

THE FOCUS

The Official Newsletter of United Astronomy Clubs of New Jersey

January 1996

Volume II Number I

NEW UACNJ OFFICERS ARE ELECTED

At the November UACNJ meeting, hosted by the RAC, the new slate of officers were elected for 1996. This year's officers are as follows:

President - Ralph Marantino (AAAP)

V. P. - Ron Russo (MMAS/SSG)

Secretary - Herb Johnson (AAAP)

Treasurer - Tom Massey (RACIMTC)

1 yr. Trustee - Al Tencza (NJAG)

3 yr. Trustee - Lonnie Buinis (HLOIMMAS)

If you have any questions or comments regarding these officers or any of the committees of UACNJ you may wish to attend a meeting to voice your opinion. The meetings are open to any UACNJ member.

Hopatcong Area

Amateur Astronomers

Find A New Abode

After much work by HAAA president Ken Roundy a "permanent" meeting place has been obtained. The club will now be meeting at the Hopatcong Civic Center on Lakeside Boulevard in Hopatcong.

This new site offers many advantages for the HAAA. The H.C.C. not only offers a local meeting facility and ample parking, but the large field in the rear of the building can double as an observing site.

The first meeting to take place there will occur on January 17, 1996. Pro-

vided all goes as planned, regular club meetings will be held on the third Wednesday of the month.

A Note From The Editor

Firstly I'd like to wish everyone a very happy and healthy New Year! Hopefully 1996 will be even better than 1995 for all UACNJ clubs.

The Focus now in its' second year of publication can only survive with your input. All club announcements as well as any pertinent articles will be published here (provided that there's enough room, although that hasn't been a problem yet) provided they are submitted in time. Publishing deadlines for *The Focus* are the 1st of March, May, July, September and November. Please get your submissions in as early as possible. Submissions can be submitted to:

The Focus

c/o Wayne Zuhl

717 Brookside Place

Cranford, NJ 07016

or via e-mail at: zuhlw@soho.ios.com

RADIO ASTRONOMY UPDATE

By Herb Johnson

The radio telescope project at Jenny Jump is a multi-year project to design, build and test a small radio telescope at 400 MHz. The goals are to use a simple design and system, so that the UACNJ can become familiar with the issues, designs, costs and operation of a small radio observatory; to develop interest

and experience in radio astronomy among the members of the UACNJ; and to provide a public radio astronomy facility at the Jenny Jump site. The telescope will operate continuously, in all weather and at all hours, from the antenna location seventy feet in front of the house and connected by a buried power cable and signal conduit. The antenna system is intended for use and operation over a five year span. The conduit and electronics will be useful for many more years to accommodate changes and upgrades over time.

The antenna design is a collinear array of eight dipole antennae, each 37 cm long (half wavelength), arranged on a 40 square foot flat frame which faces the sky. As radio sources drift past the front of the antenna, the radio noise they emit will be captured by the antenna, amplified and converted to a lower frequency for convenience and sent along a 70 foot underground cable to the house. There a simple chart recorder will display the passages of various sources as they cross the antenna. These sources will include the Sun, supernova remnants such as Casseopia A and the plane of the gal-

continued on next page...

UACNJ Board Meeting

The next meeting will be held on
Sat., January 20, 1996 at 10 a.m.
The meeting will be hosted by AAJ
at Sperry Observatory in Cranford.

All are welcome to attend the
meeting.

For directions call Barry Malpas
at: 908-755-6932



THE JUMP NOTES

Several events will be taking place in the near future at the UACNJ Consortium observatory at Jenny Jump State Forest in Hope, NJ.

There will be regular **Saturday Work Sessions** on January 20th, February 3rd and 17th, March 2nd and 16th. Work sessions usually begin at 10 a.m. and run all day. During these Saturday work parties, renovations are made to the house and the grounds and anything else that needs work. If you haven't yet attended a work session, you really should. You'll not only be helping with the site but it's a great way to meet people from other clubs.

In mid October we received the official word from the State that the site plan has been approved. This means that new observatories can begin construction in the spring. We will begin setting up work crews to help dig and pour the foundations. Get out there and give a hand!

