



FOCUS

The Newsletter of the United Astronomy Clubs of New Jersey

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4th Annual Symposium Draws Second Biggest Crowd

The fourth annual UACNJ Symposium drew a crowd of around 150 and earned some \$250 from food and "flea market" sales. The attendance ranks second only to the first Symposium. Part of the success is probably due to the clear skies enjoyed by nightfall.

As usual, two series of talks were given. Those for the general public were given in the downstairs meeting room. More advanced talks were given upstairs. Gordon Bond spoke on techniques for drawing deep sky objects, Tom Crowley, president of the Society of Amateur Radio Astronomers talked about radio astronomy and Aaron Krahnert gave an interesting presentation



Wayne Augenstein (center) provided some splendid views of solar activity - which may be on the increase!

about supernovae while inviting members to join him in establishing a UACNJ supernovae search program.

Several members set up their telescopes on the observing field. During the day, these provided some stunning views of

sunspots and a few large prominences. We seem to be entering a period of increased solar activity that some predict will be spectacular!

Parking proved an interesting challenge with the situation somewhat in limbo. Visitors were fed into the area amongst the foundations for the eventual club observatories. Once this area was filled, they were directed across the edge of the observing field and down the trail in the back to the area recently cleared.

Eventually, this area will be expanded and access to the road on that side re-established. This will be used for the public and allow them to use headlights without disturbing observers on the hilltop.

TPO Discount Subscription Plan for UACNJ Members!

As many of you know, I also edit and publish The Practical Observer (TPO), a quarterly magazine for serious amateur astronomers focusing on a wide variety of observing techniques.

Members of UACNJ clubs can now receive a *discounted subscription!* A one year subscription normally costs \$12. UACNJ members can get it for **\$10!**

Write Gordon Bond, 313 Raphael Ave., Middlesex, NJ 08846-1224 for a free sample issue and full information to show at your next club meeting.

10" Reflector Move Complete

It was a lot heavier than it looked! When the tube of Robert Saunder's old telescope was removed (see last issue), it was decided that a team would return for the cast iron German equatorial style mount. The idea was to disassemble it - or at least remove the counterweight which made balancing it difficult. Several attempts were made to twist, pull and bang the weight off the rod, but to no avail. We were able to disconnect the mount from the box containing the drive mechanism, however, which did help. Plenty of photos were taken of it all intact to aide putting it back together properly later.

Dave Henderson's block and tackle hoist was hooked up to the beam at the upper frame of the slit and used to remove the mount from its pier

and lower it down onto blocks of wood set on the steps. Once secured there, the hoist was removed from where it was and rehooked to a lower beam which allowed it to be lowered out the door. Once out, it was
(continued on back)



"Beats me!" - Barry Malpas, Saul Moroz and Ron Russo try to work out if the mount can be taken apart - it couldn't!

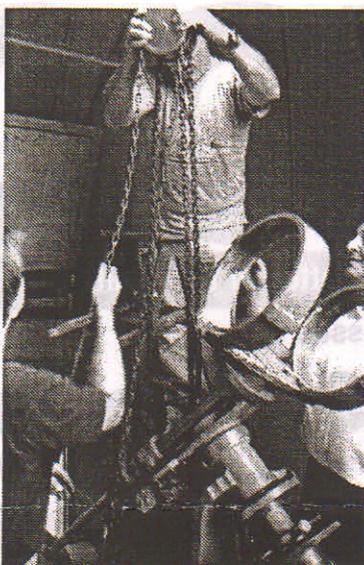
10" Reflector Move Complete

(continued from front)

muscled into the back of Henderson's pick-up truck. The box containing the drive (about as heavy with thick plate steel walls) was manhandled off and slid down a wood plank ramp outside and also into the truck.

Considering the difficulty of moving the thing, it was decided it would be best to take it directly up to Jenny Jump. The tube now resides in Saul Moroz's basement. The original plan was to store the mount there as well, but the thought of having to lift it down the steps changed that!

