

NEW MEMBERS

- Bast, Louis B., Nebraska Hall, Arlington, Va.
- Holleran, Robert T., 1416 Otis St. N.E. Michigan 3127
- Walls, Roy J., 6503 Georgia St., Chevy Chase, Md.
(Wash. 15) Wisconsin 5395
- White, Alexander L., 1010 Barnaby Terrace S.E., Apt. 202.
Victory 2620
- Jefferis, Robert C., 3401 16th St. N.W. Columbia 6807
- *Stone, Jay, 5618 Nebraska Ave. N.W. (15) Emerson 8643
- *Ricketts, John B., 5501 Broad Branch Road N.W. (15)
Emerson 3563
- *Adams, Robert J., 714 Guilford Court, Silver Springs, Md.
Shepard 3165
- *Austensen, Bruce, 9318 Worth Avenue, Silver Springs, Md.
Sligo 4200
- *Wright, Thomas L., 9224 Kingsbury Drive, Silver Springs,
Md. Sligo 8362

OCCULTATIONS

Morgan Cilley

Date	Star No.	Magnitude	Immersion	Hour Angle
1	3503	7.4	6:34 PM	3 1/2 W
3	184	6.2	8:15 PM	4 W
4	290	6.1	8:34 PM	3 3/4 W
5	416	5.4	10:41 PM	5 W
7	652	6.4	4:32 PM	2 3/4 E
7	683	7.3	10:00 PM	2 3/4 W
8	833	7.1	10:52 PM	2 3/4 W
9	844	5.7	1:14 AM	5 W
11	1169	5.4	1:24 AM	3 1/4 W

VARIABLE-STAR OBSERVING was introduced to some and reviewed for other NCAs January 14th when Mr. Cilley explained why information concerning variable stars is important to astronomers. He described the method of observing, how to use the charts, keep a log, and send reports to the AAVSO at Harvard. Due to the interest shown in this program, a similar meeting will be held February 25th.

 Mabel Sterns, editor, 2517 K Street N.W. (7) DI-9422
 Jewell Boling, assistant editor, 1717 P St. N.W. (6)

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STAR DUST
 National Capital Astronomers
 Washington, D. C.

February 1949 Vol. 6, No. 6

- Date FEBRUARY CALENDAR
- 3 Thurs. Open house, Rotbart Observatory, 4410 River Road N.W. 8 to 10 p.m. Call Emerson 0119.
 - 5 Sat. "Climates of the Geologic Past," Dr. Edgar Bowles, Professor of Geology, American University. 8:15 p.m. Commerce Auditorium.
 - 17 Thurs. Open house, Rotbart Observatory, 8 to 10 p.m.
 - 18 Fri. Junior night at the 5-inch Clark, 8 p.m. Alternate, Saturday, Feb. 26. John Lankford.
 - 19 Sat. Discussion group, 8 p.m. Commerce foyer. "Optics of the Aurora and of the Comets," Edward P. Jenkins.
 - 23 Wed. Regular members' observation, 8 p.m. at the NCA 5-inch Clark telescope. Alternate, Monday, February 28. Carl Werntz.
 - 25 Fri. Variable stars, Mr. Cilley. Naval Observatory lobby 8 p.m.
 - Mon. and Thurs., telescope-making class 8-10 p.m., 505 Morse St. N.E. Miss Warthen, SH-9451; class TR-2224.

"CLIMATES OF THE GEOLOGIC PAST" will trace the climatic changes through past geologic ages, emphasizing the impact of climate on the evolution of life and the extinction of certain known specialized forms such as the dinosaur, the hairy mammoth, and others. The reasons for climatic changes and the geologic evidences on which interpretation of climates are based, will be surveyed. The possibility of predicting future climatic conditions will be given some attention.

Dr. Bowles received his training at the George Washington and the Johns Hopkins Universities. His major interest has resulted in field work in extensive areas which include southern and western United States, Mexico, Alaska, and Egypt. Before joining the staff of the American University, Dr. Bowles taught at Rutgers University.

