

FROM

HALIFAX CENTRE R.A.S.C.
1747 SUMMER ST.
HALIFAX, N.S.

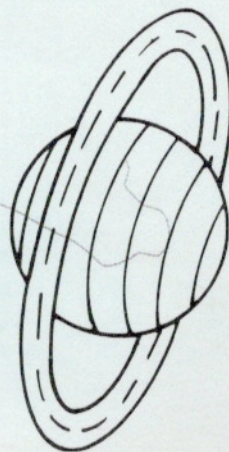
TO

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NOVA NOTES



44° 38' N
63° 35' W

HALIFAX CENTRE

*Sep
1974*

6.N.70

NOTICE of MEETING



HALIFAX CENTRE

R.A.S.C.

Date: September 20th, 1974
Place: The Theatre
Nova Scotia Museum
1747 Summer St.
Halifax, N.S.
Time: 8:00 P.M. Sharp!
Topic: "The Report from the Annual Meeting"

Speaker: Dr. Roy Bishop
Department of Physics
Acadia University
Wolfville, N.S.

Refreshments will be served and all members
and guests are most welcome!

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of the Nova Scotia Museum.

Editor's Page

Hi! How was your summer...astronomically speaking?

I suppose you are all wondering what ever happened to August? Well, August, this year has been canceled for this occasion only. Hopefully, it will return at the same time next year!

What do you think of this month's issue? It's late and small! But before you complain, ask yourself, "What did I contribute?". The answer is most likely nothing save for your membership dues. And even there, there are some of you who strike out! Let's keep in mind that we are hosting the next Annual Meeting! So we had better pull our socks up!! The whole country is watching!!!

Keep those...no, no...get those letters and articles coming in!

Peter Edwards
The Editor

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Featured Constellation for September

The "Age of Aquarius" has come to Nova Notes! This zodiacal constellation receives four honorable mentions in the deep sky object category and one in the planetary. M2, a globular cluster of magnitude 6.3, can easily be seen in small telescopes. A more difficult globular cluster is M72 at magnitude 9.1. The Saturn Nebula at mag. 8.5 is a disappointment. It is only a small ellipse, about the size of the hole in the ring nebula. The Helix Nebula, NGC7293, is about twice the size of the Dumb-bell and nearly 3 magnitudes fainter. And, of course, Jupiter is residing in Aquarius this year. It has just past opposition, and is well placed for evening observation.

The "Water Bearer", unfortunately, is a faint constellation, having no star brighter than 3rd magnitude!

P.E.

Minutes of the Meeting
April 26, 1974

The President opened the meeting at eight o'clock in the Dunn Building of Dalhousie University. Dr. Peter Reynolds agreed to serve as chairman of a preparations committee for the 1975 General Assembly. Peter then introduced our guest speaker, Dr. Murray Cunningham, who told us about the "Early Days at David Dunlap Observatory".

Having worked as volunteer assistant while a high school student, Murray joined the observatory staff as a \$1000 per year assistant observer whose duties centered on the radial velocity program of the 74" reflector. The work was long but enjoyable, and the staff were memorable individuals. Dr. Cunningham's views and anecdotes brought the audience in closer contact with the people, the place and the time that together made up the DDO of the thirties. In doing so, he awakened us to a great chunk of the Canadian astronomical tradition.

The twenty people attending enjoyed refreshments, told stories of their own, departed shortly after ten o'clock.

W. Z.

Minutes of the Meeting
May 21, 1974

Dr. Cunningham opened the meeting. About two dozen members were in attendance. He announced that Dr. Owen Gingerich, Professor of astronomy and the history of science of Harvard University, had accepted an invitation to speak to the 1975 General Assembly. For those who did not notice the collision, the sun went through the equinox today.

Dr. Peter Reynolds talked about the "Origin and Age of the Elements". The Hubble expansion, interpreted as the result of a Big Bang, provides an age estimate of the universe at large and an upper limit to the age of the elements. This age is of the order of 20 billion years. Globular clusters appear to have ages of about 10-15 billion years.

It might seem that the elements have ages greater than ten billion years or so. But things are not so simple. Since the middle fifties, it has been widely held that the heaviest elements, the elements familiar to us through daily use, the so-called R-process elements,

have been synthesized from the lighter elements in the blazing environment of the supernova. Among the products of the explosion are uranium-235 and 238 and iodine-129. The relative numbers of 235 and 238 indicate that about 6.6 billion years ago, a supernova occurred. The material ejected later became part of the rocks of the earth's crust, the crust itself forming about 4.6 billion years ago. The I-129, like the uranium, is unstable and decays into Xe-129, an inert element (gaseous). Its rate of decay is quite rapid, and this raises a problem. If two billion years elapsed between supernova and crustal formation, the I-129 would have been entirely depleted and hence would not have been available for inclusion in the earth's rocks. Yet the evidence is that I-129 was present in the earth's crust, implying that the supernova occurred nearly simultaneously with the hardening of the crust. Which age do we believe-both, either, or neither?

Observing Session
August 1974

About a dozen people found their way to the Mahone Bay home of Mr. & Mrs. Foster Beveridge. They were greeted by the Beveridges and by a deep sky almost unknown to those of us living in the shadow of the container pier. We brought along our naked eyes, our binoculars, refractors, reflectors, and Questars. The Beveridges pulled out their 8", f/6 Newtonian, and a delicious spread of refreshments. The session had everything you could desire: meteors in abundance, an hour or so of spectacular aurora, a deep sky in which galaxies, planetaries, clusters were simple to find and a delight to behold, and excited observers. After many had left, the stragglers examined Jupiter and the rapid motions of its satellites, and discovered the joys of binocular and naked eye viewing of the Southern Milky Way. Having returned to the city, I compared the views with those seen in Mahone Bay. They were clearly inferior, but even in town many of the condensations and clusters ~~were~~ were readily visible to the naked eye. Perhaps we see too little because we give up too soon.

W. Z.