

DECEMBER, 1983
NOW IN OUR 36th YEAR

Phoenix Astronomical Society, Inc.

PHOENIX, ARIZONA

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MEETING DECEMBER 2

ANCIENT ASTRONOMY AT MACHUPICCHU

Our guest speaker for the December meeting will be Dr. Raymond E. White of Stewart Observatory in Tucson. Dr. White has been researching this subject in South America, and is the author of that interesting article on Bart Bok in the October issue of Sky and Telescope. This should be a very interesting meeting in both an astronomical and an historical sense.

The meeting will be in room C-102 at Phoenix College, and will begin at 8pm.

JANUARY MEETING

PHOTOMETRY

Our speaker at the January meeting will be Louis Boyd, who will give us a talk on photometry. Details will be in the January newsletter.

OCTOBER'S MEETING

After first giving us clear directions to the U.S. Naval Observatory, Dr. Crawford gave us a very good talk on the criteria for choosing an observatory site. One of facts brought out was that over a period of time, the night-time sky in any given location will be as cloudy as the day-time sky, so there is no need to stay at a site 24 hours a day. Satellite maps are studied for a year, atmospheric pressure and water vapor (absolute) are measured at the site, and the darkness of the sky is measured and compared to other sites under consideration.

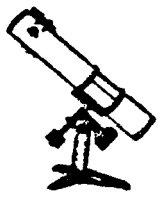
Dr. Crawford told us that because of modern equipment and telemetry, observatories no longer have to be located near universities, and with light pollution being such a problem, it is not even a desirable characteristic. For example, Moana Kea in Hawaii and Cerro Tololo in Chile are very remote when compared to other major observatories. Speaking of Cerro Tololo, its sky is 80% to 85% clear compared to only 65% to 70% clear at Kitt Peak!

One of the more interesting things Dr. Crawford told us was that Mount Graham is the last site in the continental U.S. considered as a possible home for the proposed 10 meter telescope.

After his lecture, Dr. Crawford answered many questions over coffee and cookies.



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U. S. NAVAL OBSERVATORY FIELD TRIP

In spite of cloudy skies, five of our members made it to the USNO near Flagstaff. Hermann Andresen, Bob Buckner, Joe Callahan, Stanley Gorodenski, and Fulton Wright; along with members of The Prescott Astronomy Club; were given a guided tour by Dr. Fred Vrba. During a short break in the clouds, the 61" was trained on M15 and gave a truly spectacular view! Those in attendance were shown how to work the controls and some tried their hand at aiming the big 'scope. Even though clouds were a major problem, the outing was well worth while to the people I talked to.

NOVEMBERS' CLOUD PARTY

XXXX The food was good, even if the sky wasn't. Other than the moon, the only things we saw were photographs and slides taken by Raul Espinoza and Dr. Kieth Parizek. The photos were good, but weren't like the real thing.

FUTURE EVENTS

In February, Dr. Ann Cowley will speak to us on "Newly Discovered Black Holes". Dr. Cowley comes to us from A.S.U.

April is our business meeting, and we hope to have a short talk from one of our members after the election of officers. By the way, it's not too soon to be thinking about nominations! Who would you like to have as your officers in the '84-85 season?

PIGGY-BACK POLARIZING FILTERS

By Bob Pribbenow

Several weeks ago, intent on demonstrating the topography of the Lunar surface, I purchased a pair of piggy-back polarizing filters.

After the filter set is securely screwed into the base of the eyepiece, the lower filter is rotated until the desired amount of light is allowed to enter the eyepiece. Several adjustments may be necessary.

Aiming the telescope directly at the bright, full, rising moon, the view appeared as a Lunar "map" suspended in the darkened sky.

The crater Tycho, with its striations, Copernicus, the mares and other Lunar physical features were easy to identify.

For lunar observation in particular, a pair of piggy-back polarizing filters seems to be a good investment.

FOR SALE: Quantum 6" Maksutov telescope, wedge, tripod, no eyepieces; Cave 6" Deluxe Newtonian, mount, drive, 3 eyepieces; Edmond Astroscan, with stand. Contact Ron Schmidli at 276-8343.

Deadline for the next newsletter will be Friday, January 13.