

POLARIS



Royal Astronomical Society of Canada
London Centre Newsletter
July 2011

Nothing Like Diamond Skies Dan Tremblay

To quote a verse from a Randy Bachman song ,
“ Blue Collar” which says; “at 4 :00 in the
morning my world is really still, the air is fresh
under diamond skies , it’s great to be alive” It
seemed quite appropriate for last Thursday, The
eve of Canada Day.

I was off and the
conditions were
absolutely marvelous.
After not getting out
for nearly six months,
I needed starlight
under dark skies. Well
fortunately Harold
was heading out to
Fingal later on and
that was perfect.

As it turned out , a
whole crew showed
up. The distinguished
observers were , Mike
Roffey, Kelley Manson, Harold, Charlie Moher,
Andy from Hamilton with a 22 inch obsession and
a colleague of his ,another chap from the Windsor
Centre, Mike Hanes , Dennis , George if I’m not
mistaken, and Ramona with I must say heavenly
cupcakes. Between the chit-chat and damp air we
had some great views

There was a good array of instruments. Needless
to say , M- 22 in a 22 inch scope is something to
behold. The veil Nebula in Cygnus was also a

visual treat. Kelley Manson’s bino set-up on a
9.25 SCT was very interesting. It gave great
images of M-20 ,M-17, M-8,. The best I’ve seen
in a SCT. Mike Roffey ‘s 12 inch f5 produced a
fabulous view of the veil nebula through 52 cygni
with i’ts graceful wave of nebulosity.



For me ,the evening
was just great. This
may be due to the
simple fact that I don’t
get out enough . After
not being out for so
long ,being at Fingal
gave the effect of
soothing balm.
However, this would
explain the obsessive
disorder that haunt the
best of us. Oh did I
mentioned that I
ordered another
eyepiece. Oh well

what’s the harm with a new 14mm UWA?

With all this being said I eventually packed it up
by 3:30-ish. And you know what? Things are still
at 3:00 in the morning and the air is fresh under
diamond skies at Fingal. Yeah , it’s great to be
alive.

Keep Looking Up!

Moon Phases



July 8 2011



July 15 2011



July 23 2011



July 30 2011

New Observer's Chair

The London RASC has a new person in the position of Observer's Chair. It is Mike Roffey.

Mike has had a passion for observing the night sky for many many years. I have known him for a few years now. I was fortunate enough to camp next to him at Starfest a couple years ago. I remember he brought his 12" collapsible Dobsonian.

Leaving the post is Pete Raine and he will be missed. Pete is an avid observer and photographer of the night sky. Thanks for the great job Pete!

Hello Mike and farewell Pete!

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LONDON RASC MONTHLY MEETINGS

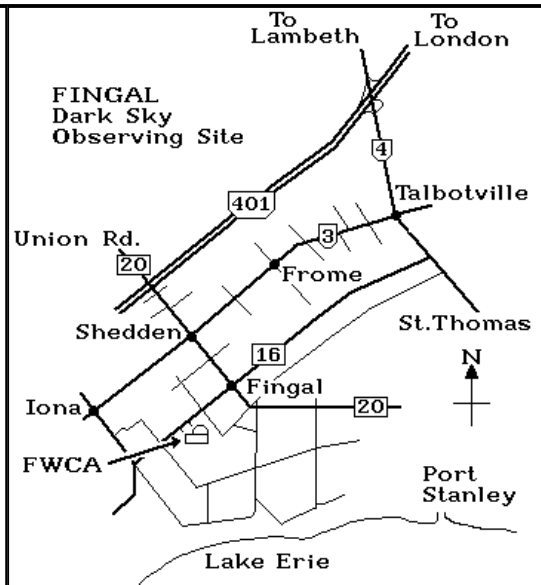
The London RASC group meets at Fanshawe College in London Ontario, September through July on the third Friday of the month at 19:00. We meet in room B1073.

Everyone interested in astronomy is invited to attend and enjoy our guest speaker, member activity and observing reports, announcements of new discoveries and upcoming events, telescopes and telescope accessories show and tell, and other fun activities. Have a look at our future and past activities on our website to see what we are doing.

Parking is free on Friday evenings, and there is plenty of room in the east parking lot off Oxford St. and parking spaces on the south side of B building. Enter the college by B building doors near Oxford Street, just west of the bus stop. College signs at key hallway locations will help you find us.

The London RASC webpage can be found at: www.rasc.ca/London

Our dark sky observing site is at the **Fingal Wildlife Management Area**.



