world today.

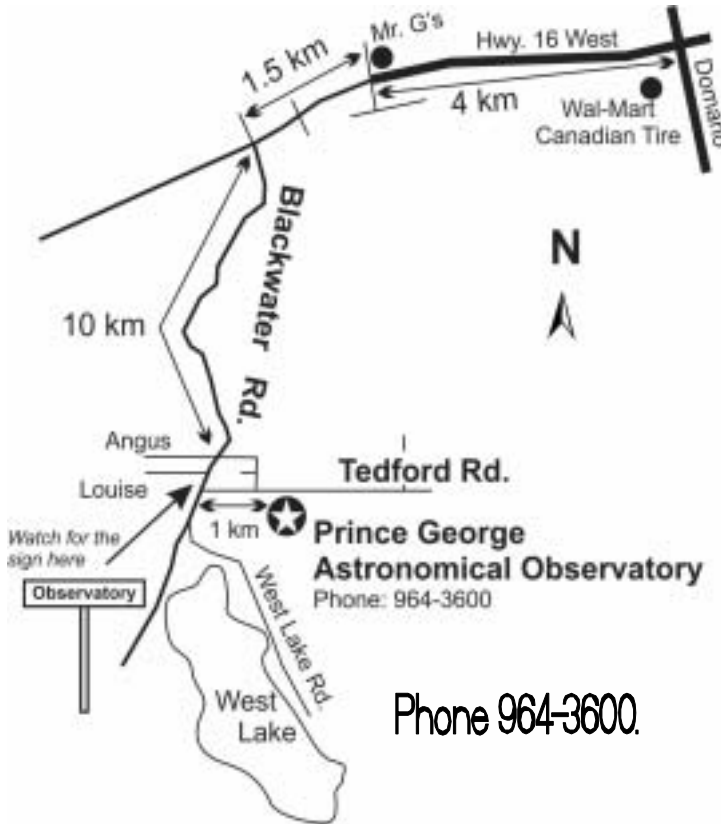
[and RASC politics if you ask him—read Alan Whitman's report starting on page 3 ~ Brian]



the PeGASus

is published monthly by the
Royal Astronomical Society Canada
Prince George Centre

Our pursuits are out of this world.
Our activities are astronomical.
Our aim is the sky.



Phone 964-3600.

Contributions to the newsletter are welcome.

Deadline for the next issue is

April 15

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you can renew your membership at
www.rasc.ca/princegeorge

Hello All,

My report is interspersed with Brian's summary of the Centre's positions. [The Centre's positions were discussed and decided upon at the Feb 23, 2005 General Meeting.]

Brian's writings are "bold", Alan's responses are "plain".

In regards to how the PG Centre feels on the "Proposals Concerning Fee Change Procedure, Flexible Fee Distributions, the Use of Centre Surcharges, and Transparency in Fee Reporting."

PROPOSAL #1. National Council-Proposed Fee Changes and Removal of the 90-day Notice Requirement

- we are **FOR** National Council being the ones to initiate membership fee changes.
- we are **AGAINST** eliminating the 90 day wait period because we feel a reasonable discussion on the subject with our membership can not be made in 30 days. Our ex-treasurer also felt there would be some conflict with the Provincial Government and a time-line for us to notify the membership of the proposed fee increases.

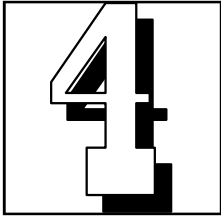
I spoke against and voted against the proposal to remove the 90-day requirement. I suggested that 60 days might be a reasonable compromise and that 30 days was "unseemly haste". The proposal passed, but was then rendered irrelevant when Council subsequently passed a motion to abolish the membership's right to ratify membership fee increases at the Annual Meeting. That constitutional change would have to be ratified at the Annual Meeting. If you are as unhappy with the idea as I am, make sure that everyone who does not attend the GA in person gives their proxy vote to a like-minded person !

PROPOSAL #2. Change the fixed 60/40 Society/ Centre Fee Distributions to a Flexible Distribution.

