



THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA
LA SOCIÉTÉ ROYALE D'ASTRONOMIE DU CANADA



GA2004 – St. John's, Newfoundland

ANNUAL REPORT
RAPPORT ANNUEL

2004

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MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

A detailed breakdown of membership by Centre, category, country, province, expiry date and much more may be found in the members'-only section of the RASC website at: <http://www.rasc.ca/private/memberstatis/20041231-active.pdf>

THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA – 2005

RASC Web Site www.rasc.ca
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Officers

Honorary President	Dr. Roy Bishop	
President	Peter Jedicke	pjedicke@fanshawec.ca
First Vice-President	Scott Young	Scott_Young@ManitobaMuseum.ca
Second Vice-President	David Lane	dlane@ap.stmarys.ca
Secretary	Kim Hay	kimhay@kingston.net
Treasurer	David Clark	davidlclark@rogers.com
Recorder	James Edgar	jamesedgar@sasktel.net
Past President	Dr. Rajiv Gupta	rgupta@telus.net

Journal Editor	Dr. Wayne Barkhouse	editor@rasc.ca
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Beginner's Observing Guide Editor	Leo Enright	tcorbor@frontenac.net
Calendar Editor	Dr. Rajiv Gupta	rgupta@telus.net
Librarian	Dr. Robert Garrison	garrison@astro.utoronto.ca
Astronomy Day Coordinator	Bruce McCurdy	bmccurdy@telusplanet.net

2004 - 2005 Committees

Awards	Dr. Rajiv Gupta	rgupta@telus.net
Constitution	Randy Attwood	randy.attwood@rogers.com
Education:	Mary Lou Whitehorne	mlwhitehorne@hfx.eastlink.ca
Executive	Peter Jedicke	pjedicke@fanshawec.ca
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Historical	Peter Broughton	pbroughton@3web.net
Information Technology	David Lane	dlane@ap.stmarys.ca
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Membership and Promotion	Denis Grey	denis.grey@sympatico.ca
Nominating:	Dr. Rajiv Gupta	rgupta@telus.net
Observing:	Chris Fleming	chrisfleming1@sympatico.ca
Property:	Robert May	robertbrianmay@aol.com
Publications:	Scott Young	Scott_Young@ManitobaMuseum.ca
Task Force 21:	Peter Jedicke	pjedicke@fanshawec.ca

Centre Representatives on National Council

Belleville Centre	Robert Adye	Centre Francophone	Saskatoon Centre	Jim Young
Calgary Centre	Roland Dechesne	de Montréal	St. John's Centre	Doug Grouchy
Calgary Centre	Glenn Hawley	Montreal Centre	Thunder Bay Centre	Dave Gallant
Charlottetown Centre	Mark Walker	Niagara Centre	Toronto Centre	Denis Grey
Edmonton Centre	Richard Vanderberg	Okanagan Centre	Toronto Centre	Tony Horvatin
Edmonton Centre	Bruce McCurdy	Ottawa Centre	Toronto Centre	Geoff Brown
Halifax Centre	Pat Kelly	Ottawa Centre	Toronto Centre	Charles Darrow
Hamilton Centre	Roger Hill	Ottawa Centre	Toronto Centre	Guy Nason
Kingston Centre	John Hurley	Prince George	Vancouver Centre	Doug Montgomery
Kitchener-Waterloo		Québec Centre	Vancouver Centre	Jason Rickerby
Centre	Bernd Mueller	Regina Centre	Victoria Centre	David Lee
London Centre	Gary Hinks	Sarnia Centre	Windsor Centre	Tim Bennett
Moncton Centre	Paul Gray		Winnipeg Centre	Stan Runge

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the new vision of the Society's Annual Report!

Late in each year, Treasurers and Secretaries of Centres and their fellow Centre leaders, as well as national Officers and staff, begin work on this concise but comprehensive snapshot of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada's overall state. It is certainly a good idea to reflect on our achievements, but the Annual Report is also worthwhile because it helps give us the perspective we need to plan for the future.

Thus it may seem strange for me to remind you that the production of an Annual Report is not actually required by the Society's By-law. So you may ask: "what is required?" The relevant articles of the By-law are mainly 4.09, 4.10, 8.01, and 9.03. Article 8.01 explicitly lays out what must be mailed to members. Furthermore, government regulations do not require that an extensive suite of information be sent to members of a charitable organization. The rules are different for shareholders of a corporation.

The Society has built up its traditions for over a century. But we spend a fortune on the Annual Report! In the August 1974 issue of the *Journal*, the Minutes of the Annual Meeting say "The President reported that it had been proposed to reduce expenses by reducing the content of the Supplement. The Council felt it advisable to query the general membership on this action and invited comments." A lengthy discussion finally ended with a motion "that the Supplement continue in its present format." I can't help wondering how the Society might have evolved over the past 30 years if that motion had been defeated! It cost almost \$10,000 in 2003 and again in 2004 to print and to distribute the Annual Report. A bit more than half of that pays for Canada Post to mail it to you. Canada Post's regulations are much more complex than in 1974, and the Annual Report can no longer be mailed at the less-expensive publication rate even if it is packaged with the *Journal*.

In 2004, the Society conducted a membership survey, and it revealed that about 70% of you do not value the Annual Report highly or very highly. One of you wrote in the space provided for comments, "Make Annual Report available over the Internet & notify members that they can access it if they wish." So your Council decided that the materials required by the By-law would be prepared, printed, and sent to members by Canada Post. All the rest of the traditional material – and more – has also been prepared and is ready to be read or printed by you if you download the data from the Society's Web site.

