

POLARIS



Royal Astronomical Society of Canada London Centre Newsletter September 2010

Best First Telescope: The Eight Inch Dobsonian Telescope?

John Kulczycki

There are a lot of telescope options out there. The eight inch Dobsonian offers a lot of value for the money and a lot of viewing power.

Making that first telescope decision is pretty tough. There are a lot of choices in the market place: everything from small apochromatic refractors, to Schmidt Cassegrains, to Newtonian reflectors and then there are the Maksutov variations. To top it off, all of these come in a range of sizes.

Below those telescope choices there are mounting choices: German Equatorial, Alta-Azimuth, motorized, non-motorized, GoTo, and Push To with digital setting circles. Again, these range in size and complexity and are well worth spending more money on than the telescope optical tube itself.

So what is the best first telescope given all these choices? The eight inch Dobsonian (Dob) telescope offers a great compromise between ease of use, aperture, useful stargazing lifespan, cost, and resale value.

The name "Dobsonian" comes from homage paid to John Dobson who pioneered the idea of placing an inexpensive Newtonian reflector on an easy to use ground level Alta-azimuth base.

The telescope consists of a ground board, rocker box and a removable optical tube assembly. There is some assembly required for these telescopes, especially if bought on-line or over the phone. If bought from a dealer, assembly could be included in the purchase price.

Ease of Use is Important

To get the most out of any telescope, it must be used often. The eight inch Dob is as basic a telescope as there can be:

- It has no electronics,
- No power requirements,
- No star alignment is needed
- A manageable size of telescope for one person to handle

Aperture of the Mirror

This is the factor that determines how deep you can see into the night sky. The larger the aperture, the more faint light the instrument will gather. Here's what it can do:

- This telescope will have no problem showing planets and stars from an urban environment

- It has sufficient light grasp to show galaxies and nebulae under darker sky and in some urban environments
- Double stars can be split
- Variable stars can be seen
- The Messier Catalogue is within its grasp as well as many NGC and IC objects

Useful Stargazing Lifespan

With eight inches of mirror powering this telescope it will be useful for a number of years and not easily outgrown:

- Portability means it can be easily transported to darker sky sites
- Generous aperture means it will offer the view more objects and show them better than a smaller instrument
- Simple design means there are no electronic problems through the life of the telescope

Cost

The eight inch Dobsonian ranges in cost from about \$360 to \$500 depending on the maker and accessories:

- This price is within \$50 to \$75 of the cost of a six inch Dobsonian similarly equipped.
- There is no reason to go with the smaller telescope given the large increase in performance from the six inch telescope to the eight inch telescope.

Resale Value

Eight inch aperture Dobsonian telescopes are more desirable on the used telescope market because of their high inherent performance to portability ratio.

If you have the room to store an eight inch Dobsonian and can handle moving it from the storage area to your observing area, this telescope represents great value for money in the many choices there are in the telescope market. Buying a good used eight inch dob represents the best value to performance ratio of all.

As with all telescopes, setting up the telescope properly, is key to using this telescope successfully.

References:

NightWatch: A practical Guide to Viewing the Universe, Terrance Dickinson, Firefly Books
Star-Hopping for Backyard Astronomers, Alan M. MacRobert, Sky Publishing Corp.

Moon Phases



September 15 2010



September 23 2010



October 1 2010



October 7 2010

Full Moons of the Year

- January – Wolf Moon
- February – Snow Moon
- March – Worm Moon
- April – Pink Moon
- May – Flower Moon
- June – Strawberry Moon
- July – Buck or Sturgeon Moon
- August – Fruit or Barley Moon
- September – Harvest Moon
- October – Hunters Moon
- November – Beaver Moon
- December – Cold or Long Nights Moon

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Find the Polaris newsletters on the internet at: www.patusratus.ca/Polaris