- we are **AGAINST** this.
- **60/40** is an easier system as it is locked in.
- **Everyone knows where they stand and can plan accordingly.**
- **It is an equitable system as far as the split goes. National has greater expenses and gets more but, not everything.**
- **Due to inflation and other pressures, Centres do need more money from time to time, especially the smaller ones. It is harder for our Centre to convince the membership to increase the surcharge. It is easier for us if it is mandated by National.**
- **We do not want to be at the mercy of the big Centres who have lots of money to tell us how much we should get.**
- **We feel that there will be a lot of time spent arguing over any new proposed fee split and it will end up being close to a 60/40 split anyway.**

Again, I spoke and voted against this proposal, especially mentioning the Centre's high expenses for insuring and heating the observatory complex. The motion passed. Any change in the split would have to be accepted by a 2/3rds majority in National Council. Coincidentally, Ntl Reps make up 2/3rds of Ntl Council's members.

Continued on page 6



Coming Events

Mar 23	General Meeting	7:30 pm	Observatory
Mar 25	Youth Day	9:00 am & 1:00 pm	Observatory
Mar 25	Cubs Tour	7:00 pm	Observatory
April 9	NOVA workshop	7:30 pm	Observatory
April 13	Executive Meeting	7:30 pm	SpeeDee (5th & Brunswick)
April 16	Astronomy Day	2:00 pm	Observatory
April 23	NOVA workshop	7:30 pm	Observatory
April 27	General Meeting	7:30 pm	Observatory
May 7	NOVA workshop	7:30 pm	Observatory
May 11	Executive Meeting	7:30 pm	SpeeDee
May 17	Nat. President Peter Jedicke	7:30 pm	Observatory
	Topic: Astronomy in Hawaii: Research, Outreach & Observing		
May 20-23	RASC National General Assembly 2005		Okanagan
	Registration & Info for GA: http://www.rasc.ca:8080/rasc/index.jsp		
May 25	General Meeting	7:30 pm	Observatory

Open Houses run every Friday evening March through May

Members Nights run every Saturday evening (weather permitting) February through May

The Night Sky for April 2005

By Bob Nelson, PhD

Hi Folks,

Wow! We sure have been having nice weather lately. At time of writing, we've had mild temperatures, some nice sunshine, no hint of snow, and spring definitely around the corner if not here already. Last Friday, we had a wonderful night out at the observatory for public observing and clear skies Saturday for the Messier Marathon. Read about it elsewhere in this issue. I am sure that we can look forward to another fine year of

observing out at PGOA. Look for continuing improvements out there ...

Anyway, here is what is happening in the sky next month:

MERCURY is a morning object all month. The observer's Handbook tells us that it reaches greatest elongation west (that is, to the right of the Sun) of some 27° on April 26th. However, owing to the orientation of the ecliptic, this is an unfavourable apparition for northern observers.

VENUS is lost in the glare of the Sun for most of April.

MARS is a morning object this month, arising some two hours before the Sun. It's a tiny 6.3" disk

of magnitude 0.8 and lies in Capricornus, passing to Aquarius late in the month.

JUPITER, in Virgo until 2005, is an evening object. Further east of Saturn, it rises at midmonth at about 18:30 and will therefore be fairly well up at sunset. It's a 44" disk of magnitude -2.4.

SATURN, in Gemini until 2005, now is an evening object. At sunset at mid-month (around 20:00), it is high in the SSW and sets in the "wee" hours at around 03:00. For the last few years, we have been looking at the underside of its rings. My copy of Guide 8 tells me that the rings are still quite open

but allow a thin slice of Saturn's north pole region to peek over the rings. As always, there are a good number of satellites to keep us interested. Saturn will be an 18.3" disk of magnitude 0.1; it reaches opposition on the 3rd.

URANUS, in Aquarius until 2009, is a morning object still; at mid-month it rises about an hour and a half before the Sun. As usual, it's a 3.6" disk at about magnitude 5.7

NEPTUNE, in Capricornus until 2010, is an early morning object this month, rising on the 15th about two hours before the Sun. As usual, it's a 2.3" disk at about magnitude 8.0.