I am pleased to report that the members of the Society are busier and more productive than ever. The number of excellent astrophotographs, the total attendance of all the star nights, the many pages the newsletters of the Centres printed, and the number of informative lectures that took place as part of the Society's activities in 2004 are all very impressive. Every Centre has a Web presence, in addition to the extensive national Web site. Many of our Centres have outstanding observatory facilities and some have received significant grants for their outreach activities. You are part of an active and thriving community of astronomy enthusiasts at all levels. Our Society has few rivals and no equals in all the world.

The General Assembly is the biggest single event the Society undertakes each year, and in 2004 the members of St. John's Centre hosted us for a weekend of zaniness and tradition. The Simon Newcomb Award was presented to Mary Lou Whitehorne (Halifax Centre) and Service Awards to David L. Clark (London Centre), Jim Failes (Okanagan Centre), Art Fraser (Ottawa Centre), Guy Nason (Toronto Centre), and Stan Runge (Winnipeg Centre). Congratulations to all these worthy members! Rajiv Gupta completed his term as President and was warmly applauded for his service as a member of the Society's Executive, which began with the Annual Meeting of 1994 when he was appointed Treasurer. Michael Watson also stepped down as Rajiv's successor in the office of Treasurer, and we welcomed David Clark to that post. Dave Lane joined the Executive as Second Vice-President, while Kim Hay and Scott Young continued their work on the Executive Committee as Secretary and First Vice-President respectively. Perhaps you will join us at the 2005 General Assembly in Kelowna. The Okanagan Centre will host it, and their Web site can be reached at www.rasc.ca/ga2005.

The Society continues to work in partnership with the organization of professional research astronomers in Canada to present the Plaskett Medal. It is awarded for the most outstanding Canadian doctoral thesis in astronomy or astrophysics. Dr. JoAnne Brown won for her thesis, "The Magnetic Field in the Outer Galaxy." The award was presented at the 2004 meeting of the Canadian Astronomical Society (CASCA).

As usual, the publications of the Society continued their tradition of excellence, even while the revenue generated from sales to the United States was down substantially due to the strength of the Canadian dollar. Financial concerns – chiefly a worrisome deficit – have sparked renewed discussion about our reliance on revenue from publications. A significant increase in our membership fees was approved at the Annual Meeting. New initiatives from "Task Force 21," a special Committee looking into a broad spectrum of potential changes, may figure prominently in next year's edition of the Annual Report.

Meanwhile, other Committees continue to work hard. For instance, Chris Fleming, and the Observing Committee he chairs, found their "Explore the Universe Certificate" to be very popular, and they developed a lunar observing program in 2004. The Membership & Promotion Committee and its Chair, Denis Grey, have an attractive selection of promotional products on offer. And Mary Lou Whitehorne and her fellow Education Committee members continue to make progress bringing astronomy to young persons across the country.

It's an enormous thrill for me to have the opportunity to serve as your President. I look forward to 2005 and all the events on which I will be required to report in the next edition of the Annual Report.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Jedicke
President

SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

Our Society is one of history and pride. We are all astronomers, from the novice to the professional, and all are a kindred spirit of the stars.

Though traditions have carried us through the years, the future and changes that our Society will make will carry us on for years to come. We can embrace both the past and future, and grow to be strong and take hold of new dreams.

Since our President has touched on what the Society has been up to over the past year, I shall touch upon what our member numbers are all about.

Our membership over the years had been increasing, but at the end of December 2004 it appeared that our membership numbers took an average 4.7% decrease. There is work being done by our Membership and Promotion Committee to establish the possible reasons, which was presented at the winter National Council meeting, held February 26, 2005.

The RASC values all its members, and we are sorry to see members leave. If there are any suggestions that you may have on our Society, please feel free to contact Membership and Promotions Committee at map@lists.rasc.ca or Bonnie Bird, Executive Secretary, at nationaloffice@rasc.ca

Throughout the year, we have lost many friends and fellow RASC members. This is a small tribute to our lost friends and that our thoughts are with their families at the loss of their loved ones.

Wolf R. Belzing (Toronto), Dennis Billey (Edmonton), John H. Cocker (St. John's), Harlan C. Creighton (Toronto), Boris

Dyke (Toronto), Walter A. Feibelman (Unattached), Herman Harrichhausen (Okanagan), Kenneth Heal (Ottawa), George Hoshowsky (Toronto), Reginald W. Jennings (Montreal), Dr. J. Keys (Unattached), Clifford Kitson (Winnipeg), Henry Lee (Windsor), Robert W. Osborn (Toronto), P. Maurice Quinn (Niagara), John Sinclair (Toronto), Prof. Harold Taylor (Unattached), Dr. William Thurlow (Halifax), W. Jim Walker (Toronto)

As I close, I find this has been a very hard report to write, as it will be my last full annual message to the members of the RASC. My term will cease at the end of the Annual Meeting on May 22, 2005, and I thank all the past Executives, the many members who volunteer for our Society, the many members I have met over the years, and our employees whom I have had the privilege to work with over the years. I thank Bonnie Bird, our Executive Secretary, who has been a constant source of help and friendship, which I truly value. There is much work that goes on behind the scenes to running the RASC, which is operated by people who care for the RASC, both in the Past, Present, and Future. Let's keep the RASC strong and vibrant, embrace the growth of the Society, and take hold of the new dreams and avenues that we may follow in our future. Good Luck and Clear Skies!