LONDON RASC MONTHLY MEETINGS

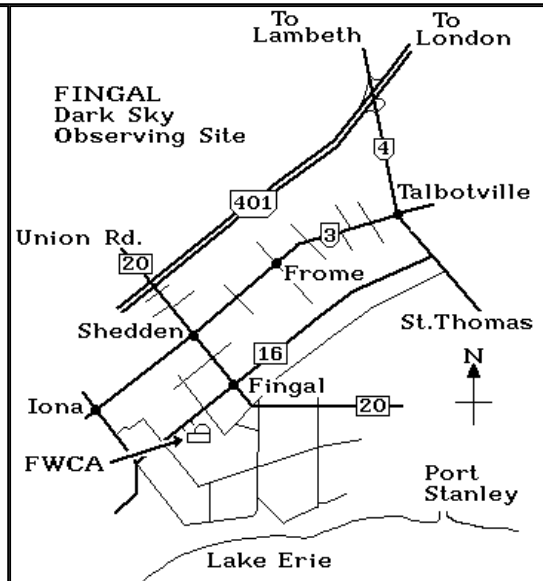
The London RASC group meets at Fanshawe College in London Ontario, September through July on the third Friday of the month at 19:00. We meet in room B1073.

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.

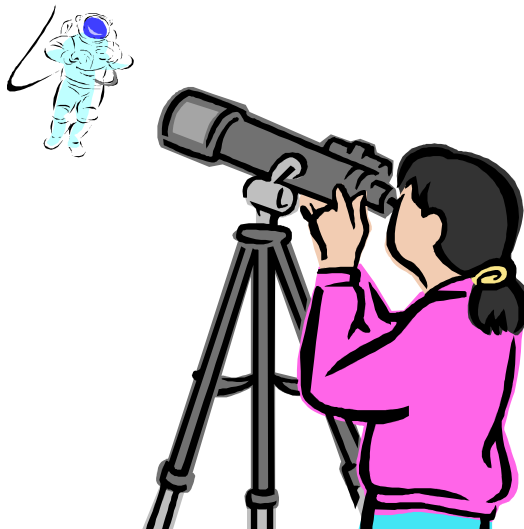
The London RASC webpage can be found at: www.rasc.ca/London

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



Sky Events for late September and early October 2010

September 19 Mercury greatest elongation W 18
 September 21 Jupiter at opposition
 September 21 Uranus at opposition
 September 22 Jupiter 0.9 S of Uranus
 September 23 Autumnal equinox
 September 23 Venus greatest illuminated extent
 September 28 Moon 1.1 S of Pleiades (M45)
 September 30 Moon 0.5 S of M35
 October 5 Zodiacal light
 October 9 Venus 3 S of Moon



Mars is low in the Western sky in Virgo
Venus is in the Western evening sky
Jupiter mid evening and is visible all night
Saturn vanishes into the evening twilight
Uranus is visible all night
Neptune visible most of the night

R.A.S.C. London Centre Library Books of the Month September 2010 By Robert Duff

In order to make our library collection available to members, I bring three books to our general monthly meetings. These "Books of the Month" are available for loan, to be returned at the following monthly meeting.

The books for September 2010 are as follows:

Burnham's Celestial Handbook: an Observer's Guide to the Universe Beyond the Solar System, by Robert Burnham. Revised and Enlarged Edition. c1978.

Volume One, Andromeda—Cetus.

Relativity: the Special and the General Theory, by Albert Einstein. Authorized translation by Robert W. Lawson. Introduced by Roger Penrose. London: The Folio Society, 2004.

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



Donation to the London Centre

I wish to thank Mike Jager for donating the following DVD videodisc set to our RASC London Centre Library at our monthly meeting, Friday, July 16th:

From the Earth to the Moon [videorecording] / Executive Producer: Tom Hanks.
 HBO, c2004. 5 videodiscs, 1 guide.

This is a commercially produced DVD set complete with a printed guide. The series, which I believe was broadcast a few years ago on the Discovery Channel, recounts the history of all the Apollo missions on 5 videodiscs. The Executive Producer is Tom Hanks.

Many thanks once again go to Mike for this valuable contribution to our Library.