PLUTO, in Serpens until Sept 2006, arises at mid-month just after midnight, so therefore is only for the bleary-eyed astronomers that stay up all night. Wait a couple of months. As usual, it's a star-like object of magnitude 14.

Daylight savings time returns on the night of April 2/3. (Blaaaaat!!)

CONSTELLATIONS to look for in April (at 10 PM, PDT) are Cen-

tral Hydra, Crater (Crt), Sextans, Leo and Leo Minor.

Central Hydra ("The Sea Serpent", not to be confused with Hydrus, "The Water Snake") is out of the Milky Way and contains two galaxies: NGC 3585 and 3621. The former is a 5.6' ellipse of magnitude 10.8; the latter, a 12' ellipse of magnitude 10.0. It's easy pickings for our 24" telescope.

Crater ("The Cup") contains no star clusters or nebulae. (My cup is empty. Ha, ha!). Seriously, though, it does contain (according to Burnham) 11 variable stars, 14 NGC galaxies and one other galaxy. It's the constellation immediately to the south of familiar Leo.

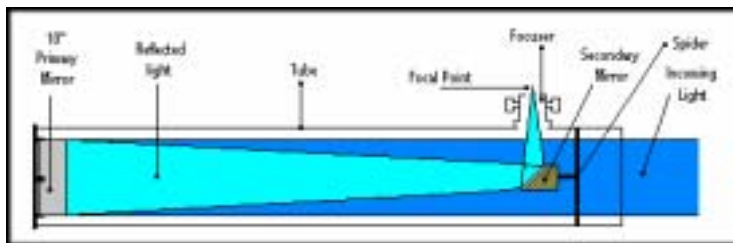
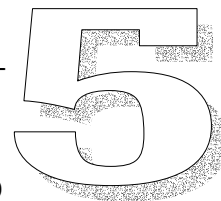
Sextans ("The Sextant") - but shaped like a scalene triangle - contains numerous galaxies, but only the following are brighter than magnitude 11: NGC 2974, 3115, 3166, and 3169. The brightest is NGC 3115, which is a very bright galaxy (total magnitude 8.9), located some 20 degrees almost due south of Regulus and just south of the scalene triangle. Burnham's tells me that it is likely not a member of the great Virgo cluster of galaxies and is somewhat closer at

around 25 million light years. The diameter is around 22,000 light years and its mass is some 24 billion solar masses. No supernovae have yet been observed in this galaxy.

Leo ("The Lion") is familiar to most of us. It's a constellation that actually resembles what it's supposed to be. The head of the beast, otherwise known as -The Sickle- contains at its base the first magnitude star Regulus (spectral type B8, main sequence). It also contains numerous galaxies (almost too many to mention) M65, 66, 95, 96, 105, plus NGC 3628, 3384, 2903.

Leo Minor ("The Little Lion") contains galaxies NGC 2859, 3245, 3344, and 3486. The brightest is NGC 3344 at magnitude 9.9. Burnham's has no other information, except that it is a fine face-on spiral.

Clear skies,
-Bob





A similar motion was passed two or three years ago at National Council, but was defeated at the Annual Meeting. If you feel strongly about this, make sure that people assign their proxy vote to a like-minded person.

I will be speaking against both proposals to change the constitution at the Annual Meeting held at the May General Assembly.

The bylaw section 3.05 Society Fees now reads:

(1) The annual Society membership fees, including the distribution rates of the Centre and Society portions, and the life membership fee shall be determined from time to time by ordinary resolution of the Council. [Ordinary resolution means a simple majority is all that is required.] The Centre portion can only be reduced from its then prevailing amount by special resolution [2/3rds majority required] of the Council. No fee shall be payable for honorary membership in the Society.

(2) The agenda for any meeting of the Council at which it is proposed to move any resolution to change the membership fees of the Society shall include the specifics of the resolution, including the proposed Centre and Society portions of the fee.

This all passed by the required 2/3rds majority, by a vote of 28-10. So it passed with only two more votes than required. This must, of course, be ratified by a 2/3rds majority vote of the membership at the Annual Meeting.

PROPOSAL #3. Centre Practice in the USE of Basic Surcharges

-we are FOR this proposal.

This passed by a large margin.