As mentioned last issue, the scope is slated to become a dedicated solar telescope and occupy one of the five observatories being built. The old observatory is slated for demolition. The dome was considered for use on the eventual observatory housing the 28", but it is too small. If anyone is interested in salvaging it, better do it soon!



Saul Moroz adjusts the hoist used to remove the mount. Dave Henderson (left) and Ron Russo attach it to the mount.

Different Perspectives

Gordon Bond

You sometimes don't appreciate what you've got until you see it from a different perspective. An amateur astronomer friend who lives in Pennsylvania has often complained in his letters about his local astronomy club. He's a dedicated lunar and planetary observer. His club always schedules their events for the new moon - perfect for deep sky observers but limiting for lunar/planetary!

Then I thought about my experiences up at Jenny Jump. I've shared the hill with observers of all persua-

sions at one time or another. Public nights tend to be scheduled so the moon is up at least early in the evening but sets soon enough to give deep sky a chance too. We have a 28" telescope waiting for an observatory that will provide deep sky fans like me a chance at some really impressive aperture. Other clubs will probably have instruments in their observatories better suited to moon and planets. The 10" reflector will become a solar telescope and the radio telescope is well under way. Astrophotographers enjoy the darkest skies in the state. The sounds of time signals often tell of the presence of meteor photographers. A variety of telescopes have been set up there, from antiques to homemade to high tech. Everyone is welcome and made to feel at home!

I'm trying to get my friend to drive over to my side of the Delaware for a night, but it's a distance for him. Pity - it would be a breath of fresh air for him!

Asteroid Certificate Program Added

In addition to its Messier and Spectroscopic certificates, the UACNJ now offers a set of three asteroid certificates for beginner, intermediate and advanced observers. Details may be found on the UACNJ website.

UACNJ NOTEBOOK

14th Annual Winter Star Party

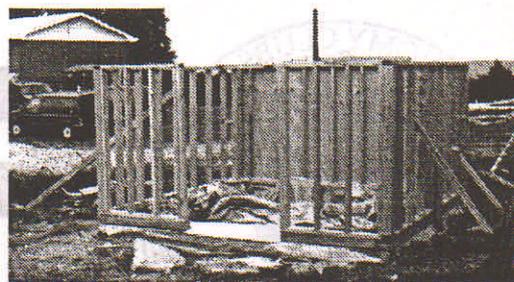
Hosted by the Southern Cross Astronomical Society and held in the Florida Keys between January 26 and February 1, 1998

Registration deadline is OCTOBER 5

Forms and information can be found at their web site:

<http://www.scas.org/wsp.html>

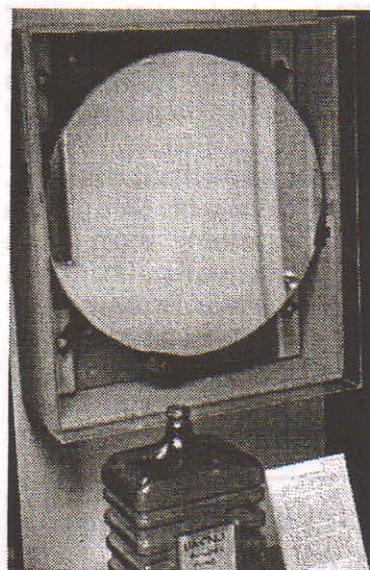
or by calling (305) 441-2428



Amateur Astronomers Association of Princeton have begun constructing their observatory on one of the five foundations. It will house a 12" reflector.

Once the public open-house season ends, work sessions will be scheduled to begin on the various projects in the planning stages now.

Watch The Focus or visit the UACNJ web site for schedule updates!



The mirror from the 28" (a.k.a. the .7 meter) telescope is now mounted on the wall of the house at Jenny Jump for a display to solicit donations for the construction of the observatory for it.

Tom Crowley of SARA (who gave a talk at the Symposium) was able to give us some good ideas for developing our **radio telescope**. Anyone interested in getting involved with radio astronomy can call Daryl Foyuth at (609) 538-8120.

The UACNJ is on the Web!

Check us out at

<http://www.erols.com/njastro/>

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

Check it out, something new is always being added!