Kim Hay
Secretary

Centre	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996
Belleville	29	26	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Calgary	323	321	315	315	310	270	267	272	256
C.F. de Montréal	30	40	39	36	38	46	46	33	11
Charlottetown	19	20	16	18	26	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Edmonton	267	271	256	249	222	217	166	152	138
Halifax	197	214	196	186	172	157	164	135	127
Hamilton	91	113	114	122	109	79	65	45	50
Kingston	110	132	145	146	152	176	136	152	142
Kitchener-Waterloo	127	133	114	106	95	80	51	32	32
London	115	119	118	115	115	78	65	49	45
Moncton	70	59	62	46	29	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Montreal	108	121	116	106	102	105	113	108	103
Niagara	123	117	109	97	91	83	72	60	48
Okanagan	85	92	87	70	61	53	40	35	16
Ottawa	469	500	480	457	431	394	298	246	216
Prince George	40	43	42	25	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Québec	38	38	45	50	63	36	50	51	47
Regina	53	59	56	47	30	27	31	18	23
St. John's	44	54	54	45	47	36	41	39	35
Sarnia	32	26	27	27	31	19	10	12	13
Saskatoon	67	73	70	73	76	77	75	54	54
Thunder Bay	41	43	39	38	32	37	31	17	20
Toronto	841	889	886	775	792	723	720	687	682
Vancouver	291	313	292	294	275	271	229	233	218
Victoria	192	200	188	200	159	148	144	126	100
Windsor	122	125	120	107	102	94	71	66	52
Winnipeg	140	136	114	105	99	106	97	77	64
Unattached	591	610	575	552	558	476	413	357	365
Honorary	14	14	13	13	13	14	15	15	15
Total	4655	4901	4688	4420	4230	3802	3410	3071	2872

AUDITOR'S REPORT

Tinkham & Associates LLP CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

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To the Members of
THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA
LA SOCIÉTÉ ROYALE D'ASTRONOMIE DU CANADA

We have audited the balance sheet of The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada as at December 31, 2004 and the statements of revenue and expenditures, and changes in net assets for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the organization's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

Except as explained in the following paragraph, we conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

As described in note 3 to the financial statements, the Society credits interest earned on unamortized life membership fees and interest earned on internally restricted funds directly to the liability or fund and does not recognize the income in the statement of revenue and expenditures. In this respect, the financial statements are not in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

In common with many charitable organizations, the Society derived revenue from donations, the completeness of which is not susceptible of satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, our verification of these revenues was limited to the amounts recorded in the records of the Society and we were not able to determine whether any adjustments might be necessary to donation revenues, excess of expenditures over revenue, assets or unrestricted net assets.

In our opinion, except for the departure from Canadian generally accepted accounting principles as explained in note 3 and except for the effect of adjustments, if any, which we may have determined to be necessary had we been able to satisfy ourselves concerning the completeness of the revenues referred to in the preceding paragraph, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Society as at December 31, 2004 and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

TORONTO, Ontario
March 14, 2005

Tinkham & Associates LLP
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

BALANCE SHEET

As at December 31

	2004	2003
Assets		
Current		
Cash	\$ 110,311	\$ 30,813
Short-term investments (note 4)	187,065	261,000
Accrued interest receivable	-	11,112
Accounts receivable	37,828	56,153
Prepaid expenses	21,108	13,978
	356,312	373,056
Long-term		
Investments (note 5)	250,000	250,000
Accrued interest receivable	12,900	9,300
Deferred costs (note 6)	31,519	46,422
	294,419	305,722
Capital assets		
Office building, furniture, equipment, library (nominal value)	1	1
	\$ 650,732	\$ 678,779
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued charges	\$ 22,439	\$ 21,483
Deferred revenue		
Membership fees for ensuing years	98,857	102,343
Journal subscriptions	18,590	24,146
Unamortized life membership fees (notes 3 & 7)	108,326	91,785
	248,212	239,757
Net Assets		
Invested in capital assets	1	1
Unrestricted	59,402	103,478
Internally restricted (notes 3 & 8)	343,117	335,543
	402,520	439,022
	\$ 650,732	\$ 678,779

On Behalf of the Board:

See accompanying notes to financial statements


 President


 Treasurer

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

Year ended December 31

	Invested in Capital Assets	Internally Restricted (notes 3 & 8)	Unrestricted	2004	2003
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 1	\$ 335,543	\$ 103,478	\$ 439,022	\$ 449,710
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures for the year	-	-	(39,965)	(39,965)	(23,398)
Donations and grants	-	37	-	37	11,000
Net interest earned on Ruth Northcott fund	-	3,426	-	3,426	1,710
Transfers	-	4,111	(4,111)	-	-
Balance, end of year	\$ 1	\$ 343,117	\$ 59,402	\$ 402,520	\$ 439,022

See accompanying notes to financial statements

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

Year ended December 31

	2004	2003
Revenue		
Membership fees	\$ 136,768	\$ 130,723
Publication revenue		
Journal	30,762	33,836
Observer's Handbook	127,720	136,010
Beginner's Observing Guide	19,198	8,912
Observer's Calendar	58,888	62,054
Skyways	6,668	5,555
Other	(39)	(1,003)
	243,197	245,364
Miscellaneous income		
Interest on investment (note 3)	4,520	8,795
Rent	15,690	15,495
Other income	8,021	4,389
	28,231	28,679
	408,196	404,766
Expenditures		
Publication costs		
Journal	72,360	73,911
Annual report	10,129	9,648
Journal distribution costs	14,864	15,957
Observer's Handbook	43,409	43,285
Beginner's Observing Guide	15,469	11,697
Observer's Calendar	35,032	34,178
Skyways	8,915	7,746
Other	193	-
Operating costs		
Office salaries and employee benefits	59,727	57,038
Membership services	29,879	25,865
Handbook distribution to members	12,495	12,725
Life membership allotment to Centres	4,928	4,787
SkyNews expense	41,505	39,711
Office expenses	27,676	18,285
Advertising	5,113	7,072
Financial services	9,684	9,789
Insurance	14,965	5,707
Committees/Promotion	6,593	6,678
Travel expenses	28,706	31,015
Building	6,519	13,070
	448,161	428,164
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures	\$ (39,965)	\$ (23,398)

