

THE NHAS OBSERVER



Newsletter of the New Hampshire Astronomical Society

Volume 2001 No. 5

"All the news that fits in print"

May 2001

Astronomy Day

President's Message

The evening program at the May 4th meeting was presented by member **Rich Demidio**. He presented his experiments with digital photography at the eyepiece. It was an amazing display of what you can do with a handheld digital camera. This year's Astronomy Day will take place at the Christa McAuliffe Planetarium (CMP) on Saturday May 12th from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. The NHAS and CMP decided to hold the event a bit later in the season than the

International Astronomy Day in the hopes that weather will be more favorable for outdoor activities.

Astronomy Day is our big event of the year. We hope to have a large turn out of volunteers to insure the event's success.

This year the NHAS will be setting up a main table with information about membership, our dark sky site, activities, skywatches and getting started in astronomy.

We will also be selling our custom designed A-Day t-shirts. The artwork for this year's edition has been finalized.

Rick Hedrick, the NHAS artist who fashioned last year's Hubble Telescope t-shirt, has again given of his time and talent to render this year's artwork.

The shirts were available to members at cost on a preorder/prepayment basis at the May 4 business meeting.

We are planning the following activities, exhibits and displays:

A Static Scope Display, a Mirror Grinding Exhibit, Computers in Astronomy, a CCD Exhibit, an Astro-Photography Exhibit, Solar Observing and a Magnification Demonstration (the last two weather permitting).

There will be two shifts associated with each of the daytime activities. Setup and first shift (10:00 am to 2:00 pm) second shift and clean up (2:00 to 6:00 pm).

Additionally, we are planning a sky watch from 9 to 10 pm that night (weather permitting).

CMP will have exhibits and displays as well, and we may be asked to help support some of these.

We will also need a couple of scopes for the static display and a few with the proper filters to support Solar Observing.

★ John Pappas

Public Observing Highlights

This month was rather sparse for skywatches. About 45 adults and kids attended a skywatch at a church in Concord. Floodlights were a problem that night.

Instead of a separate date for a CMP Skywatch, we will hold one as part of Astronomy Day.

ASTRONOMY
DAY 2001

Preparing for the Night

Setting up scope at
Young's Farm Observation Site

12" Newtonian & mount built by Joe Derek

New Hampshire Astronomical Society
& The Christa MacAuliffe Planetarium

Feature Story

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Boston Astronomy Day

The Boston Museum/Hayden Planetarium Astronomy Day was held on Saturday April 28. **Roger Greenwood, Herb Bubert, Joe Derek,** and I attended and set up scopes for daytime viewing of the Sun, Venus, and the moon.

The following photo shows **Herb Bubert** (facing camera) letting one of the hundreds of visitors get a look at the sun.



The next photo shows some more visitors looking through **Joe Derek's** scope.



The weather was great and, after leaving the museum, Herb, Joe and I went to YFOS for a wonderful night of observing. Talk about long days!

★ Chase McNiss

Web Downloads

If you missed the presentation of Favorite Astronomy Web Sites presented at the April meeting, you can find them via a link on the NHAS home page:

<http://www.nhastro.com>

★ Barbara O'Connell

May 2001

Photography in Focus

Our next meeting will be on May 25th at 7:30 pm at YFOS. With the warm weather returning, we can hold meetings there and spend the rest of the evening practicing taking astrophotos.

★ Joe Malinowski

ATM True Grit

Present at the Apr. 29 meeting were **Chase McNiss, Bob Sletten, Philip Sletten, Dave Davenport, Paul Norris, Barbara O'Connell, Mike Stebbins, Larry Lopez, and Linda Lopez.** Teachers present were **Ed Dougherty, David Shelton, and Donald Ware.**

Bob's mirror was checked using a mask provided by

David Shelton and the tex.exe program. Chase's mirror was deemed fine ground by Dave Shelton and ready for polishing. Mike's and Larry's mirrors were retested and needed work.

The Ronchi tester was moved to cement blocks for increased stability. Larry and Philip moved the blocks with the small JD tractor. Philip (to Bob's surprise) was given the task of driving the lawn tractor back to the barn. Ed brought his mirror grinder machine and started training us.

Paul finished his first grade of grit. Dave Davenport will order his mirror kit.

The next meeting is May 20. The next few meetings are: June 3, June 24, July 8, and July 22.

★ Larry Lopez

YFOS Coffeehouse

Todd Miller reported the following:

"We had a great night out there – about 6 people showed up, including myself, **Chase McNiss, Joe Derrick,** and others whom I don't know. We were there until about 2:00 am. I shot 28 photos

The NHAS Observer

(piggyback). Chase helped me take some photos of the moon earlier in the evening; by midnight the moon was setting and the skies were even darker. I dropped off my pictures and can't wait to get them back."