Sky Events for late July and all August and early September 2011

July 20 Mercury greatest elongation E
 July 27 Mars 0.5 N of Moon
 July 29 Pallas at opposition
 August 1 Mercury 1.5 N of Moon
 August 5 Vesta at opposition
 August 6 Mars 0.5 S of M35
 August 13 Perseid meteors peak
 August 22 Neptune at opposition
 September 3 Mercury greatest elongation W
 September 9 Mercury 0.7 N of Regulus
 September 16 Ceres at opposition



Mercury is in western evening sky, vanishes in August
Venus vanishes for the next two months
Mars is low in the eastern dawn sky
Jupiter in low in the morning sky, rises at midnight in August
Saturn in the western late-evening sky, setting earlier in August
Uranus at midnight, late evening in August
Neptune rises late in the evening in Aquarius, visible all night in August

R.A.S.C. London Centre Library Books of the Month July 2011 By Robert Duff

As always, these "Books of the Month" are available for loan to members, to be returned at the following monthly meeting. The books for July 2011 are as follows:

The Backyard Astronomer's Guide, by Terence Dickinson & Alan Dyer. Revised Edition. 2002.

365 Starry Nights: an Introduction to Astronomy for Every Night of the Year, text and illustrations by Chet Raymo. c1982.

Universe on a T-shirt: the Quest for the Theory of Everything, by Dan Falk. c2002.



For a complete listing of our library collection please see our RASC London Centre Library Web page at: http://www.astro.uwo.ca/~rasc/newrasc_library.html

If there is a particular book or video you wish to borrow, please feel free to contact me by telephone at (519) 439-7504 or by e-mail at rduff@sympatico.ca

Star Nights & Other Events

By Robert Duff

**Star Night, Mitchell Hepburn Public School, St. Thomas,
 June 14th, 2011**

Clear skies with just a few hazy clouds made for an excellent evening of observing for the Grade-6 class star night at Mitchell Hepburn Public School in St. Thomas. Harold Tutt set up his alt-azimuth mounted 80mm Stellarview refractor on the school field and showed some of the early arriving visitors views of the setting Sun with his homemade Baader

film full aperture solar filter. Everett Clark set up his Super Polaris mounted 11.4cm Newtonian reflector and plugged in the motor drive to his portable battery pack. Dave McCarter and Bob Duff set up their 25.4cm and 20.3cm Dobsonians, respectively.

Dave gave an informal twilight talk to some 90 children, parents and teachers sitting or standing on the grassy school campus, paying particular attention to two 60mm alt-azimuth refractors, one brought by a girl and the other by a man. As twilight gave way to a starry sky, people lined up in front of telescopes to observe the one-day-prior-to-full Moon rising

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in the east and later Saturn, which excited much astonishment with children and adults alike.

Throughout the evening several girls tried to take pictures of the Moon through Bob's 20.3cm Dobsonian with varying degrees of success. Saturn was a splendid sight in the 20.3cm Dobsonian, using the 7mm Nagler eyepiece (174.3X) and together with the 2X Barlow Lens (348.6X). There was an International Space Station (ISS) pass at around 10:45 p.m. that glided right through the bowl of the Big Dipper, to the delight of visitors still present. The star night was over by around 10:55 p.m. and members began packing up their telescopes to go home after what was a very successful and enjoyable star night. Many thanks go to everybody who helped out with this event.

Star Night, Springwater Conservation Area, June 25th, 2011

Mixed clouds and clear sky greeted RASC members at the West Campground of Springwater Conservation Area, Saturday, June 25th. RASC London Centre members Paul and Charlene Kerans brought their newly acquired 22-inch (56cm) Obsession UC (Ultra-Compact) Truss-Tube Dobsonian. Hamilton Centre member Andy Blanchard joined them with his nearly identical 22-inch (56cm) Obsession UC Dobsonian. Also there were London Centre members Harold Tutt, with his 80mm Stellarvue refractor, and Bob Duff, with his 20.3cm Dobsonian.

There were an estimated 35 of more adults and children climbing ladders to look through the Obsession telescopes and view Saturn, M13, M57 and M108. Harold showed them Saturn, Mizar and Alcor and Albireo in his 80mm refractor and Bob, Saturn and M57 in his 20.3cm Dobsonian. Harold called everybody's attention to a bright International Space Station pass at 10:55 p.m. The star night ended with clearing starry skies and everybody was packing up by around 11:20 p.m.

It was a very enjoyable evening and many thanks go to everybody who helped out. It is not often that we have two 22-inch Obsession telescopes for star night!



One visitor who was not a RASC member set up his 15-cm Dobsonian. In all, there were 9 telescopes set up by 10 out of 14 RASC London Centre members, plus one telescope set up by a non-member.

Saturn, M13, M57, Albireo and the "Double-Double" Epsilon Lyrae were among the objects people observed in various telescopes. Skies

were clear with a slight haze and the air was dry, eliminating any problems with dew. Parking lot lights made observing deep-sky objects somewhat difficult. The observing session was over by around 11:20 p.m., after most visitors had gone home or retreated to Windermere Manor for late night snacks. Many thanks go to all the RASC London Centre members who contributed to making this a successful evening under the stars.

Star Party, Windermere Manor, July 5th, 2011

Some 85 visitors along with 24 from RASC London Centre, including 14 members with 10 spouses and other family members, enjoyed a fabulous dinner beginning around 7:30 p.m. in the Grand Hall of Windermere Manor, Tuesday, July 5th, 2011. Bob Duff went around to each table and distributed Star Finder planispheres to children and adults, explaining how to use them to find stars and constellations. Dave McCarter made his digital slide presentation, "Star Gazers," around 8:30 p.m.