See accompanying notes to financial statements

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2004

1. Organization

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada is a Canadian corporation without share capital and a registered charitable organization, incorporated for the purpose of stimulating interest in and promoting astronomy and related sciences. The organization is not subject to income taxes pursuant to exemptions accorded to registered charities in the income tax legislation.

2. Significant accounting policies

These financial statements have been prepared by management in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. The preparation of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada financial statements in conformance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date, and the reported amounts of revenue and expense during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from such estimates.

(a) Basis of accounting

These financial statements were prepared using the accrual basis of accounting. The accrual basis recognizes revenues as they become available and measurable; expenses are recognized as they are incurred and measurable as a result of receipts of goods or services and the creation of a legal obligation to pay.

(b) Investments

Short-term investments are carried at the lower of cost (including accrued interest) and market on an individual basis. Long-term investments are carried at cost.

(c) Capital assets

The office building, furniture, equipment, and library of the Society are carried in the accounts at a nominal value. The cost of additions to and replacements of capital assets are expensed as they are incurred. There were no capital assets purchased in the current year (2003 - none).

(d) Membership fees

Members' fees are recognized as revenue for the fiscal year in which the membership primarily falls. Accordingly, fees received for ensuing years are recorded as deferred revenue. Life memberships are credited to deferred revenue when received. Five percent of the life membership fund is transferred at the beginning of each year to membership fees revenue.

(e) Revenue recognition

The organization follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable, if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

(f) Publications

RASC Journal subscription revenues are amortized into income over the subscription period.

(g) Contributed materials and services

The organization is dependent on the voluntary services of many individuals. Since these services are not normally purchased and because of the difficulty in estimating their fair market value, these services are not recorded in these financial statements.

3. Departure from Canadian Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

In accordance with its past practice, the Society has recorded interest earned on unamortized life memberships as a direct increase in the liability recorded on the balance sheet. The effect of this policy as at December 31, 2004 is liabilities are overstated by \$33,500 (2003 - \$27,053), interest on investment and excess of revenue over expenditures is understated by \$6,447 (2003 - \$7,324), and opening unrestricted net assets are understated by \$27,053 (2003 - \$19,729).

In accordance with its past practice, the Society has recorded donations and grants and net interest earned on certain internally restricted net assets as a direct increase in the fund balance in the statement of changes in net assets. The effect of this policy as at December 31, 2004 is interest on investment and other income and excess of revenue over expenditures is understated by \$3,463 (2003 - \$12,710).

4. Short-term investments

Short-term investments are comprised of cash on hand at ING Bank (2003 - Canada Savings Bond and a guaranteed investment certificate) with a variable rate of interest (2003 - 1.75% to 2.50%). Maturities in 2003 range from March 2004 to November 2004.

5. Long-term investments

Long-term investments are comprised of two guaranteed investment certificates with rates of interest from 3.60% to 5.00% (2003 - 3.60% to 5.00%) and maturities ranging from February 2006 to March 2007 (2003 - February 2006 to March 2007).

6. Deferred costs

Included in deferred costs are amounts paid for publishing books, which are being amortized over a period of 3 and 5 years.

7. Unamortized life membership fees

	2004	2003
Life membership fees as of January 1	\$ 91,785	\$ 74,560
Add: Life membership fees received in the year	13,330	12,642
Interest earned	7,800	8,311
Deduct: Amortization	4,589	3,728
Balance, December 31	\$ 108,326	\$ 91,785

8. Internally restricted net assets

The Board of Directors has internally restricted certain funds. The Ruth Northcott Fund was established in 1969 and funds are used for a variety of specified purposes as approved by the Board of Directors. The P.J. Millman Endowment Fund was established for the purpose of providing for the long-term growth of the Society. An amount calculated using the rate of inflation for the previous year is transferred to this fund annually. All disbursements from either fund must be approved by the Board of Directors.

The transfers to the funds are as follows:

			2004	2003
	Ruth Northcott Fund	P.J. Millman Endowment Fund	Total	Total
Fund balance, January 1	\$ 78,631	\$ 256,912	\$ 335,543	\$ 318,803
Transferred from Unrestricted net assets:				
Interest	3,426	–	3,426	2,191
Donations and grants	–	37	37	11,050
Expenses	–	–	–	(531)
Inflation adjustment	–	4,111	4,111	4,030
Balance, December 31	\$ 82,057	\$ 261,060	\$ 343,117	\$ 335,543

9. Financial instruments

It is management's opinion that the organization is not exposed to significant interest, currency, or credit risks arising from its financial instruments.

10. Statement of cash flows

A statement of cash flows is not presented because it would not provide any additional useful information.

ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES – 2004

THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA LA SOCIÉTÉ ROYALE D'ASTRONOMIE DU CANADA

Minutes of the Annual Meeting held 2004-07-04 in Room AA1043 Arts and Administration Building Memorial University, St. John's, Newfoundland

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 ndt by the Chair, the RASC National President, Dr. Rajiv Gupta. Dr. Gupta welcomed delegates to the 2004 General Assembly.