---George L. Skirm

DISCUSSION GROUP Saturday, February 19, will be of the good old-fashioned kind; everyone will have a chance to contribute to the discussion and ask questions. Mr. Edward P. Jinkins will be M.C. and the subject will be "Optics of the Aurora and of the Comets." ---Bob Wright

BIBLIOPHILES OF NCA enjoyed a treat January 11 when Mrs. Savage, Librarian at Naval Observatory, invited them to examine rare volumes on astronomy and mathematics in Latin, German, and French: Bayer's "Uranometria," atlas of constellations and one of the first of its kind (1603), "Celestial Instruments of Hevelius" (1679), and others dating back to the 16th century. Showcases have been changed and the exhibit of rare books will continue for a time. Visiting hours are 8 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARKS PROGRAM for 1949. At a trustees' meeting it was decided to cooperate with the National Capital Parks program for the year 1949 and that an enlarged program will be carried out. The selected dates for this season will be April 9 (Saturday), May 8, June 19, July 31, August 14, September 18, October 22 (Saturday), and October 29. All dates are on Sunday evening with the exception of the two that will be on Saturday. This year will see a continuation of the attempt to have a program of slides in case it is too cloudy for observing. Also, of extreme importance, is the fact that the place for holding these observation outings will be changed to 16th and Colorado Ave. N.W., site of the campfire programs. This undoubtedly will increase the attendance due to the increased accessibility of the new location.

---Grace C. Scholz

"ASTRONOMY CHARTED," a set of 25 charts, will be available at the next meeting for examination. The publisher has sent one set on approval to the secretary.

MR. EDWARD P. JINKINS has been spending a considerable part of his spare time making changes on the clock drive of our Alvan Clark telescope at the Naval Observatory. It has been fixed so that the chance of damage to either the telescope or to the drive through use of the telescope has been lessened. It is also planned to remove the metal braces recently added to reduce vibration, and to replace the wooden base with a cement block. This should steady the telescope for better observing. It is hoped that all those using our telescope will give it the care due an instrument of this quality. Please read and observe instructions posted in the building.

---Grace C. Scholz

THE ROVING ASTRONOMER OBSERVES that Mr. Halloran and Mr. Whittaker have joined the mirror-making class; Mr. and Mrs. Edward H. Jones, with their 3-inch Zeiss, have found nearly all the nebulae and star clusters shown in Norton's Star Atlas (in the northern hemisphere and within certain magnitudes, we suppose). Variable star observations for one month: Mr. Gilley 50, John Lankford 6, John Edmonds 4, Miles Davis 7, Carl Werntz 3; Mr. Gilley, one occultation.

Mr. and Mrs. Windham, Dr. and Mrs. Levin, Dr. and Mrs. Johnson, and Mr. Lane paid a visit to the Rotbart Observatory at the first open house of a series. The Observatory will be open the first and third Thursday evenings, if clear, for an indefinite period. Dr. von Numers, Dr. and Mrs. Johnson, Jewell Boling, John Lankford, Don Miller, Harriet Hutzler, Mr. Lyons, Janet Perkins, Bob Wright, and William Harris were among those who dipped into astronomy books of the past at the Naval Observatory. Several of the former along with Grace Scholz, Martha Sherman, John Edmonds, Mr. Byers, and Mr. Matthews took part in the variable star discussion.

time will be required, it must be requested at the time that the title is first submitted.

Mr. E. S. Hider of Pittsburgh is Chairman of the Emblem Committee consisting also of Miss Katherine Hendrie, Milton, Mass., and Mrs. Barbara Post, Portland, Oregon.

Mr. D. W. Rosebrugh has been asked to head the Handbook Committee. The editor of Sky and Telescope has expressed his willingness to produce in the magazine a series of articles on observing techniques, working in cooperation with the Technical Advisory Council, which would provide the basis for such a manual.

AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS, Article I, Sections 1(a) and 1(b)(2) were passed as proposed in Star Dust for January. Miss Scholz withdrew her motion to amend Art. I, Sec. 2; Mr. Wubnig re-introduced the motion with the addition: "All previous records or by-laws in conflict are null and void." Juniors now may vote, each such vote being counted as one-half; life membership dues are \$50; applicants must present applications in person to Membership Committee; election to membership shall be by voice vote unless objection is raised, whereupon secret ballot shall be required.

DR. CLYDE FISHER, speaker before the NCA October 8, 1938 and honorary member for one year, died January 7. We learned only recently that Mr. Westy Egmont of the World Calendar Association and speaker in January 1948, passed away last summer.

ARTICLES OF INTEREST: "One World of Stars," Harlow Shapley, Science, 9/24/48, p. 315/21. "Northern Lights -- Hydrogen Gas from the Sun?" Science Illustrated, Oct. 1948, p. 57/9; "Time and Change in the Metagalaxy," Harlow Shapley, Scientific Monthly, Oct. 1948, p. 243/53. "Large Sunspots," Seth B. Nicholson, Smithsonian Inst. Publication 3922, 1948 (p. 173/76 Smithsonian Report 1947). All recommended by R. J. Hinckley.