PROPOSAL #4. Transparency in Reporting of Fees

-we are FOR this. Our ex-treasurer noted that this will cause more work for the Centre Treasurers and questions why it is necessary.

This carried.

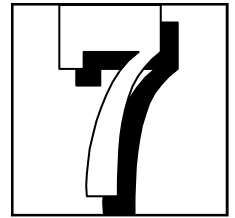
PROPOSAL #5. Proposed Fee Increase for 2005

- we are FOR this. It is obvious that membership fees should be set to a level where it is not a negative for the Society to gain members. It is equally obvious that in the short term RASC will, on a whole, lose members but, we feel that given time new memberships will be gained. As long as

>the Centres add "value" to the membership by providing support and good activities for its members. As an example, when PG Centre joined the RASC we jumped from a \$20 fee to a \$50 dollar fee. We lost about one third of our members. (down to 25 members) It has taken a few years but, by adding programs and improving facilities and the general way the Centre functions we now have 59 members. (as of today)

Continued on page 15

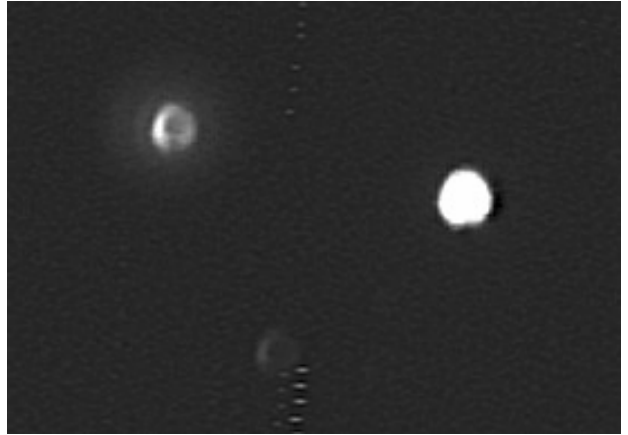
Alternative Camera Imaging



BELOW RIGHT: A CCD image of NGC2392, Eskimo Nebula, taken last night [March 13, 2005] at ~8.20 pm . Looks as though I have finally broken the 14.9 magnitude barrier . The spaced lines are artifacts of this camera. Image Info: 11 images stacked. Image exposure was about 14 sec each No dark frame was used.

For those in Nova it is located at RA 07h 30 m 45.2s, DEC. +24 degree 57'06'
It is a Planetary Nebula. Magnitude 14.9 Size 49.0"X27.0"

WayneSanders



Message from Jim Towes

Hi all,

Just wanted to let you know things are going smoothly in Vancouver so far. I received the bone marrow transplant yesterday at 4:10PM. No signs of any problems, and I went through the 3 days of chemo and 3 days of total body radiation treatments with no complications (knock on wood :-)) before the transplant. I was expecting the chemo and radiation to be a lot worse, but they give you lots of meds to counteract the effects. I was one of the lucky one's and did not get sick.

I hope you are all doing well, and hope to keep in more contact now that I am on the road to recovery.

I went for a walk around my floor (the 15th floor is an "open floor", unless you are sick, as the entire floor is pressurized with "HEPA" filtered air) and walked past a window with a view of downtown Vancouver I just had to share. The size of the yachts in the upper right of the photo are amazing, they look as bigger than passenger jets!

Jim Toews

Jim ,
We are all looking forward to your return in good health.
Hopefully in time for the summer work bees ;-)
GS

My Astronomy Experiences Down Under Photo Gallery

All photos by Doug Wayland



Hi fellow club members,

Just wanted to share a photo with you that is easy to do. I did this the evening of Feb 27, 2005 at our observatory. For this exposure I put my 35mm Canon FTb camera on a tripod with a Sigma 28mm lens stopped down to f4 and left the shutter open for one hour, using a cable release to open and close the shutter. I aimed at Polaris and framed the dome in the foreground. Comet Machholz was in the field of view and I was hoping to capture it, but it is very hard to see. I think it is the fuzzy trail at about the eleven o'clock position a short distance out from Polaris. Note the sky glow from PG just over the dome. Robin was moving the dome a few times during that hour, hence the ghost images of the lower dome shutter.