Star Nights & Other Events

By Robert Duff

Elginfield Observatory Open House, July 24th, 2010

The weather cleared for a short time before sunset for the Elginfield Observatory Open House, Saturday, July 24th, 6:00 p.m.—12 o'clock midnight. People from the UWO Physics & Astronomy Department included Postdoctoral Fellow Alyssa Gilbert, coordinating the event; Nicole Kaiser (Let's Talk Science), giving tours of the Observatory; and graduate student Teznie Pugh, working in the telescope control room. Dr. Peter Brown and Dr. Amelia Wehlau were also there.

RASC London Centre members included Harold Tutt, John Kulczycki, Richard Gibbens, Patrick Whelan, Peter Jedicke, Charlie Barbara, Bill Gardner, Mike Jager, John Rousom, Joe O'Neil, Matt Neima, Mike Roffey, Steve Arenburg, John Dixon, Ryan Fraser, Suzie Chelico, Roman Dubinski, Steve Imrie and myself (Bob Duff). A former RASC London Centre member from the early 1990s, Steve Sharp, also joined us. Harold Tutt brought his 80mm Stellarvue refractor, John Kulczycki his 70mm Stellarvue refractor and 150mm Meade MTS-SN6 Schmidt-Newtonian, Mike Roffey his 80mm Sky-Watcher refractor, and Matt Neima his 20.3cm Celestron Schmidt-Cassegrain. People were able to briefly view the planet Venus through these telescopes. Patrick Whelan showed visitors views of solar prominences on the late afternoon Sun through his 40mm Coronado P.S.T. hydrogen-alpha solar telescope. Harold Tutt also showed visitors sunspots through his 80mm Stellarvue refractor and homemade Baader solar filter, from 7:00—8:30 p.m., and then the Moon for approximately half-an-hour until it became too cloudy.

Charlie Barbara set up an extensive display of his large collection of meteorites in a room on the main floor of the Observatory, giving a few samples away to enthusiastic young visitors.

Peter Jedicke showed a continuous line of visitors the planet Venus (near half-phase) through the big 1.2 metre Ritchey-Chretien telescope in the dome. John Kulczycki showed groups of visitors the aluminizing vacuum chamber used to re-aluminize the 1.2 metre primary mirror every two years.

Alyssa Gilbert reported an estimated 500 visitors and that there were many favourable comments from people about how friendly, helpful and knowledgeable everyone was. Charlie Barbara's meteorite collection was a big hit!

It clouded over as the evening progressed, although the Full Moon was visible occasionally through hazy clouds. In all, the evening was a great success.

Elginfield Observatory Open House, August 21st, 2010

Cloudy skies and rain greeted visitors for the second Elginfield Observatory Open House, Saturday, August 21st, who began arriving at 5:00 p.m., a full hour early! People from the UWO Physics & Astronomy Department included Postdoctoral Fellow Alyssa Gilbert, coordinating the event, and graduate students Emily McCullough and Amanda Papadimos, who greeted and counted visitors. Faculty members included Dr. Peter Brown, Dr. Paul Wiegert and Dr. Pauline Barmbly.

(Continued on page 5)

September 2010 Pocket Sky Atlas Challenges

Cooler weather and longer nights are upon us. While this tends to be a busy time for most, there is always a little time to take out a binocular, lean back in a reclining lounger outside for a quick scan of the night sky.

I've indexed the object to the star chart page it's on so this should be easy hunting.

Naked Eye:

Pisces, (look for the wanderer!) Page 4 and 5. Alfirk and Altais, Page 61.

Small Scopes and binoculars:

Delta Cephei, Page 73. Alnasl Page 67, M4, Page 56

Larger Scopes:

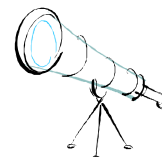
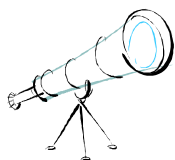
Barnard's Galaxy, Page 66. NGC 6217, Page 61. 6939, Page 61.

Bonus Objects

UGC 10822, Page 63. NGC 6800, Page 62

Happy hunting!

