

97 Hawkswood Drive

Hailsham, Sussex, England

1965 June 25

BAA Circulars

Dear Mr Low,

Thank you for your letter with the many questions about the BAA Circulars. I hesitate to give advice - I will just give the facts (the answers to your questions) and let you draw your own conclusions. However, I think you would be wise to consider whether your recipients could get the information they want from sources which would be rivals to yours. These are (i) the IAU Bureau at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Institution, Cambridge, Mass which issues telegrams and circulars (ii) the BAA Circulars, about which you already have some knowledge - and will soon have more. (i) is relatively expensive and varies with the number of telegrams and/or circulars received. (ii) is currently 7/6 a year.

The answers to the questions: -

- (1) Sources IAU Telegrams and Circulars
Directors of BAA observing Sections
BAA members and others
Royal Greenwich Obs! (where I am employed)

* Reliability of sources is assessed from experience - I know most of them. In cases of doubt, where I am ignorant of some aspect of a new discovery, I ask questions of my knowledgeable friends at Herstmonceux.

- (2) What to include A Circular is generally "triggered off" by the discovery of a comet, nova or the launching of a bright satellite. Or if some interesting astronomical phenomenon is soon to occur. I generally assume the limiting magnitude of peoples' interest to be at about 12^m to 14^m . Fainter objects may get mentioned if a Circular comes out for some other reason.

The remainder of the Circular is filled up with Reminders (e.g. VS Section's notes on stars needing observation) and Notices.

- (3) Cost The Circulars are self-supporting, so long as I do not issue more than about one dozen a year.

- (4) Preparation & Mailing Copy for printer is an evening's work - say 3 hours. When a Circular is imminent I warn the Printer to prepare the envelopes (we have an incredible number of address changes)

* I always try to get discoveries confirmed independently before publication

I take copy to printer the following morning. For short Circulars the proof is read at 1230 pm the same day, printing and mailing occurring the same afternoon. Longer circulars: I read the proof around 1700 pm same day and printing and mailing occurs next day. In one exceptional case - only a few lines of type - I warned the printer in the morning and got the circulars into the post the same afternoon!

(5) Appreciation of Circulars. Presumably the Circulars are appreciated because the Circulation has increased from 1600 in 1958 to about 2400 this year. Certainly observers depend on the Circulars to receive general instructions from Directors of Observing Sections.

I hope all this helps you to make some decision. What you will do, I imagine, depends very much on how many subscribers you expect to have. For instance, if the number is up to, say, 100 you might find the most efficient way was to use a typewriter stencil and a duplicator. I shall be interested to hear what you decide to do and will be glad to help by answering more questions, if you have any.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Candy

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Sender's name and address:

Mr Candy

97 Handsworth Drive

Handsworth, Sutton, England

To open cut here →

AN AIR LETTER SHOULD NOT CONTAIN ANY
ENCLOSURE; IF IT DOES IT WILL BE SURCHARGED
OR SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL.

← Second fold here →



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