ASTRONOMICAL LEAGUE NOTES

Middle East Region

The National Capital Astronomers is one of fifteen societies in this region extending from New Jersey to Indiana, and from Michigan to Kentucky. Regional Chairman is Charles H. LeRoy, AAA of Pittsburgh, Vice Chairman, Mabel Sterns, NCA; Secretary, Elizabeth Fazekas, AAS of Norfolk; Treasurer, Edwin F. Bailey, A.A. of Franklin Institute, Philadelphia. The regional council comprises the officers, and one representative from each society, who in our group is Mr. Wright.

Miss Grace Scholz, Chairman of the regional Junior Activities Committee, proposed at the council meeting in Washington, October 16th, that the purpose of the Committee be two-fold: 1. to stimulate the formation of new junior groups, and 2. to devise means of acquainting all junior astronomers in the region with the things other juniors are doing. The latter will receive primary emphasis with the hope that the former will follow in due course. The first of a quarterly news letter was circulated to all juniors in the member societies of this region during January. John Edmonds represents the NCA on the editorial staff; Miles Davis and Thomas Walsh also were contributors.

Four questions were put to society members upon recommendation of the council:

1. That Mabel Sterns be certified as member of the League council. Returns to date: 14 in favor.
2. That terms of regional council members be staggered into 1, 2, or 3 years by alphabetical order of cities. 14 in favor. NCA, three years.
3. That the region divide into two regions. 11 in favor, 3 opposed.
4. That we recommend that regional treasurers collect dues and forward up to 80% to the general treasurer upon demand. 13 in favor, 1 opposed. At present, general treasurer collects all dues and refunds 20% to regional officers.

National

The term is not sufficiently broad, but is used here as a convenient handle to distinguish from regional, matters applying to the entire League. President, Mrs. Helen S. Federer, Boston Astronomical Club, Cambridge; Vice President, William C. Oberem, ATMs and Observers, Buffalo; Secretary, Mrs. Margaret Back, Detroit A.S.; Treasurer, Carl P. Richards, Salem, Ore.; Executive Secretary, James B. Rothschild, 209 West 21st Street, New York 11, N. Y.; council member from Middle East Region, Mabel Sterns; Chairman of Junior Activities Committee, Miss Grace Scholz.

The Technical Advisory Council is engaged in a survey of the entire field of amateur observing and instrument making, with a view to evaluating fields of work now done by amateurs, and development of new projects yet untouched which have been opened recently through modern technical advances. One activity that is being considered is the sponsoring and distribution to League members of instructive articles concerning observation techniques and construction of instruments. Sky and Telescope will be the publishing medium for such articles. The Council is composed of:

- Harlow Shapley, Chairman (Director of Harvard College Observatory).
- James G. Baker (Lick, formerly Harvard), instrumentation.
- N. T. Bobrovnikoff (Perkins), comets.
- Dirk Brouwer (Yale), occultations, celestial mechanics, computing.
- L. E. Cunningham (Berkeley), ephemerides, comets, and asteroids.
- John S. Hall (Naval), photoelectric work, instrumentation, and observing.
- N. U. Mayall (Lick), spectroscopy and galaxies.
- Paul W. Merrill (Mt. Wilson), variables.
- Walter O. Roberts (Harvard and Climax), sun and solar instrumentation.
- G. Van Biesbroeck (Yerkes), double stars, comets, eclipses.
- C. C. Wylie (Iowa), meteors and meteorites.

Regional boundaries are subject to approval of the League Council which held in abeyance the report of the Middle East Region and suggested it be curtailed in area. The Region therefore proposes that the western boundary fall between Kentucky and Virginia-West Virginia, and extend north through Columbus and Ohio to Lake Erie. The remainder of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, and Kentucky would form a separate region. The proposal will be submitted to the League Council.

In order to clarify the League's interest in all astronomy rather than amateur astronomy only, and in order to eliminate references in our by-laws which appear to restrict the League to the United States only, the National Council has proposed the following amendments to the by-laws, to be considered by member societies:

Present Article I, Section 1(a): Any bona fide organization of amateur astronomers... Proposed: Any organization with bona fide interest in astronomy.

Proposed: Delete the word "national" wherever it appears as applying to the National President, National Vice President, National Secretary, National Treasurer, National Council and national headquarters. Substitute for "national officers" wherever it appears, "officers of the League," and for "national convention" wherever it appears, "general convention;" and for "national committees," "League committees," and make such other minor changes of phraseology, punctuation, etc., as may be necessary for consistency with the preceding changes.

Titles of papers to be presented at conventions, and brief abstracts of at least 50 words must be in the hands of the Executive Secretary six weeks in advance of each general convention in order to be included in the program. Complete papers or more extensive abstracts may be presented at any time before the close of the convention and that material will be included in the Proceedings to the extent that space permits. The time allotted for oral presentation of each paper shall not normally exceed ten minutes. If it is anticipated that additional