Enjoy, Doug



Messier Marathon 2005

See article on page 10

Photos by : Hugh and Annette Kennedy and Doug Wayland

Allan Whitman has prepared a BC customized Messier Marathon schedule, it is still early enough in the season to try the Messier Marathon again. It is under the "Observing" section "Other Projects" heading on our website www.rasc.ca/princegeorge



This scope was once owned by Terrance Dickinson. DW



DW



HK



DW

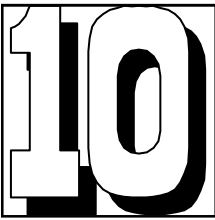


HK

RIGHT: Just by luck, I seem to have captured the green flash during a sunset at Kihei, Maui on 2005 Feb 23.

Bob Nelson





Messier Marathon 2005

On March 12 the club held its annual Messier Marathon night. This year we were blessed with an exceptionally clear sky and warm temperatures.

Hugh, Annette and Jim A arrived first at around 4:30 pm and quickly set up an encampment at the rear of the viewing area. They were very well prepared with all manner of gadgetry laid out on a table. By the time I got there Doug and Rod had joined them. Shortly thereafter John M, Rod, Effie, Art, Maurice, Greg, Blair and Leona and her friend joined us.

To start off we hauled a dob out to the road and observed Mercury below the 2 day old crescent Moon. We all tried to out do each other by seeing who could see it naked eye. A few motorists had strange looks on their faces as they passed our "gang" on the side of the road.

Afterwards we went inside the classroom where a terrific meal was laid out with loads of chili, salads, desserts, eggrolls, chicken wings and an assortment of finger foods to be had.

After dinner it was time to get cracking on the list. As usual Doug was terrific shouting out which objects to get first before they were hidden behind trees. Everyone got into the swing of things excitedly shouting out when they had "got another one!" No one paused at all until about 10:00 pm.

I packed it in at midnight, having bagged a personal best of 42 objects. Doug, Hugh, Annette, Greg, Blair, John M and Rob were all still observing like mad. It was definitely a night to remember!

Brian Battersby

Here are some quotes I got via email after the marathon:

"I really enjoyed the evening and the help everyone gave us new folks. I can actually look up in the night sky and recognize things now. Next year I'll be better prepared with charts for the evening... Maybe a back brace also!" ~ Hugh Kennedy

"I had a great night, the pot luck was excellent and it was nice to see the other members that came out." ~ Doug Wayland

"Great night last night, I had a great time." ~ Jim Arnold

Messier Count

<u>Member</u>	<u>Total Observed</u>
Doug Wayland	99
Brian Battersby	42
Jim Arnold	34
Hugh Kennedy	29
Wayne Sanders	11**

Congratulations to all who participated in the Messier Hunt. See you next year!

Explore the Universe Certificate

<u>Member</u>	<u>Total Observed*</u>
Glen Harris	40
Wayne Sanders	32**
Jim Arnold	29
Greg Mohammed	27
Annette Kennedy	21
Hugh Kennedy	21

**There are 110 possible objects on the list to observe. Only 55 are required to get the certificate.*

***Wayne made his observations using only binoculars.*

Part Two of
My Astronomy Experiences
Down Under

By Doug Wayland

11

After last months issue was already delivered , we discovered that I had been having some difficulty with assembling Doug's article. Any omissions or repetitions were my fault , or maybe my computer, yes I'll blame it on my computer , darn thing! Sorry folks G.S.

At this point I just want to mention that spending Christmas in Australia was an unreal experience. I had never been anywhere where it is warm at Christmas before. Instead of roast turkey or ham, people either went to the beach or to friends' houses for a BBQ. No turkey to be seen. We had a mixed grill BBQ outside in 38 C temperatures. We had shade and plenty of refreshments, so thoroughly enjoyed it. People over there dream about going to places like Canada for a white Christmas.