John Kulczycki



RASC London Centre members included John Kulczycki, who set up his 70mm Stellarvue refractor and Adam Priestap-Suttis, who brought his 20.3cm Sky-Watcher Dobsonian. Patrick Whelan was also there with daughter, Bridget. Dave McCarter demonstrated mirror-grinding techniques while Bridget Whelan and Cheryl Priestap presided over the “astro-trinkets” souvenir table and gave away “Star Finder” planispheres and copies of the book, “Mary Lou’s New Telescope.” Charlie Barbara set up his impressive meteorite collection in the Observatory kitchen, while others talked about the telescope and aluminizing vacuum chamber for 1.2 metre primary mirror. John Kulczycki and Dave McCarter directed traffic for several hours. Steve Imrie greeted visitors in the dome, while Bob Duff took some photographs.

Peter Jedicke spent most of the evening demonstrating the big 1.2 metre Ritchey-Chretien telescope in the dome, while Alyssa Gilbert worked in the control room slewing the telescope and turning the dome. Towards 11:00 p.m., the sky partially cleared and the dome was opened. However, the telescope was in Coude mode and time constraints precluded public viewing. Visitors satisfied their curiosity by observing the Moon outside through Adam’s 20.3cm Sky-Watcher Dobsonian telescope. People continued to arrive right up until midnight. In total we had about 350 visitors, including several who went home to get other family members.

What would our total have been on a clear evening? If it had been a moonless night, deep-sky objects would have glowed brightly in the 1.2 metre telescope! Many thanks go to everyone who helped make this a successful Open House.

Quai Du Vin Winery Star Nights, July 31st & August 1st, 2010

Quai Du Vin Winery Star Night, Saturday, July 31st, 2010

Cloudy skies greeted visitors and RASC London Centre members for the Quai Du Vin Winery Star Night, Saturday, July 31st. Nevertheless there was a huge outdoor screen unfurled and 5 picnic tables. RASC London Centre members present included Harold Tutt, Glen Spooner, Arthur Oslach, Steve Imrie, Dave McCarter, Bob Duff, Peter and Dianne Jedicke, Mike and Donna Costa and Joe O’Neil and son, Kristin.

London Centre President, Dave McCarter, started fielding questions from the audience around 9:00 p.m., then

began his digital slide presentation, “The Power of Observation,” around 9:15 p.m. The presentation ended with a few more questions around 10:30 p.m.

In all there were 22 visitors plus the owner Rob Quai and his wife making for an audience of 24 people enjoying the presentation. Wine and cheese followed for the astronomers around 11:00 p.m.

Quai Du Vin Winery Star Night, Sunday, August 1st, 2010

Clouds with some clear skies greeted visitors for the Quai Du Vin Winery Star Night, Sunday, August 1st.

There was a good turn out of RASC London Centre members. Set up north to south down the field there were 17 member telescopes, one Galileoscope and one tripod mounted binoculars, including, Adam Priestap-Suttis and his mother, Cheryl, with Adam’s 20.3cm Sky-Watcher Dobsonian; John Gunning, with his 130mm Astro-Physics StarFire refractor; Roman Dubinski, with his 127mm Sky-Watcher Maksutov; Mike Roffey, with his 80mm Sky-Watcher refractor; Matt Neima, with his 20.3cm Celestron Schmidt-Cassegrain; Bob Duff, with my 20.3cm Starfinder Newtonian on its Dobsonian mount; Harold Tutt, with his 80mm Stellarvue refractor; Peter and Dianne Jedicke with Peter’s Galileoscope; Rick Saunders, with his Stellarvue 102 ED refractor; Tom Czinege, with his 20.3cm Celestron Schmidt-Cassegrain; Mike and Donna Costa, with Mike’s 25.4cm home-built truss-tube Dobsonian; Everett Clark, with his 114mm Tasco Newtonian; Kelly Manson, with his 9.25-inch (23.5cm) Celestron Schmidt-Cassegrain and 10X70mm tripod mounted binoculars; Glen Spooner, with his 32cm home-built truss-tube Dobsonian; Peter and Cheri Raine, with their 90mm Williams Optics refractor and 25.4cm Sky-Watcher Dobsonian, respectively; Dave Clark, with his laptop computer and 20.3cm Celestron Schmidt-Cassegrain; and Mike Jager, with his 20.3cm Sky-Watcher Dobsonian.