Dr. Gupta called the roll of Centres. Twenty-one Centres were represented (Calgary, Charlottetown, Edmonton, Halifax, Kingston, London, Centre Francophone de Montréal, Moncton, Montreal, Niagara, Okanagan, Ottawa, Québec, Regina, St. John's, Sarnia, Thunder Bay, Toronto, Vancouver, Victoria, Winnipeg) and there were also several unattached members present and one guest. There were approximately 110 members in attendance.

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Dr. Gupta stated that item 4. Motion to Increase Society Fees and item 5. Motion to Amend By-law #1 need to be interchanged and that item 6. Election of Auditor, and 7. Results of the Election of Officers of the Society need to be interchanged to satisfy the order of business as stated in the by-laws.

MOTION AM200401

It was moved by Mr. Pihack and seconded by Mr. Hurley to adopt the agenda as amended.

The **MOTION** was **CARRIED**.

2. MINUTES OF THE 2003 ANNUAL MEETING

Ms. Bird reported that the date of the 2003 Annual Meeting should be changed from July 1, 2003 to June 29, 2003.

Mr. Whitman stated that **MOTION AM200310** was moved by Mr. Richard Christie.

MOTION AM200402

It was moved by Dr. Levy and seconded by Mr. Montgomery to adopt the minutes as amended.

The **MOTION** was **CARRIED**.

3. REPORTS:

3.1 OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Dr. Gupta thanked the Society for his outgoing gift of a fleece vest with the new logo and embroidered with 56th President of the Society. Dr. Gupta remarked that he enjoyed his two years as President and his ten years on the Executive. Dr. Gupta thanked

all the Centres for their extraordinary measures during his visits. Dr. Gupta stated that he visited 22 of the 27 Centres. Dr. Gupta gave his best wishes for the next Executive and thanked the Society for allowing him the privilege of serving them.

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

There was no report.

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Mr. Young remarked that all of his activities were covered under other committee reports.

NATIONAL SECRETARY

Ms. Hay expressed thanks and appreciation to the St. John's Centre for hosting such a wonderful General Assembly. Ms. Hay remarked that it was a pleasure to work with this year's executive and thanked Ms. Bird and Mr. McGillis for their hard work. On behalf of the Society, Ms. Hay thanked all the volunteers that make the Society as wonderful an organization that it is. A round of applause followed. Ms. Hay stated that she looked forward to working with the new incoming executive as this is the final year of her second term of office. Ms. Hay read a letter of appreciation from Honorary Member Patrick Moore.

Ms. Hay read the names of members who were reported as deceased in 2003 and the first five months of 2004. A moment of silence was observed in their honour. Ms. Hay once again thanked the St. John's Centre for hosting the 2004 General Assembly and looked forward to seeing everyone again at the 2005 General Assembly at the Okanagan Centre. Dr. Levy reminded the Society of the passing of Dr. Janet Mattei, Director of the American Association of Variable Star Observers, and who was a close friend of the Society.

TREASURER

Dr. Gupta explained to the Society that Mr. Watson had resigned in January 2004 as Treasurer due to heavy work commitments and that in the interim Mr. Clark had volunteered to work with the Finance Committee to prepare the financial statements for the Annual Report. Mr. Clark discussed the financial statements. Mr. Clark reported that the Society has approximately \$449,710 in assets and a loss of \$23,398 for the year including the \$10,000 Michael J. Smith award, otherwise there would have been a loss of \$33,398. Mr. Clark remarked that much of the Society's income comes from publications but that a loss was incurred when the U.S. dollar rose last year. Mr. Clark stated that the Society now pays \$13,000 for insurance instead of \$3,000 as in previous years.

MOTION AM200403

It was moved by Mr. Young and seconded by Mr. Orenstein to adopt the financial statements as published in the 2003 Annual report.

The **MOTION** was **CARRIED**.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Ms. Bird remarked that National Office is very much a part of the

Committees of the Society, such as the Awards, Membership and Promotion, Nominating, Observing, Property, Information Technology, Executive, and Proxy Committees. Ms. Bird stated that the purpose of National Office is to serve the members, Centres, and customers of the Society. Ms. Bird thanked all the volunteers that make the Society work. Ms. Bird thanked Dr. Gupta for his hard work, guidance, and leadership during his terms serving as Treasurer, *Observer's Handbook* Editor, *Observer's Calendar* Editor, and as President. Ms. Bird thanked Dr. Gupta for always being available when needed and said that he would be missed. Ms. Bird thanked Ms. Hay for her assistance, and as a mover and doer. Ms. Bird thanked Mr. Lane for his assistance with the computer system. Ms. Bird thanked Mr. Clark for his great efforts in preparing the financial statements for the Annual Report. Ms. Bird thanked Mr. Kell for his quick turn-around in keeping the Web site up to date. Ms. Bird thanked Mr. Grey for his hard work on Committees and for his work developing new promotional materials and for his efforts implementing the membership survey. Ms. Bird thanked Ms. DeBond for her work on the minutes of the Council meetings. Ms. Bird remarked that it was her pleasure to work for the Society and to contribute. Dr. Gupta thanked Ms. Bird one more time for her dedication and the appreciation of the Society to Ms. Bird was expressed with a round of applause.

NATIONAL RECORDER

There was no report.

3.2 STANDING COMMITTEES

AWARDS

Dr. Garrison reported that the report had been given the previous evening at the banquet.

