



FOCUS

The Newsletter of the United Astronomy Clubs of New Jersey

Volume 3, Issue 4

August/September 1997

28" Naegele Telescope Moved

The move of the Naegele 28" telescope from its original observatory in Basking Ridge to Jenny Jump was completed on May 30, 1997. The process began on May 17 when the mirror, tube and drive assembly was removed by a team of UACNJ volunteers. They returned on May 30 for the jeep axle mount.

Great care was taken to make sure that all the parts were labeled and numerous photos were taken to make putting it all back together easier. Optician Al Witzgall examined the mirror and determined that it will need to be recoated. Some rewiring will be

necessary and a fresh coat of paint needed, but beyond this the integrity of this unique instrument will remain intact.

The tube and axle are now stored in a barn near the Ranger Station at Jenny Jump. Hoisting the tube to the second story hay loft was quite a job! The mirror and other components are at the house. The plan is to mount the mirror as a display to solicit donations for the planned observatory to house the instrument.

Thanks to all those who volunteered their time, vehicles, tools and muscles to the cause!



Since the tube was wider than the observatory door, it had to be lifted up and out through the slit in the roof.

Gordon Bond New Focus Editor

Effective with this issue, I'll be the new Editor of The Focus. Many thanks to Wayne Zuhl for all his work in the past establishing and editing this newsletter.

Send all material for this newsletter to Gordon Bond, 313 Raphael Ave., Middlesex, NJ 08846-1224.

I produce this on QuarkXpress and would prefer articles saved as ASCII files, but I can accept other formats too. If you have any questions, call me at (732) 469-7752 week-nights between 8 and 10 pm.

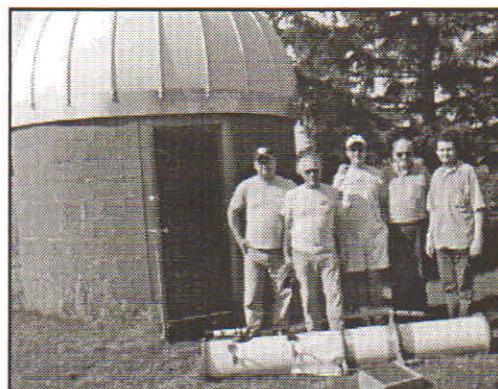
10" Refractor Donated

Though he lived less than ten minutes away and had driven by the place thousands of times, Saul Moroz had no idea of the treasure that was hidden behind the trees of the Somerset farmland. It was his daughter who discovered the observatory which was at first thought to be a small silo. Some detective work by Saul and Ralph Marantino tracked down the owner, Robert Saunders.

Saunders, who lived in Princeton and was a founding member of the Amateur Astronomers Association of Princeton, had been living in Vermont where he moved in 1989. The observatory he built in the then-dark skies of rural Somerset County in 1959 sat dormant since that time. Saul and Ralph contacted him and he graciously donated the 10 inch f/10 Newtonian housed within to the UACNJ. Saunders came down to NJ with his son to help UACNJ volunteers disassemble and move the tube, which is now stored in Saul's home. The instrument was professionally made for Saunders in New York State. The tube was successfully moved, but the German equatorial mount proved too heavy and still sits in

the observatory until arrangements can be made for more hands. The building's dome was initially to be salvaged for use on the eventual building that will house the 28", but it now appears to be too small. The building is slated for demolition.

With its long focal length, plans are to turn the telescope into a dedicated solar telescope housed in the roll-off roof shed formerly slated for the now defunct Henrietta Leavitt Observatory.



Left to Right: Ralph Marantino, Saul Moroz, Saunders' son, Robert Saunders, Gordon Bond

Protected "Dark Area" Program

We've been investing a lot of time, effort and money on developing the UACNJ's observatory up at Jenny Jump. Our member clubs have also worked hard to establish their observatories and observing sites. We need to protect this investment against the scourge of light pollution which threatens to render such sites useless.

As UACNJ members are probably well-aware, the state appointed Light Pollution Study Commission has finished meeting and has made its recommendations to the Governor. As of the time this is written, there has been no signs that Governor Whitman has acted upon those recommendations.

The Study Commission's report includes a recommendation that "Areas of New Jersey determined to be especially suitable for astronomical observations or which provide nocturnal benefits to flora and fauna should be considered for designation as 'dark areas'."

The Report goes on to state that, "The State of New Jersey should consider formulating a plan to retain or, where possible, reduce lighting levels in those parts of the 'dark areas' which are under control of the State. County and municipal government should be encouraged to retain or reduce existing lighting levels in 'dark areas' they own."