In addition, Arthur Oslach brought his Celestron Sky-Scout Personal Planetarium for locating sky objects. Patrick Whelan brought his 10X50mm Vixen binoculars. Other members present included John Dixon, Dave Rubenhagen, Mark Stevens, Maria Lavdas and Jenny Shaw. RASC Hamilton Centre member Andy Blanchard was also there.

Two women who were non-members brought their 60mm Bushnell refractor. I gave them a “Become a Sidewalk Astronomer” booklet, a London Centre brochure and assembled two “Star Finder” planispheres for them.

London Centre President, Dave McCarter, made his digital slide presentation, "The Power of Observation," which was well received by the audience.

Cloudy skies made observing difficult and visitors were able to view only a few objects (mostly in the south) through telescopes. It was not until close to midnight that the skies overhead cleared and we were able to view stars overhead and the waning Moon and Jupiter in the east. Matt Neima got a nice view of Jupiter in his 20.3cm Celestron Schmidt-Cassegrain. Wine and cheese followed past midnight under starry skies.

There were in all 28 people from the RASC London Centre and one member from the Hamilton Centre. An estimated 120 visitors came to the Star Night.

Our deepest thanks go to all members who turned out to make this event worthwhile despite the clouds, to Dave McCarter for his excellent slide presentation and to Bob Quai for hosting the event at the Quai Du Vin Winery!

Cronyn Observatory Indian and Northern Affairs Department Summer Camp Open House, August 5th, 2010

Clear skies greeted visitors from the Indian and Northern Affairs Department to the Cronyn, Thursday, August 5th, 9:00—11:00 p.m. Graduate students Amanda Papadimos and Alexander De Souza hosted the event, with Amanda making her presentation, "Constellations," and Alexander running the big 25.4cm refractor in the dome. This was part of a Summer Camp for First Nations and Inuit youth from across Canada organized by the Indian and Northern Affairs Department. The group leader told me that there were 50 youth (age, 12—15 years) and the rest were adults for a total of 69 people. They arrived in two groups, with Amanda making her presentation twice (the first group being 33) for a total of 69 visitors.

RASC London Centre members present included Tom Czinege (with his Celestron C8 Schmidt-Cassegrain) and Adam Priestap-Suttis and his mother Cheryl (with Adam's 20.3cm Dobsonian), who set up their telescopes in the plaza on the south side, between the Cronyn and the Bioengineering building. Patrick Whelan set up the 25.4cm Dobsonian on the roof patio of the Cronyn. Peter Jedicke helped Alexander with the big 25.4cm refractor in the dome and worked on the computer. I (Bob Duff) directed groups between the dome and the plaza and helped with the observing. Objects observed included M57, Epsilon Lyrae, Albireo and Mizar and Alcor. The visitors enjoyed the evening and we closed

down the Observatory around 11:15 p.m. It was a great night with clear skies much appreciated by everybody.

St. Mary's Public Library / McCully's Hill Farm Star Night, August 17th, 2010

Cloudy skies ruled out the McCully's Hill Farm star night for Tuesday, August 17th. Matt Neima, Bob Duff and Peter Jedicke as well as the Summer Reading Program Coordinator for St. Mary's Public Library showed up to speak to any visitors who arrived anyway, to advise them to come back on Wednesday.

Daryl Newcombe of CTV Channel A News showed up and interviewed Peter Jedicke about the future of Elginfield Observatory. Matt Neima and Bob Duff set up their Celestron C8 Schmidt-Cassegrain and Meade 20.3cm Dobsonian telescopes, respectively. Peter's interview with Daryl Newcombe was videoed against the vivid backdrop of a glorious red sunset, later to be shown on the 6:00 p.m. Channel A News (Wednesday, August 18th).