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

There was no report.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Ms. Whitehorne stated that the Committee will be more proactively involved with public and school education. Ms. Whitehorne stated that the Committee would produce a survey later in the year to determine the needs of educators.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Dr. Gupta announced that Mr. Richard Weatherson is the Society's new legal counsel.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Clark stated that the report had been given at the National Council meeting (NC042) held on 2004-07-02.

HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

Mr. Broughton reported on the efforts to erect a plaque for the 1761 observation of the Transit of Venus, in St. John's. Mr. Broughton said the Historical Board turned down the Society's request for the plaque so the Society wanted to erect their own plaque. The provincial government decided not to open The Rooms, the intended home of the plaque and where the provincial archives were to be housed. Mr. Broughton expressed grati-

tude to Mr. Fred Smith for helping materialize a plaque and have it displayed in a suitable place in St. John's. Mr. Broughton reported that Mr. Jim Rowe scanned original records of the national Observing Committee's activities during the 1960s and put them on CD. A round of applause followed. Mr. Broughton stated that he had heard from the grandson of the 1911 RASC gold-medal winner, and that he spoke with Ms. Wendy Wales, descendant of William Wales who observed the 1761 Transit of Venus from Churchill, Manitoba. Mr. Broughton thanked Mr. David Orenstein for his work on the archives in the province of Quebec. Mr. Orenstein said he could be contacted at david.orenstein@utoronto.ca

LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Dr. Garrison stated that the library was in crisis because of the piling up of books in a small place. Dr. Garrison said that Mr. Rob Duff (London Centre) who has a Masters degree in Library Science, helped the Committee decide to make the library specialized in things relevant to the Society. Dr. Garrison said relevant materials will be given highest priority to be kept and materials that are interesting but not relevant to the Society will be distributed. Dr. Garrison asked the membership for suggestions what to do with the library materials so that it would not become a Toronto library.

MEMBERSHIP AND PROMOTION COMMITTEE

Mr. Dechesne announced the new Committee Chair would be Mr. Denis Grey. Mr. Dechesne thanked Ms. Hay, the Committee Chair when he first joined the Committee for her support and inspiration. Mr. Dechesne said that the Committee looks at ways to improve service to the membership and how to promote the Society to potential new members and to the public. Mr. Dechesne thanked Dr. Gupta for his help with the new logo of the Society. Mr. Dechesne said the Committee would look at creating additional products and reported that 1000 of the membership surveys had been returned so far, with approximately 20% of the membership responding, and the survey results would be reported in an upcoming Journal. Mr. Gada expressed concern over the pricing structure used for products and if correct procedure was being followed for setting prices. Mr. Grey remarked that promotional products were priced to give a 40% profit to the Society. Dr. Gupta suggested that this should be discussed at the Council meeting (NC043) immediately following the Annual Meeting.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

There was no report.

OBSERVING COMMITTEE

Mr. Fleming reported that the Lunar-observing certificate would be coming out in the fall and will be named after Isabel K. Williamson. Mr. Fleming said that more material has been added to the observing certificate section including an asteroid section. Mr. Fleming stated that the charts available are courtesy of Mr. Dave Lane and his ECU program. Mr. Fleming remarked on the new comprehensive page for the Transit of Venus. Mr. Fleming reported that there were 25 recipients of the Explore the Universe Certificate in the last three years. Mr. Fleming thanked Mr. Kell

and Mr. Lane for keeping the Web site updated and ensuring that it always works. Mr. Fleming reported that the Committee has been developing new observing forms with thanks to Mr. Runge (Winnipeg Centre) and these should be available on the Web site soon. Mr. Fleming remarked that a comet section is being developed and thanked Mr. Holzer (Regina Centre) and Dr. Levy for offering to write an introduction to the comet section. Mr. Fleming remarked that more observing sections were planned to meet the interests of members including extended observing lists and lists of objects of special interest to people, e.g. lists of globular clusters, nebulae, etc.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Ms. Bird expressed Mr. May's regrets for not being able to attend the General Assembly and reported on his behalf that the National Office building was being maintained in good repair.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Mr. Jedicke remarked that a report was submitted to National Council at the meeting held 2004-07-02 (NC042) and said that the continuing publications such as the Journal and Observer's Handbook were on track. Mr. Jedicke reported that it was not too hopeful that Chapters would sell the Observer's Handbook. Mr. Jedicke said that the French language society FAAQ could print to order a copy of something similar to the Observer's Handbook in French. Mr. Jedicke suggested that the Publication Editors report through the Publications Committee.

BEGINNER'S OBSERVING GUIDE EDITOR

Dr. Levy reported that Mr. Enright was delighted with the response to the new edition of the Beginner's Observing Guide.

JOURNAL EDITOR

There was no report.

OBSERVER'S CALENDAR EDITOR

There was no report.

OBSERVER'S HANDBOOK EDITOR

There was no report.

3.3 SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

ASTRONOMY DAY CO-ORDINATOR

Mr. McCurdy remarked that it was a pleasure to serve the Society as Astronomy Day Co-ordinator.