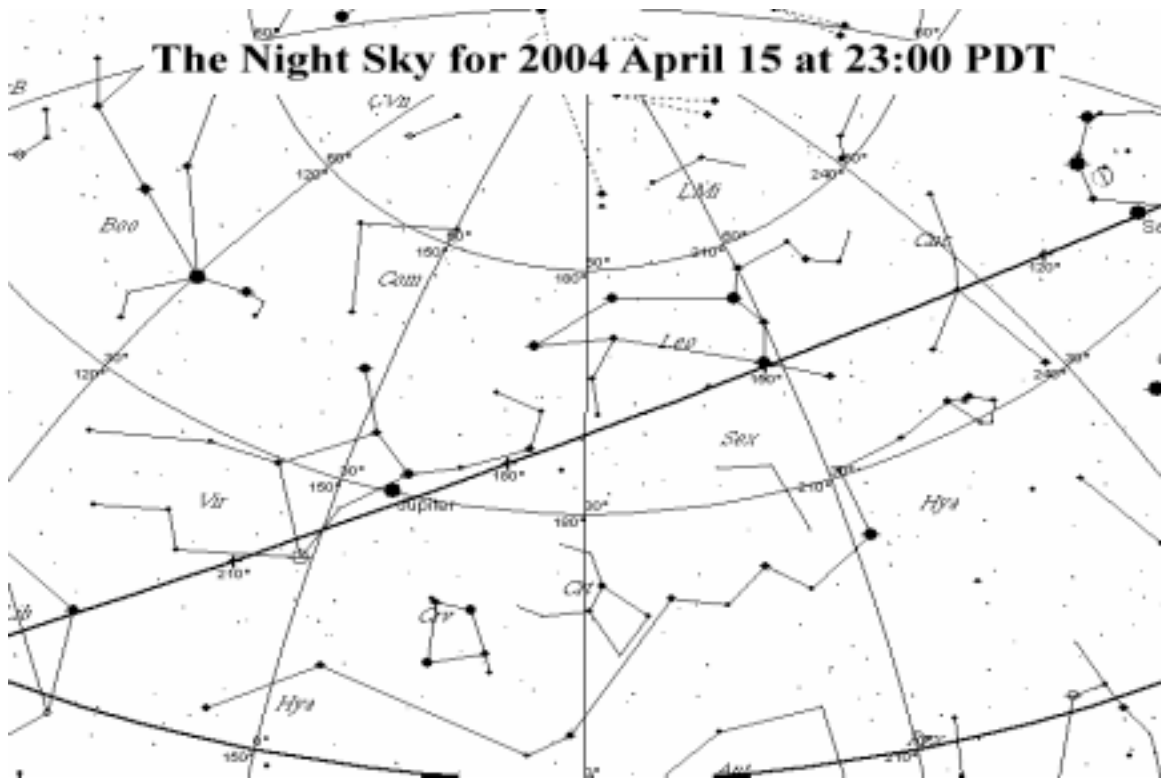
On five different evenings I went to the coast to try and photograph the green flash as the sun set into the Indian Ocean. On two of those, clouds along the horizon spoiled the show. On the other three, I did see the green flash, but did not get great pictures of it. The sea breezes were very strong so the telescope with camera attached was shaking a lot. Fortunately you can do this type of photography with a fast shutter speed so it is still possible to take clear pictures. I held the scope firmly with both hands while I viewed through the camera view finder and had either my niece or Shaun trip the remote shutter release when I said "now". On one outing we saw a boat on the horizon heading for the partially set sun, so I watched in the view finder until the moment it was on the sun and clicked a shot. I have seen pictures of the sun with a plane silhouetted, so why not a boat! The last attempt had the most spectacular green flash, but alas, I clicked too many shots early into the setting phase and ran out of film just before the last part where the sun disappeared into the ocean. I could see lots of green on top of the sun as it started setting, but there was an exceptional green flash at the last moment that I missed, even Shaun clearly saw it with her naked eye. We had a friend there with us watching through my binoculars and she was really impressed and thanked me very much for showing her the phenomenon, she said she had seen a lot of sunsets, but never one like this. See photos of my attempts at this.



12



I did a bit of solar observing and photographing with the ETX while in Perth, but I had to do it about mid morning, because it got too hot after that. I photographed the large sunspot complex, 720, that I heard was responsible for setting off some magnificent aural displays. At one point there was a large fire burning in the hills East of Perth, making the air very smokey at times. It had the effect of making the sun look pleasingly orange, even through the Baader filter. The two photographs I took were at the prime focus of my ETX with a Baader filter in place.



