

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF FRANKSTON INC.P.O. BOX 596 FRANKSTON 3199NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 1990BBQ, VIDEO AND OBSERVING NIGHT AT MOOROODUC  
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 15th

Moorooduc Airfield is to be the site for a combined BBQ for our own Society and the Moorooduc Aero Club on Saturday 15th September. Meat, salads, tea and coffee will all be supplied, whilst desserts and drinks, if required, will be on a BYO basis.

A charge of \$6.00 per head (half price for children) has been arranged to cover costs for the occasion.

If skies are clear, an Observing Night will be held later, but in any case astronomical videos and a further photographic display by South Australian David Miller (with slides available for purchase) will follow in the Airfield Club Rooms.

A start around 4.30 - 5.30 p.m. is planned and for further information check with Steve Malone.

This should be an enjoyable function regardless of weather, so make a date for the 15th if you can.

If skies are cloudy on the 15th then the monthly Observing Night (but not the BBQ) will be postponed to Saturday, 22nd September.

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MEETING WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 19th

The September meeting will consist of an Exhibition of Members' equipment of all kinds, telescopes home made and commercial and anything else related to amateur astronomy. You can take part in this and exchange information and ideas with other members about your completed, or still to be completed, equipment.

In addition, videos of Auroras and the history of the Solar System are planned to be shown during the evening. The meeting, in Room F6 of Peninsula School, commencing at 8 p.m.

SOCIETY NEWS

An enjoyable video on NASA plans for the construction of an Earth orbiting manned Space Station was shown at the August meeting, together with a talk by Ken Bryant on the determination of distances in the Universe, starting from measurements of Earth's diameter, to Solar System distances, and leading by ingenious steps to the estimation of distances to the further parts of the Universe.

Steve Malone reported on his visits to Sydney and Sutherland Observatories, and Bruce Tregaskis reported his recent observations of Comet Levy. Bob Heale provided his "Sky for the Month" talk and charts for location of the "Double-Double" star Alpha Capricornii, whilst David Miller displayed another fine collection of his Sky and Astronomical photos.

PROPOSED SOCIETY LAPEL BADGES

Members who attended the recent Frankston

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NACAA will have noticed the attractive and well designed lapel badges worn by members of a number of other Societies. The Committee is now considering production of a similar badge for our Society and invites members to present designs for such a badge. It is not necessary to prepare an artistic representation yourself; this can be done professionally from sketched design.

The type of design envisaged would be one containing themes related to our Bayside/Mornington Peninsula environment, combined with an astronomical theme. If you can create such a design within a diameter of about 2 cm then please forward your sketch to the Committee for consideration as soon as possible. You may later see your design become reality.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT FROM PETER BROWN

Balance brought forward			\$1,595.65
<u>Receipts</u>	Subscriptions	172.00	
	Donation	30.00	202.00
			<hr/>
			1,797.65
<u>Expenses</u>	Postage July	23.15	
	Registration of Caravan	15.10	38.25
			<hr/>
Balance carried forward			\$1,759.40
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#### SKY NOTES

Comet Levy 1990c. One of the very few comets to reach naked eye brightness in recent years, Comet Levy has moved from near the Great Square of

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Pegasus to Aquila, and during September will move from below the Sagittarius "Teapot" across the Scorpius Milky Way into Lupus. The comet has been seen by a number of members, including naked eye sightings by Committee Members on their August meeting night.

An ephemeris for September follows:-

		<u>R.A.</u>	<u>Dec.</u>
Sept	09	17h 16m	-30° 03
Sept	14	16h 42m	-33 32
Sept	19	16h 16m	-35 41
Sept	24	15h 57m	-37 05
Sept	29	15h 42m	-38 04
Oct	04	15h 30m	-38 47
Oct	09	15h 19m	-39 18
Oct	19	15h 10m	-39 42

Constellations. September is the month of the Spring Equinox in the Southern Hemisphere and the Autumn Equinox in the Northern Hemisphere. At this time the Sun crosses the Celestial Equator (the Equinoctial) at the "First point of Libra", now situated in Virgo, as a result of the 25,000 year Precession of the Equinoxes. Correspondingly, the "First Point of Aries" where in March the Sun moves into the Northern Celestial Hemisphere from the Southern is diametrically opposite to the Sun and is on the meridian (due north) at midnight. The "First Point of Aries", the point from which all measurements of Right Ascension are taken, has similarly precessed westward along the Celestial Equator and is now not in Aries but in Pisces, so that eventually it will move right around the Celestial Equator, returning to Aries in about another 23,000 years.

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In the earlier September evening skies, before Pisces and the "First Point of Aries" move due north, we see the Southern Cross and pointers sinking towards the western horizon, with bright Canopus, second brightest star in the entire sky after Sirius, and about 100 light years distance, grazing the southern horizon northwards and near the horizon is the constellation of Cygnus the Swan, a treasure house of Milky Way vistas but hard to see from Frankston due to its low elevation and the lights of Melbourne to the north. If you are travelling north or have a clear dark country observing site, this is a great area to explore with binoculars or Rich Field telescope.

To the west of Cygnus is the constellation of Lyra, the Harp, with the brilliant blue star Vega and the famous planetary nebula M57, the Ring Nebula, between Beta and Gamma Lyrae, whilst nearer to Vega is Epsilon, the famous "Double-Double" star where each star of the naked eye (just) double is itself double.

Planets. Saturn remains the most easily visible of the planets again this month, with its unique telescopic appearance and retinue of satellites, whilst Mars, now in Taurus, is approaching opposition in November and is becoming steadily larger in the telescope eyepiece, reaching a maximum of 18 seconds of arc at opposition. This will be Mars' closest approach for the rest of the 20th Century and something to look forward to if you enjoy identifying surface features on the Red Planet.

Jupiter, Venus and Mercury are all in morning twilight and Uranus and Neptune are binocular objects nearby to Saturn and high in

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the sky. (See ASV Yearbook for charts).

THE MOON

New Moon	Sept 19	Oct 19
First Quarter	Sept 27	Oct 27
Full Moon	Sept 05	Oct 04
Last Quarter	Sept 12	Oct 11

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