Mr. McCurdy reported that 23 Centres reported on their activities including Earth Day activities and events. Mr. McCurdy announced that Moncton Centre celebrated Astronomy Day in Fredericton and Saint John, as well as in Moncton itself. Mr. McCurdy thanked the hundreds of Society volunteers and remarked that their efforts were appreciated by tens of thousands of Canadians across the country. Mr. McCurdy announced that the date for Astronomy Day in 2005 would be Saturday, April 16, 2005.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Mr. Lane remarked that the Committee reports to various Council committees and runs the private section of the member's

pages. Mr. Lane thanked Mr. Kell for his hard work keeping the site up-to-date. Mr. Lane stated that Mr. Scattolin was seeking help to run the registration software, a volunteer Java programmer to enhance and maintain the program. Mr. Lane was also looking for Centres willing to use the registration software for their star-party's on-line registration. Mr. Lane thanked and acknowledged St. Mary's University for their support, allowing use of their server for the Society.

LIGHT-POLLUTION ABATEMENT COMMITTEE

There was no report.

PROXY COMMITTEE

Ms. Hurley reported that the proxy forms had been distributed to the members and had been returned. Dr. Gupta thanked the Committee for their hard work in the past year. A round of applause followed.

4. MOTION TO AMEND BY-LAW #1

MOTION AM200404

It was moved by Mr. Lane and seconded by Mr. Parry that the term of office of a National Council Representative is two years. No person may hold the office of National Council Representative for more than three consecutive terms, but such person may be re-elected after a lapse of one term.

The motion was **CARRIED** by special resolution.

5. MOTION TO INCREASE SOCIETY FEES

MOTION AM200405

It was moved by Mr. Young and seconded by Mr. Jedicke that the Society's membership fees be increased by \$6 per year for ordinary members, \$3.75 per year for youth members, and \$120 for life members.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

6. RESULTS OF THE ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY.

Dr. Gupta announced that the Officers had been elected by acclamation. Dr. Gupta introduced the new executive: Mr. Peter Jedicke, President; Mr. Scott Young, 1st Vice-President; Mr. Dave Lane, 2nd Vice-President; Mr. Dave Clark, Treasurer. A round of applause followed.

7. ELECTION OF AUDITOR

MOTION AM200406

It was moved by Mr. Bordage and seconded by Mr. Auclair that Tinkham & Associates be appointed as auditors for the Society.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

MOTION AM200407

It was moved by Dr. Bishop and seconded by Mr. Young that the Society acknowledge the enormous dedication and contributions made by Mr. Michael Watson to the Society as Treasurer, legal counsel, and Chair of the Constitution Committee.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

A round of applause followed.

Dr. Levy acknowledged the contributions, dedication and

leadership of the past and present Presidents of the Society. Dr. Levy presented Dr. Gupta with an outgoing gift of a wooden bound record book. Dr. Gupta thanked the Society and remarked how much he enjoyed his term as President. Dr. Levy announced that Dr. Gupta would still continue as the Editor of the Observer's Handbook and of the Observer's Calendar. Dr. Gupta introduced Mr. Jedicke as the incoming Society President and presented him with a gift. Mr. Jedicke presented Dr. Gupta with a plaque acknowledging his time as President and as a token of appreciation for all the hard work he had done for the Society. Dr. Gupta read the plaque to the membership and thanked the Society.

GA 2005 Okanagan Centre - May 20, 2005, Kelowna, British Columbia

Mr. Whitman invited the membership to the 2005 General Assembly to be held 2005-05-20 in Kelowna, British Columbia.

Mr. Kell reported that a Web page would be available soon with on-line registration forms also available. Mr. Whitman distributed brochures and showed a promotional video. Mr. Whitman announced some of the events planned for the General Assembly.

9. AJDOURNMENT

MOTION AM200408

It was moved by Mr. Montgomery and seconded by Mr. Orenstein to adjourn the 2004 Annual Meeting.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

Respectfully submitted,

Heide DeBond

Recorder

ANNUAL REPORTS FROM THE CENTRES

BELLEVILLE CENTRE

- January:** General Meeting: Carl MacDonald
“Constellation Canis Major and Friends”;
Dave Cotterell “Astronomical Trivia”
Executive Meeting: Discussion of year’s events /
Astronomical Road Show
- February:** General Meeting: Robert Adye “What’s Up
and Observing” Poor weather – small crowd so
short meeting
- March:** General Meeting: Antonina Ivanova “Mystery of
the Tunguska Explosion”
Executive Meeting: Discussion of RASC Council
meetings / Astronomy Day discussion
Observing Session: Messier Marathon Observing
Session – End of March
- April:** General Meeting: Carl MacDonald
“Constellation: Cancer”
Beginner’s Observing Guide Give Away
Science Fair Judging: three members judging
astronomy-related projects – cash prize for first,
second, and third
Astronomy Day: 13 members out for a static
display at the Quinte Mall
Observing Session: 14 members out for public
observing at Zwick’s Park (part of Astronomy
Day)
- May:** General Meeting: Carl MacDonald
“Constellations Corvus & Crater”
Doug Angle (Kingston RASC) “24-inch Dob
and Optics”
Cub Scout Astronomy Camp: six members
providing the requirements for the Cub
Astronomy badge – about 60 Cubs participating
- June:** General Meeting: Carl MacDonald
“Constellation Scorpius”
Executive Meeting: Club Telescope / Bon Echo
Weekend discussions
Venus Transit! Massassauga Point get-together:
approximately 20 members
Adventure Class: Astronomy Presentation and
Observing at Presquille Provincial Park
- July:** General Meeting: Carl MacDonald
“Constellation Virgo”
Robert Adye “Dobsonian Star-Tracking Platform”
Bon Echo Provincial Park Camping Weekend –
Approximately 12 members observing at beach.
- August:** General Meeting: Carl MacDonald
“Constellation Hercules”
Dave Cotterell “Celestrivia”
Executive Meeting: Privacy Policy /
Sign-out Policy
Star Bar-B-Que: Summer Bar-B-Que –
approximately 20 members present – Food and