The next work session is on Saturday, May 19, at 1 pm. We will clean up the warming room, nail down some weather stripping, and do a small amount of electrical work.

Mike Townsend at Coffee House



Photo by Chase McNiss

The Bottom Line

The club account balance remains at about \$7,400. We now have 133 paid members and 137 total members.

The club liability insurance has been paid in full for 2001. Updated membership lists are available at club meetings.

Donations

NHAS offers its thanks to the following people for their donations.

Marc Stowbridge additional electrical materials for YFOS

Taylor Cole \$25.00

Steve Forbes Jupiter's Great Red Spot (several), 5th Anniversary of Lunar landing, Saturn Rings, Pioneer, Shuttle Gliders, red mylar suitable for laptops

★ Jim Warendt

Looking Back at Last Month

Opening Remarks. John Pappas reviewed items in the mail.

Book of the Month. None this month

Scope of the Month. Mike Townsend displayed a Celestron 8-in. f/5 Newtonian, imported by Celestron. An unusual feature was the corrector lens in the middle of the tube. Field of view was wide with bright, sharp images, but it was only two-color corrected. For planets, Mike rated it as good as a 4-in. refractor. The tube was so short that stray light interfered with observing. A dew cap would help.

Club Scope: with Mike Pelletier

Committees. ATMs: Barbara O’Connell said the ATMs would resume work on mirrors from last year and start some new ones. The next session would be at the Lopez barn on Apr. 29. Ed Dougherty planned on setting up his grinding machine.

Web Comm: Barbara O’Connell discussed the lack of a web site as due the Vits Networks bankruptcy. The officers would consider a new service if our host continued to be out of service.

Photo Comm: Joe Malinowski noted they had held two meetings this year and the March meeting was well attended. The next one was to be on Apr. 27.

YFOS Observatory. Joel Harris showed of some finely machined fixtures for manipulating the observatory roof.

Chase McNiss described the brush fire.

Public Observing. Ed Ting reviewed the few skywatches that did take place (too many snowstorms). There was one to be held on Apr. 14 or the Boy Scouts in Concord. John Pappas reviewed the events he attended.

Astronomy Day. This May 12 event at CMP still needed a coordinator. Several members volunteered to attend and staff various exhibits. John Pappas agreed to notify members as to jobs that needed support. Michael Frascinella offered to work with Rick Hedrick to get a t-shirt design approved and to Joe Malinowski before the May 4 club meeting.

Treasury. Jim Warendra reported a balance of \$7500 and 134 members. He asked members to be sure to make out

checks for magazine renewals to the publisher not NHAS.

Other News. John Blackwell discussed the aurora of Weds. night (Apr. 11) as it affected his magnetometer early warning system.

Several members said they would attend the Northeast regional Star Party in Keene, NH on June 8-9.

Evening Program. Barbara O’Connell presented “Favorite Astronomy Web Sites” on the big dome.



Photo by Bob Sletten

Earlier in the week, Barbara had surveyed the membership to get as many suggestions as possible for great Astronomy web sites.

As a result, we were treated to a virtual live demonstration of numerous Astronomy sites. They included NHAS member web sites, educational sites, commercial sites, specialized astronomy sites, and even an astronomy radio talk show.

It was 10 pm before we realized it, proving that time flies when you are browsing the web.

★ Michael Frascinella

Tell Us You’ve Moved

If you change your home address or your e-mail address, be sure to let us know. Since most members receive club notices and the newsletter via e-mail, it is important that you contact us with any changes as soon as possible. Otherwise, you may experience a lapse in service.

Send mail to Treasurer Jim Warendra at Treasurer@nhastro.com. He maintains the master membership list and notifies the officers of such changes.

Include your full name and new street address or new e-mail address, and whether you want to add, modify, or delete an e-mail address. Larry Lopez needs this information so he can update the e-mail lists.

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>> DEADLINE FOR JUNE 2001 ISSUE: 4 PM JUNE 1<<

E-mail articles to Editor. Call to schedule late submissions.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Notify the Treasurer. Include your full name and new street address. If changing an e-mail address, specify whether you want to add, modify, or delete an e-mail address.

How to Join N.H.A.S.

Write to us:

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Use our web site:

<http://www.nhastro.com/>

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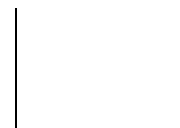
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NHAS Upcoming Events

Astronomy Day, May 12, Planetarium

Event	Date	Time	Location
May meeting	May 4	7:30 pm	Planetarium, Concord, NH
Astronomy Day	May 12	All day	Planetarium, Concord, NH
ATM Meeting	May 20	3 pm	Lopez Barn, New Boston, NH
Coffee House, Photo Comm	May 25	7:30 pm	YFOS, Hillsborough, NH
CMP Skywatch	June 1	7:30 pm	Planetarium, Concord, NH
June Club Meeting	June 8	7:30 pm	Planetarium, Concord, NH