We need your support to make the Observatory a success. If you're already a supporting member of the Consortium then you know that yearly dues are due. Regular membership is \$20, Sustaining memberships cost \$50. Your dues help pay the bills that are incurred at the Observatory to keep it operating. This may sound like a beg-a-thon but that money is needed to help keep this fine dark sky site available to amateur astronomers. If you are not a Consortium member and would like to become one, contact Barry Malpas at 908-755-6932  for more information.

continued from previous page...
axy. Other receivers, including audio, can be connected and demonstrated to the public. Research programs to chart sources and solar activity will be developed.

For more information contact Ron Russo at 201-673-1631. Materials and notes are available on the radio telescope project. Meetings of the commit-

tee generally occur monthly at the Jenny Jump site. All UACNJ members are invited to attend. We hope to have something to "show" this spring.

Editor's note: When referring to UACNJ members it is in reference to any member of a club that belongs to the UACNJ this *do not* mean that you have to be a participating member of the Jenny Jump consortium.

Looking for Jenny

by Gordon Bond

I suppose it's a question that's crossed the minds of most UACNJ members not familiar with Warren County - just who was this Jenny Jump and why did she have a state forest named after her? An afternoon spent search the New Jersey Collection of the Raritan Valley Library turned up little. So, I turned to Helen Maurella, the head of the forest and someone who played a pivotal role in the UACNJ acquiring its hilltop. She sent me a packet of info gleaned from other's quests for the elusive Jenny, which I share here.

The forest takes its name from the Jenny Jump Mountain Range which reaches from 399 feet in elevation at Mountain Lake to 1,108 feet near the Forest Headquarters, near the observatory. The earliest known reference to the mountain by the Jenny Jump name was found in the diary of a Swedish Missionary named Sven Roseen, which he penned in 1747. Samuel Green, the deputy surveyor for the West Jersey Proprietors (the British who ran the Colonies) is said to have been the first to settle in the range. He had his headquarters in the vicinity of Mountain Lake which, prior to 1768, was known as Green's Pond after him. It was from Green that the Moravians purchased 1,500 acres of land to build the town now known as Hope in 1768. The timber used to build Hope came from the trees on the mountain.

Jenny's identity is lost somewhere in the mists of Warren County's rich folkloric history. A darker tale tells of a settler who built his cabin near a steep cliff facing the northwest. He was working in a field at the cliff's bottom when he heard his young daughter, Jenny, cry out to him from above. To his horror he saw her surrounded by a band of marauding Indians (possibly Iriquois) with no chance of escape. In

desperation, rather than let his daughter fall victim to her attackers, he instructed her, "Jenny, jump!" which she did, falling a hundred feet to her death.

Perhaps a little happier of an ending, though no less dramatic, may be found in another version which one source called "probably the most reliable account". Here, Jenny becomes the wife of an elderly settler and both are driving a horse drawn cart down a steep side of the mountain. The old man loses control and the cart threatens to capsize, at which time he cries out to his wife, "Jenny, jump!" According to the story, she does and is saved from accident or even death, but nothing is mentioned of how her mate fared.

A variation of this theme has Jenny as the daughter of a moonshiner with his still on the mountain. While rolling a barrel from the still, it got away from him and rolled down the hill straight for Jenny who was acting as lookout near the cliff's edge. Once again, the cry of "Jenny, jump!" though it isn't clear if she jumped off the cliff to her death or out of the way.

A more comical version has no Jenny. In the early days of European exploration and settlement of the region, fur traders and trappers would exchange jugs of gin with the natives for pelts and the rights to trap on their land. The original inhabitants were the Leni Lenape tribe who were later defeated by the Iriquois Nation. In any case, after his payoff, so the the story goes, one Indian always retreated to the hills to drink his prize while gazing over the lovely view. But in one case, after perhaps a little too much gin, the jug was tipped over and rolled clean off of the cliff to the dismay of its owner. When telling his misfortune to a settler, he proclaimed, "The Gin-He-Jump!"

There are minor variation of these tales and of who Jenny was. It may be impossible to find any historical evidence of Jenny, but some folks claim to know the spot from which she jumped. According to a recent article in Warren County Magazine two long time residents determined what they believe to be the exact spot of the legendary jump.

We may never know more, but don't be surprised if one deep, dark night at the observatory, when you're all alone, you don't hear whispered on the wind "Jenny, jump!"