Only one lady visitor showed up and another family of 3 or 4 came in a van later to pick up somebody. We left a little after 9:30 p.m. with somebody arriving to close the gate after us.

St. Mary's Public Library / McCully's Hill Farm Star Night, August 18th, 2010

A bright Moon at two days past First Quarter dominated the bright clear sky as 7 RASC London Centre members arrived with their telescopes at McCully's Hill Farm for the St. Mary's Public Library Star Night, Wednesday, August 18th. These included Adam Priestap-Suttis (and father, David) with his 20.3cm Sky-Watcher Dobsonian; Mike Roffey with his new Celestron Omni XLT 150mm Newtonian; Gary Hinks with his 80mm alt-azimuth refractor; new member Luigi Perzia with his 127mm Celestron Newtonian; Peter Jedicke with his 40.6cm Truss-Tube Dobsonian; Dave McCarter with his Dobsonian mounted Meade 25.4cm Newtonian and Bob Duff with his Meade 20.3cm Newtonian on its Dobsonian mount. Three St. Mary's Public Library staff members were also there, with the Library's 76mm Newtonian, which Dave McCarter showed them how to set up and use.

There were some 40—45 visitors in all that night, which was remarkably clear with a bright moonlight and lots of dew. Peter Jedicke stood on a picnic table and gave everybody a sky tour with his green laser pointer. Visitors enjoyed good views of the moon, M13, M57, Epsilon Lyrae, Mizar and Alcor and other deep-sky objects. Later in the evening they viewed Jupiter and Uranus

rising in the southeast.

The visitors were very appreciative and London Centre members continued observing for a while after they left, until around 11:15 p.m. We stopped for refreshments at Tim Horton's in St. Mary's on the way home.

Kiwanis Club of Middlesex (London) Slide Talk, August 26th, 2010

Peter Jedicke gave a digital slide presentation, "Canada's Role in Space," before 70 members and guests of the Kiwanis Club of Middlesex (London), on Thursday morning, August 26th. Peter reported that, after the presentation, some members shared memories of activities related to Canada's space program, including one member who had been a school chum of John H. Chapman. Other members said they had been unaware that Canada has made significant contributions to human adventure in outer space.

**Astronomy Night, University of Western Ontario
Perth Hall Residence, September 11th, 2010**

RASC London Centre members Dave McCarter, Steve Imrie, Peter Jedicke and Bob Duff provided an astronomy talk to students at the University of Western Ontario Perth Hall Residence Cafeteria, as part of the Orientation Week activities. They arrived around 9:30 p.m. and talked to students for a while. Bob Duff set up the RASC London Centre photo display with a few brochures, which interested several students. Dave McCarter began his digital slide presentation around 11:25 p.m., ending around 12 midnight, with 5 first and second year students in attendance. (Another student stood at the door for a while but didn't join the group seated around the table.) The evening ended shortly after midnight, with a few questions. Clouds and drizzle ruled out observing.

**Cronyn Observatory Saturday Evening Summer
Open House, May 1st—August 28th, 2010**

By Robert Duff

**Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, July
17th, 2010**

A clear sky greeted visitors to the Cronyn Observatory Saturday evening Open House, July 17th, 8:30 p.m. There were 29 visitors by the time Dr. Pauline Barmby finished her digital slide presentation, "Being an Astronomer," a little after 9:00 p.m. There were an esti-

mated 50—55 visitors to the Cronyn by closing time around 11:00 p.m.

Graduate student Emily McCullough explained how the big 25.4cm refractor in the dome worked and then invited people to look at the Moon and Saturn, using the 32mm Erfle eyepiece (137X). Peter Jedicke and I (Bob Duff) spent most of the time on the Observatory's roof patio. Richard Gibbens was also there. Peter checked the "Starry Night" sky charting software and the "Heavens Above" Web site on the computer in the dome and found an Iridium flare forecast at 21:57h, which was too low, 17 degrees altitude in the north-northwest, for us to see. I showed people the near First Quarter Moon and, briefly, Saturn through the RASC London Centre's 25.4cm Dobsonian, using the 17mm Nagler eyepiece (67X). Other objects visitors viewed in the Dobsonian were the orange and blue double star Albireo, the Ring Nebula (M57) and Mizar and Alcor.