Observing began in the parking lot around 9:40 p.m. with RASC London Centre setting up their telescopes, including, Harold Tutt, with his alt-azimuth mounted 80mm Stellarvue refractor; Paul and Charlene Kerans with their 22-inch (56cm) Obsession Truss-Tube Dobsonian; Bob Duff, with his 20.3cm Dobsonian; Patrick Whelan, with his 25.4cm f/8 Dobsonian; Adam Priestap-Suttis, with his 20.3cm Sky-Watcher Dobsonian; Mike Roffey, with his equatorial mounted Celestron Omni XLT 15cm Newtonian; Everett Clark, with his equatorial mounted 11.4cm Newtonian; John Kulczycki, with his 40.6cm Truss-Tube Dobsonian; and Kelly Manson, with his fork-mounted 9 1/4-inch (23.5cm) Celestron Schmidt-Cassegrain. Other members present included Maria Lavdas, Roman Dubinski and Robert Ellis.

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Cronyn Observatory Saturday Evening Summer Open House, June 18th—July 9th, 2011

By Robert Duff

Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, June 18th, 2011

Clear skies with some haze greeted visitors to the Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, June 18th, 2011. Faculty member Pauline Barmby made her digital slide presentation “What’s New in Astronomy?” from the laptop computer screen after a glitch prevented use of the digital projector. Peter Jedicke, Richard Gibbens and Bob Duff represented the RASC London Centre.

Faculty member Paul Wiegert showed visitors Saturn through the 25.4cm refractor in the dome. Bob Duff set up the London Centre’s 25.4cm Dobsonian on the Observatory’s roof patio and showed them Arcturus in the twilight sky and then Saturn, Vega and Mizar and Alcor as the sky darkened. People asked questions and were impressed by views of Saturn through both telescopes. Peter Jedicke identified 2 Iridium flares for the evening, one being observed in the west around 11:14 p.m., after the visitors had gone.

The audience totalled 28 visitors at the end of Pauline’s first presentation, which was followed by some thoughtful questions from children. She thought there were 9 visitors for the second presentation and maybe 5 more after that. This suggests around 42 visitors for the evening. It was clearly an enjoyable evening for everybody.

Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, June 25th, 2011

Dave McCarter reported clear skies at the Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, June 25th. Faculty member Sarah Gallagher gave an excellent presentation, “Galactic Train Wrecks,” and then everybody went upstairs to observe through the big 25.4cm refractor in the dome.

Dave found Saturn in the RASC London Centre’s 25.4cm Dobsonian as did Charlie Moher in his 25.4cm Dobsonian. Peter Jedicke gave them the azimuth and elevation for the planet so they didn’t have to scan the twilight sky for too long. They also observed Albireo, Cor Caroli, Mizar and Alcor, M13, M27 and M57. Dave tried for M51 but the sky was getting hazy. Everett Clark showed a couple of interested visitors the London Centre’s Web site on the computer in the dome.

Also there was Richard Gibbens. There was an interested crowd of 25 visitors.

Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, July 2nd, 2011

Lightning, thunder and rain greeted 2 visitors to the Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, July 2nd, 8:30 p.m. Graduate student Sanaz Golriz made the digital slide presentation, “Telescopes in Space,” and Physics & Astronomy faculty member Dr. John de Bruyn gave a tour of the 25.4cm refractor in the dome. Two physics students dropped in briefly and decided to come back on an evening when the sky was clear. Richard Gibbens represented the RASC London Centre. Bob Duff arrived at 9:50 p.m. after the visitors had left. The Observatory was closed around 10:15 p.m. and everybody went home.

Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, July 9th, 2011

Hazy clouds gave way to relatively clear sky for the Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, July 9th, 8:30 p.m. Graduate student Neven Vulic made his digital slide presentation, “A Tour of Our Solar System,” counting 49 and later an estimated 75 visitors for the evening, following a second presentation. Other graduate students included Tyler Desjardins, who set up 25.4cm refractor in the dome with the 17mm Nagler eyepiece (258X), and Maryam Tabeshian and Fereshtgh Rajabi, who welcomed and supervised the visitors.

RASC London Centre was represented by 6 members, including Peter Jedicke who helped welcome visitors into the dome by explaining the history and technical aspects of the Cronyn telescope. Bob Duff spent most of the evening showing people the Moon through the big 25.4cm refractor. On the Observatory’s roof patio, Chris Fleming showed visitors views of the Moon, Saturn and other objects through his Celestron 20.3cm Star Hopper Dobsonian, while Dave McCarter used the London Centre’s 25.4cm Dobsonian. Other objects observed included M13, M27, M57, Albireo, Mizar and Alcor. Mike Roffey set up his Celestron Omni XLT 15cm Newtonian on the walkway in front of the Cronyn to show visitors the Moon. Charlie Moher was also there. Dave called everybody’s attention to 2 Iridium flares, brightening to magnitudes -8 and -1 , respectively. They appeared one after the other about 11 degrees northeast of Deneb, around 10:53 p.m.