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 - JUNE, 1983

Meeting, Wednesday, June 22nd

The Society's June meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 22nd, in Room B1.37 of the Chisholm Institute, McMahon's Rd., Frankston commencing at 8 p.m.

The speaker for the evening will be Andrew Prentice, a theoretical astronomer from Monash University, who will speak on "Comets and the Problem of the Missing Solar Neutrinos". Andrew has been the author of original theories on the evolution of the Solar System, and his lively presentation of these theories to an earlier Society meeting will be remembered by members.

Viewing Night, Saturday, June 25th

A further viewing night is planned to be held in the grounds of the Chisholm Institute on Saturday, June 25th, starting about 6 p.m. Members are again requested to bring portable instruments.

Society News

Members enjoyed a visit to the planetarium situated in the Chisholm Institute of Technology, Caulfield, on May 25th. The planetarium provides a display of the night sky for our latitude throughout the different seasons of the year, and in addition an audio-visual display on the various planets of the Solar System was presented. A further display provided an amusing view of how our civilisation might appear to the hypothetical residents of a planet in the Alpha Centauri system.

Bruce Tregaskis reports that the Society's 16 inch mirror is now reaching the final stage of polishing. It is hoped that figuring of the mirror will be completed in

the near future, prior to installation in a telescope and mounting system.

Sky Notes

There will be a partial eclipse of the Moon on Saturday, June 25th. Times for the different phases are as follows:-

Moon enteres penumbra	3h 43m	AEST p.m.
Moon rises	4h 59m	"
Umbral phase begins	5h 14m	"
Middle of eclipse	6h 22m	"
Umbral phase ends	7h 30m	"
Penumbral phase ends	9h 02m	"
Magnitude of eclipse	0.339	

The Moon will be in Sagittarius.

Comet IRAS/Araki/Alcock 1983d was observed by many members on its close approach to Earth in May and is still a telescopic object at the end of June.

Comet Sugano/Saigusa/Fujikawa 1983e was also in close approach to Earth in early June and will be a telescopic object in the southern sky in late June.

The constellations of Scorpius and Sagittarius, the location of the centre of our Milky Way Galaxy system, are to be seen high in the sky during June and July. The whole region consists of the bright star fields of the Milky Way, itself intersected by dark rifts of obscuring dust.

Numerous open, or galactic, star clusters are to be seen through binoculars or telescope and many globular clusters, although located outside of the plane of the Milky Way can be seen in the same region. The actual centre of the Milky Way, possibly a 'Black Hole', is at some 30,000 light years distance on the western side of the 'Teapot' of Sagittarius.

Near the northern horizon, in July, will be seen the constellation of Lyra, the Harp, with the bright bluish star Vega. Above Vega, and between the stars Beta and Gamma Lyrae, is located the famous 'Ring Nebula', the probable result of an explosive stellar event in the distant past. The Ring Nebula can be viewed in a 15cm or larger aperture telescope as an oval shaped patch of misty light.

Amongst the planets Venus remains a very bright object in the western sky after sunset, and Jupiter and Saturn are high in the sky in Scorpius and Virgo respectively. The ring system of Saturn is now widely open for telescopic observation.