One young boy with his grandfather asked many questions and scrolled through a very useful astronomy application on his iPhone. We closed down the Observatory around 11:00 p.m. after an enjoyable evening of discussion and stargazing.

**Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, July
24th, 2010**

Eric Clinton reported that he arrived at the Cronyn Observatory at 8:15 p.m., for the Open House, July 24th, and stayed until the whole sky was clouded at 10:00 p.m. There were perhaps two-dozen (~24) visitors the entire night. Eric showed a few visitors Venus from the Observatory's roof patio, using his son Ben's Celestron C5 Schmidt-Cassegrain, until the Engineering building "occulted" it. Eric then directed the telescope towards the nearly Full Moon at low power. He believed that the 25.4cm dome refractor was also directed at the Moon. Of the three students that were there, Nathan Armstrong made a digital slide presentation on the Sun, Mat Abado operated the big refractor in the dome and Eamon Duffy assisted.

**Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, July
31st, 2010**

Astronomy undergraduate students Patrick Cookson, Neil Bhatt and Mathew Abado hosted the Cronyn Observatory Open House for Saturday, July 31st, 8:30 p.m. Patrick Cookson gave the digital / slide presentation, "A Survey of the Solar System" and reported that there were approximately 15 visitors. They were not able to open the dome due to inclement weather. However, Neil Bhatt, gave the visitors a tour of the big 25.4cm

refractor in the dome, recounting some history of its usage over the years. People were very curious about the telescope and astronomy in general. Mathew Abado assisted Neil and Patrick in answering questions and showing people the telescope. They closed the Observatory at 10:50 p.m.

Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, August 7th, 2010

Increasingly cloudy skies greeted visitors to the Cronyn Observatory Saturday evening Open House, August 7th. Astronomy undergraduate students Allison Hill, Melanie Wright, Patrick Cookson and Mathew Abado hosted the event. Allison Hill began her digital slide presentation, "Stellar Death," shortly after 8:30 p.m. More visitors arrived so that by 9:37 p.m. there were 56 people, mostly seated in the lecture room with a few standing at the door. She gave a second presentation to 8 or 10 people, who may have been the ones who came in last and were standing at the door. Two more people arrived around 10:30 p.m. after the presentations were over. There were in all 58 visitors counted for the evening. Melanie Wright, Patrick Cookson and Mathew Abado operated the big 25.4cm refractor in the dome.

The RASC London Centre was represented by 5 of its members including Richard Gibbens (who attended Allison's slide presentation), Paul and Charlene Kerans, Dave McCarter and me (Bob Duff). I arrived around 8:10 p.m. and set up the RASC London Centre's 25.4cm Dobsonian (17mm Nagler eyepiece, 67X) on the Observatory's roof patio and showed visitors the weather vane on the roof of the Bioengineering building to the south. Paul and Charlene Kerans arrived and also set up their 30.5cm Meade Truss-Tube Dobsonian on the roof patio. Visitors glimpsed a few stars (Arcturus and Vega) through our telescopes, but otherwise asked a lot of questions. Dave McCarter arrived for a short time but had to leave early. A gave a "Star Finder" planisphere and booklet, "Become a Sidewalk Astronomer," and some Galileo Moment cards to one family and a second "Sidewalk Astronomer" to another. I also gave them RASC London Centre brochures.

We closed the Observatory around 10:40 p.m. While everybody was disappointed with the cloudy skies, some will no doubt return under clearer skies.

Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, August 14th, 2010

Cloudy skies greeted visitors to the Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, August 14th, 8:30 p.m. Gradu-

ate student Stephanie Keating made her digital slide presentation, "The Birth, Life and Death of Stars," before a group of visitors that totalled 24 by the end of the evening. Graduate students Draco Szathmary and Pam Tanakul operated the 25.4cm refractor and gave the visitors a tour of the dome. Graduate student Robbie Halonen was also there, listening to the presentation and talking to visitors.