Note: the sunspot complex on the smoky sun picture, which I took two days after the first, has moved quite a bit to the left.



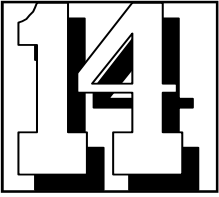
Smoky Sun

Before we even left for Australia I read in the 2005 observer's handbook that there would be a daytime occultation of Jupiter by the moon, visible from Western Australia on January the 4th. So I was prepared for that. I set up the ETX in the back yard at 10:00 am and could make out pale Jupiter a little ways away from the waning last quarter moon. I took several pictures as the moon approached Jupiter in the bright blue sky and at precisely the predicted time for Perth of 10:44 the planet was gone from view behind the moon. Twenty minutes later it reappeared. Despite the washed out sight of Jupiter, I did get some pictures where you can clearly see the two coming together and again with Jupiter just after reappearance. I was quite impressed with the ETX. See photos:



That evening the seeing was very steady and I was able to do some quality viewing with my ETX from the backyard. With a Meade 6.7mm UWA eyepiece giving 186 power, I had a very clear view of Saturn. Cassini's division was sharp and I could see banding on the planet itself. Castor, which crosses high overhead in PG was just a few degrees above the Northern horizon from Perth, yet it split nicely, confirming the excellent seeing. Eta Orionis, a close double, consisting of mag 3.6 and 5.0 stars separated by 1.5", was a very easy split, much easier than the few times I have tried it from PG. This is partly because it is higher overhead in Australia and partly because of the excellent seeing that night. The great Orion nebula was exceptional with the trapezium appearing large and crisp and surrounded by the nebula.

I happened to pick up the premier issue of Australian Sky and Telescope magazine (January, 2005), so I viewed the binocular highlight from it, which was the very red star R Doradus. It was a great sight in the ETX. M 41 just south of Sirius was almost directly overhead, the same with M79. I am used to looking at these two at a very low angle in the south from PG. The ETX performed admirably, even from the city. Being able to bump up the power had the effect of increasing the contrast and counter acting the sky glow.



There is a very interesting formation called Wave Rock about 350 km east of Perth near a small town called Hyden. It is like a huge tidal wave frozen in solid granite. We planned to go there on January 6. While checking this out I noticed that there was a small private observatory, called Star Gate, nearby that offered public viewing, so I booked us in for the evening.

When we got to Hyden, it was about 40 degrees in the shade; oil was coming out of the pavement at Wave Rock Resort. In the evening it didn't cool down much and there was a hot wind blowing. We got to the gate across the driveway leading to the observatory at dusk, about 19:30. The owner showed up shortly after so I got out of the car to greet him. As we were standing there, he all of a sudden said "there's a snake". I looked where he was pointing and in the car headlights you could see about a five foot long dark snake slithering across the road about 50 feet away. "Probably a Dugite" he says, which is a very venomous snake common to the area. I must say, that is the only snake we saw in the two months we were there, except for the zoo. But I thought about them a lot that night as we stood outside around the owner Steve's 16 inch Meade Newtonian telescope.

He had told us to wear long pants and closed shoes because it can get cool, even in summer, but that night with the hot wind blowing, it was very hot, we almost felt uncomfortable in long pants and short sleeve shirts. Now that's a switch, I have never felt too hot before when viewing the night sky. I thought it was a good thing we had long pants on, it may offer some protection against snakes!!