The UACNJ would like to help this process move forward by compiling a comprehensive list of areas which fit the criteria of the Commission's recommended dark area sites. We have mailed a set of forms for this purpose to all UACNJ clubs. Even out-of-state clubs can participate by nominating sites they use in New Jersey.

We would like to stress not only how these sites allow the hobbyist to enjoy astronomy, but also how they represent a valuable educational resource for the state by allowing the public to also experience the night sky.

Now is the time to act! If your club has not received the forms or

has any questions, please call Gordon Bond at (732) 469-7752 evenings between 8 and 10 pm

weeknights or during the week-end. Forms are also on the UACNJ web site.

We're not in Kansas anymore, Toto!

Bary Malpas

Gordon Bond and I were on our way up to Jenny Jump to give a special presentation to a group of high school students on Friday evening, July 18th. The weather prognosis was not good, and we figured the program would probably consist of my lecture and a tour of the facility ... obviously no viewing, with the weather growing more ominous as we drove along route 78 west.

Just before the access to route 31 north we had to pull over due to the heavy winds and rain that came up on us suddenly. Even the large trucks did the same due to the zero visibility. After about ten minutes, however, everything died down to a drizzle which eventually stopped.

We continued on being thwarted occasionally by deep water across the road and poor traffic conditions. Once we reached route 611 we realized what had happened. A tornado, or group of them, had touched down in the entire region between Great Meadows and Hope. As we drove along it was obvious that there was substantial damage to all the properties we passed. There was no power, as many of the lines were downed due to the many fallen trees.

We made it up to Far View Road, but could not go more than half way to the park entrance. We spent about an hour trying to find a route that would allow us to approach from the north with no luck. Everywhere, on every property there was extensive damage with trees and power lines downed everywhere.

We again drove up to Far View Road and proceeded as far as we could. We parked the Jeep and advanced on foot with flash lights, climbing over, under

and around trees as we walked. One tree downed was completely up-rooted, its root ball now about ten feet tall as the large tree lay on its side across someones property. Finally coming to the driveway of the Observatory, we continued up the hill. In front of the neighbors property, twenty-five feet before the entrance gate, a tree had had its top completely TWISTED off as it lay crumpled across the drive.

It was now approaching 9:00 p.m. and it was getting dark. Four more trees, several of them quite large, blocked our way down the drive to Jenny Jump Observatory. But, as we approached the buildings, both the house and the observatory, we were surprised to see that there were no trees down, and there was no damage to the buildings.

We went inside to check everything. The power was out, but the phone worked. We called the park office, and our respective homes to inform all that we and the observatory were OK.

The sky was now beginning to clear somewhat, and with the power out for the entire valley (or county as I was later to learn) we both thought that this could be, even with all the surrounding devastation, the ultimate observing experience. NO LIGHTS IN NEW JERSEY!!! We would have opened the observatory except the FULL MOON was rising over the horizon. So we proceeded back to the Jeep. We had walked over two miles to get in and back out. Driving along the ridge we stopped by Gil Jeffer's house since he was scheduled to help us with the public program. He had many trees down, but no damage to his house.

UACNJ NOTEBOOK

August 30 - 31

6th Annual MEGAMEET

Lehigh Valley Amateur
Astronomical Society
This is a regional amateur club
observing event: no fuss - no frills
- no admission charge
Pulpit Rock on Blue Mountain
about 30 miles west of Allentown,
PA

September 6

4th Annual UACNJ

Symposium

UACNJ Observatory, Jenny
Jump State Forest
1:30pm to 11:00pm
General and technical talks, solar
observing, displays, flea market,
evening star party & more.

September 20

**The Astronomical Society of
Long Island's Annual Forum**

Five guest speakers, vendors,

etc. For more info check out
<http://www.netcom/~alan-s/asli.html>
Held at Five Towns College, Exit
50 off the L.I.E.

September 26 - 28

**First Annual South Jersey Star
Party**

South Jersey Astronomy Club
Held at Belleplain State Forest,
Cape May, NJ. For more info
check out
<http://members.aol.com/sjastroc/sjacstpt.html>

October 3 - 5

Stella-Della-Valley XI

Bucks-Mont Astronomical
Association
Astronomy weekend campout
Ottsville, Bucks County, PA
For more info check out
<http://astro4.ast.vill.edu/bmaatop.htm>

The UACNJ is on the Web!

Check us out at <http://www.erols.com/njastro/>

The observers duty roster and the JJ project work schedule are located in the "UACNJ connection" section on the site.