Since it was cloudy, Draco showed visitors the communications tower in south London through the big 25.4cm refractor, using the 32mm Erfle eyepiece (137X). Richard Gibbens and I (Bob Duff) were the two RASC London Centre members present. I showed the visitors the weather vane (wind speed propeller) on the roof of the Bioengineering building to the south, using the London Centre's 25.4cm Dobsonian with the 17mm Nagler eyepiece (67X).

The visitors were gone by 9:40 p.m. and we closed the Observatory shortly thereafter as some light rain began to fall. It was a pretty good evening despite the clouds.

Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, August 21st, 2010

Graduate student Jeff Bailey reported that 16 showed up for the Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, August 21st, despite the weather, which was clouds and rain.

Graduate student Nicole Wityk made the digital / slide presentation, "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star," which was a general overview of stars, what they are and where they come from. There were quite a few children, including a birthday party. Jeff showed them the telescope, explaining how it worked. He also got the children to move the dome and telescope. The Observatory was closed down around 10:00 p.m.

Cronyn Observatory Open House, Saturday, August 28th, 2010

A clear sky greeted visitors to the Cronyn Observatory, Saturday August 28th, for the last Open House of the 2010 summer season. Graduate student Wolf Dapp began his digital slide presentation, "Star Formation—a Physical Perspective," at 8:30 p.m., before 29 visitors with more people arriving even as he spoke. RASC London Centre member Richard Gibbens was there, listening to the presentation. Graduates student Rajib Saha operated the big 25.4cm refractor in the dome and graduate student Ruma Samadder greeted and counted visitors. There would be 169 visitors by the end of the evening.

Rajib and I (Bob Duff) showed visitors the orange and blue double star Albireo through the big refractor in the dome, using the 32mm Erfle eyepiece (137X). We directed the telescope towards Jupiter around 10:00 p.m., when it was high enough above the eastern horizon and got an excellent view of the cloud belts and 4 Galilean moons. Graduate student Talayeh Hezareh arrived and took over the big telescope allowing Rajib and me to set up the RASC London Centre's 25.4cm Dobsonian on the Observatory's roof patio. I directed the Dobsonian towards the waning (4-days-past-full) gibbous Moon, giving the visitors splendid views through the 17mm Nagler eyepiece (67X). We watched an International Space Station (ISS) pass, from northeast to northwest at 9:20 p.m. I answered questions and gave a constellation tour with my green laser pointer.

Peter Jedicke arrived and helped with the Open House until closing time around 11:10 p.m. It was an exceptionally clear, mild night with a good turnout of visitors, and a perfect ending for the Cronyn Observatory Summer Open House 2010.

Cronyn Observatory Open House, May 1—August 28, 2010, Summary Report

A total of 20 Cronyn Observatory Saturday evening Open House events were held from May 1st —August 28th, 2010. The total number of visitors (Members of the Public) to the Observatory was 709 based on the estimated totals for each event. The RASC London Centre member "Participation Rate" was 55 for 16 out of 20 events. In all, 14 RASC London Centre members participated in Cronyn Observatory Open House events. The Amateur Telescope Usage Rate was 24 for 10 amateur telescopes used. There was also one RASC Hamilton Centre member with image stabilizing binoculars at one event (May 29th). Note that this does not include the Galileoscopes or telescopes brought by visitors.

The 14 RASC London Centre Member who participated in one or more Cronyn Observatory Saturday evening Open House events from May 1st to August 28th, 2010, are as follows: Greg Andres, Everett Clark, Eric Clinton, Bob Duff, Richard Gibbens, Steve Imrie, Peter Jedicke, Paul Kerans, Charlene Kerans, John Kulczycki, Dave McCarter, Adam Priestap-Suttis, Mike Roffey and Harold Tutt.

We thank all RASC London Centre members who helped with the Cronyn Observatory Saturday evening Open Houses, May 1st—August 28th, 2010.