The only other people visiting that night were a young couple from Germany, so with us three and Steve, there were only six people. I had my 15 x 70 binoculars which worked the best for viewing comet Machholz, which was now getting close to the Pleiades. In the large field of the binoculars you could just make out the two tails coming off the comet, about 90 degrees apart. With no moon, the sky was very dark and transparent except for a few clouds that were drifting by. Steve showed us several southern sky objects. Tuc 47 was breathtaking; the great globular filled the field of view in the 16 inch. It was a swarm of stars that resolved down to a bright, dense core. It was the best view I have ever had of a globular star cluster. We could see the coal sack that night as a distinctive dark hole in the Milky Way, by the Southern Cross. We had a look at the open cluster called the Jewel box in Crux. In the eyepiece it displayed several stars of contrasting red, blue and yellowish colours. I could see why they call it the Jewel Box. The Eta Carinae nebula, in the big scope, was like a black and white photograph that you would see of it in a book. Both Steve and the Germans liked my binoculars and wanted to know about them so they could get their own. In fact everybody there that night spent a lot of time viewing with my binocs. The seeing was a little unsteady so the view of Saturn in the big scope was not crisp; in fact I liked the view I had of it the other night in the ETX from Perth better.

On the way out the lights were on at the front of the observatory and as Shaun was walking, she looked down and saw about a 4 inch long centipede speeding in a zig zag pattern along the dirt. Steve said you wouldn't want one of those to bite your toe. I guess they are venomous too.

Steve said that on the hot nights like the one we experienced, there could be snakes, centipedes and scorpions out. I'm glad he didn't tell us that before we started viewing. We left about 23:00.

On January 12 I got my last glimpse of Comet Machholz from Australia, as it was now well past the Pleiades and very low in the North.

We left Perth at 06:00 on January 22 to come home. That was a long day. We traveled for 26 hours including 20 hours flying to get to our hotel in Vancouver at 16:00 on the same day, Jan 22. That was a

weird one; it took me a few days to get straightened out. The only thing astronomical I did on the trip home was take a picture of the Earth's shadow at sunrise from 35,000 feet over the Pacific, about two hours from LA. See photo attached. From that altitude the shadow was very much more obvious than when seen from ground level.



It was a great vacation, but it is nice to be home.
Doug Wayland

continued from page 6

Council passed a resolution to support a discussion on a fee increase at the Annual Meeting. The motion did not include a dollar amount.

This morning [February 28, 2005] I made the following post to the national RASC discussion list, RASCals:

Hello all,

I had hoped that the Annual Meeting on Sunday morning at our Okanagan GA would be a quiet easy-going low-key affair such as the one at St. John's in 2004 was, not hectic and filled with controversy like the Vancouver GA's Annual Meeting in 2003 was. Following the Saturday National Council meeting it is now evident that the 2005 Annual Meeting at our GA will be at least as controversial and emotional (and therefore LONG) as the one in Vancouver was. National Council passed motions which quoting National President Peter Jedicke make for an "historic alteration of the root of our Society' business". These major constitutional changes will all be debated again at the Annual Meeting where they must be ratified by the membership before taking effect. National Council's proposed changes include ABOLISHING the ordinary members's current right to approve membership fee increases by voting in person or by proxy at Annual Meetings and abolishing the fixed 60/40 fee split between national and the centres, replacing it with a flexible fee split that Ntl Council can unilaterally decide from time to time in its [frequently rushed] wisdom. Both issues will be powder kegs!!

Before you automatically give your proxy to your centre's National Rep you might want to ascertain that he or she shares your viewpoint on these fundamental issues. If not, ask around and find somebody who will be attending the Annual Meeting who shares your viewpoint and give your proxy to him or her. If the annual meeting at the GA ratifies these proposed constitutional changes, these long held and cherished rights will be gone for no apparent gain other than to avoid the opportunity for sober second thought that GA Annual Meetings have always given.

These motions to abolish long-held rights of ordinary members and the Centres have NOTHING to do with coping with the Society's deficit.

I am pleased to report that the eight proposals for slashing the deficit that the national Financial Committee introduced were all passed, resulting in the deficit being halved to about \$26,000. National Council was nearly unanimous in recognizing the need to finally change our way of doing things to a leaner one. Many "nice to have" programs were slashed or suspended. Some committee chairmen actually volunteered cuts to their budgets !

Additional measures proposed by the Financial Committee and by Past President Rajiv Gupta should further cut the deficit in 2006. Most corporate recovery programs are in stages and so is ours so as not to abrogate existing promises.

Best,
Alan Whitman
Member, Ntl Financial Committee
Alternate Ntl Rep Prince George Centre
GA Organizing Comm Member