

A S T R O N O M I C A L S O C I E T Y  
O F F R A N K S T O N

NEWSLETTER - OCTOBER, 1982

Meeting, October 27th

A.S.F.'s October meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 27th in the Science Wing, Chisholm Institute, McMahon's Rd., Frankston, commencing at 8 p.m. A notice will direct members to the room for this meeting. = B.1.37.

The speaker for the meeting will be Bruce Tregaskis, the Director of the Variable Star Section, A.S.V., who will speak on "Variable Stars and Supernovae", mainly from an observational point of view.

Viewing night, October 29th

An observing night is planned for Friday, 29th October at the Chisholm Institute. As the B. J. Smith telescope is now in store, portable instruments of all kinds will be required - telescopes, binoculars - the more the better. Come and bring your friends!

Talk on telescope engineering, October 20th

G. R. Hovey of Mt. Stromlo and Siding Spring Observatories will present a talk on professional telescope engineering in Melbourne on Thursday, 20th October, commencing at 5 p.m. By courtesy of A.S.V. an invitation is extended to A.S.F. members to attend. Persons interested should contact Bruce Tregaskis for details. Tel: 787 2444.

Forthcoming A.S.F. activities for November/December

Friday, 19th November

Social night at the Frankston R.S.L. Anticipated cost \$12.00 per head approx.

Saturday, 20th November

A.S.F. display in Frankston Library, featuring explorer George Bass in an astronomical context.

Saturday, 4th December

A BBQ and Star Party to be held at the Baxter Park Observatory site.

A date in December to be decided

A further fund raising sale is planned at Central Park Kiosk. Members are requested to bring along any items suitable for such a sale to forthcoming Society meetings, to be held in store prior to the sale.

Annual Exhibition and Field Night. Astronomical Society of Victoria

The A.S.V.'s annual exhibition and field night for 1982 will be held on Saturday, 20th November at the National Herbarium and adjacent Melbourne Observatory commencing at 2 p.m. An invitation has been extended to A.S.F. members to attend and exhibit items of interest. Portable telescopes can be used in the Observatory grounds and portable BBQs used if desired. Coffee and hot water will be available.

This annual event provides a good opportunity to meet other amateurs, examine astronomical equipment and, weather permitting, to observe with a variety of instruments.

Society News

The Special General Meeting of the Society, held on 22nd September to discuss the possible formation of a Co-operative Society for the purpose of arranging finance for the proposed Matthew Flinders Observatory, was attended by a representative of the Register of Co-operative Societies.

On the basis of the information provided by this representative, it now seems clear that the scale of finance which would be required by the Society for the Observatory (some \$100,000 approx.) would be considerably in excess of that which might be provided within the guidelines operative for the regulation of Co-operative Society financing.

As a consequence, it appears necessary to consider other methods of financing the project and in this regard an approach has been made by Steve Malone to the Federal Minister of Science for assistance. However, availability of finance from this source in the near future also seems unlikely.

A degree of local publicity for the Society is expected to be provided soon in the "News", where a new column will provide information on both tides and astronomical items of interest. John Palmer is currently making arrangements for this astronomical news service.

### Aurora

A spectacular auroral display was observed by Steve Malone from Mt. Beauty on September 7th for a period of some three hours. Brilliant colours and changing formations were seen and the display described as equal in brightness to Canopus in the sky. Members who may be lucky enough to observe auroral displays are asked to provide reports to Bruce Tregaskis, who acts as director of the Auroral Section, A.S.V.

### Sky Notes

Of the bright planets, only Mars remains easily visible for the next few weeks. During October the eastward movement of the Red Planet against the stars of Scorpius has been very noticeable, and in November Mars will move across the bright star fields of Sagittarius.

Uranus, at the limit of naked eye vision, may be located in Scorpius, and Neptune may be seen with binoculars in Ophiuchus. Charts for both planets can be found in the A.S.V. Yearbook, 1982.

The evening skies in springtime witness the sinking of the Scorpius/Sagittarius region, site of the galactic centre, in the western sky and the rising of Orion in the east. At this time the Milky Way lies level with the horizon and the open spaces of the galactic polar region are in the zenith.

The opportunity also arises for observers in our far southern latitudes to locate the Great Andromeda galaxy M31 low in the northern sky. This galaxy, at 2 million light years distance, is the furthest object visible to the naked eye and can be found by first locating the line of stars Beta, Mu, and Nu Andromedae to the east of the Great Square of Pegasus. The galaxy then lies somewhat to the west of Nu and can best be viewed at low power in binoculars or a finder telescope. In suitably clear skies in the Northern Hemisphere the partly edge on disc can be traced to 2 degrees, four times the Moon's diameter.

### The Moon

New Moon	October 17	November 16
First Quarter	October 25	November 24
Full Moon	November 1	
Last Quarter	November 8	