- Observing at Dave Cotterell’s
Starfest: Approximately ten members participated
- September:** General Meeting: Dave Cotterell “Double Stars,
Double Stars”
Home Schooling Group: six members provided
lectures and observing at a farm North of Stirling
for about 30 members of home schooling group
Fall-N-Stars: RASC Belleville / RASC Kingston
Star Party – Weekend observing at Vanderwater
Park – once again a success!
- October:** General Meeting: Carl MacDonald
“Constellation: group discussion on favourites”
Executive Meeting: Christmas Dinner /
Elections preparation
- November:** General Meeting: Carl MacDonald
“Constellation Cepheus”
Elections completed
- December:** General Meeting: No general meeting –
Christmas Dinner!
Annual Christmas Dinner: Over 20 participants

Carl MacDonald
President, Belleville Centre

CALGARY CENTRE

Calgary Centre members conducted many public-education activities during the year. The largest ones were:

- February 25 - 29** Spring Home Show
- March 27** Spring Star Night at Fish Creek
Provincial Park
- May 6** Space Day at the Aerospace Museum and the
Calgary Science Centre
- June 2 - 5** (Calgary) Mayor’s Environmental Expo
- September 9 - 12** Alberta Star Party
- October 16** Camp Gardner Star Night for Scouts and Cubs
- October 23** Fall Star Night at Fish Creek Park
- October 27** Lunar eclipse observing at Nose Hill Park

Ongoing programs continue to flourish thanks to vital efforts by these leaders and numerous unnamed volunteers: The StarSeeker Newsletter – Chantelle Dubois Nishiyama; The Telescope for Lend Program – John Breen and John Herter; Youth Group – Blair Colborne; Light-Pollution Committee – Bob King and Roland Dechesne; Telescope Building Program – Phil Johnson; Wilson Coulee Observatory Tours – Shirley Conway and Susan Yeo; Public Viewing at the Calgary Science Centre – Steve Donaldson

Calgary Centre conducts events that provide members with a chance to meet each other in a social setting, to recognize important contributions, and to celebrate our accomplishments. The major ones during 2003 were:

- February 7** Annual Banquet
- June 19** Final general meeting and season-end Bar-B-Que at the Wilson Coulee Observatory
- July 15 - 18** Eccles Ranch Observatory Star-B-Q
- We continue to hold monthly general meetings at the Calgary Science Centre. During 2004, the featured speakers were:
- January:** Alan Dyer "Demonstration of MegaStar astronomy software"
Brian Fenerty "Virtual multimedia review of the top astronomy and science-related developments of the previous year"
- February:** Alan Dyer "Experiences during the November 2003 Antarctic solar eclipse"
Preview of the June 2004 transit of Venus
- March:** Tom Cameron "Slide show of CCD images taken by staff and volunteers at the Rothney Astrophysical Observatory between 1998 and 2003"
- April:** Dr. Rob Stewart – 2004 Peter Sim Lecture "Mars on Earth"
- May:** Danielle Carpentier "The Physiological Side Effects of Microgravity on the Human Body and the Importance of Fitness in the Selection of Astronauts"
- June:** Year-end Bar-B-Que
- September:** Several presenters: "Video of the Calgary Centre's Egypt Transit of Venus Expedition"
Steven Barnes "General Astrophotography"
- October:** Jeff Zambory "Slides of his trip on one of the last Concorde flights from New York to London"
Jim Kinnaird "Pictures and a talk on Murray Paulson's My Big Fat Greek Transit tour"
- November:** Brian Fenerty "Demonstration of the Planetarium Application for the Palm Computing Platform"
Jack Milliken "Features of the Herald-Bobroff AstroAtlas"
- December:** No meeting in December

Jim Kinnaird

Secretary, Calgary Centre

CHARLOTTETOWN CENTRE

During 2004, the Charlottetown Centre met on the third Sunday of each month, with the exception of July and August. Meetings were held at the University of Prince Edward Island. Regular agenda items included a sky overview for the coming month, discussion of a specific constellation, and a space-news update. Other agenda items focused on specific current happenings and items of particular interest to members.

Monthly observing sessions were well attended.

Public outreach included a public-education demonstration in conjunction with International Astronomy Day and a public presentation and observing session at the Greenwich National Park. In addition, in association with the Physics Department of

the University, the Centre organized a very successful and well-attended public viewing series entitled, "The Moon on Mondays and The Sun on Sundays."

The Centre held two social functions, a summer Bar-B-Que and the annual Christmas party. 2004 proved to be a most productive and interesting year for the Charlottetown Centre.

Keith Wornell,

Secretary, Charlottetown Centre

EDMONTON CENTRE

2004 was an exciting year for the Edmonton Centre. The Edmonton Centre was involved in a casino this year on March 7 and 8. This event brought substantial money into the Edmonton Centre's funds. As usual, Franklin Loehde did a great job as the Casino Manager. The casino managed to bring in over \$78,000.

Our biggest annual public-education event continues to be Astronomy Days. Krista Stefan did a tremendous job organizing this event, which was held April 23 to 25, with the main activities on the 24th. Krista managed to bring in Alan Dyer as a guest speaker. Alan gave a fascinating talk that was well attended by the public. The main event however continues to be the gathering of both the public and members of the RASC in front of the public observatory of the Odysium. The RASC was well represented with many telescopes, showing many visitors the Moon, planets, and selected deep-sky objects. It should also be mentioned that the Odysium's Team of the Year award was presented to the R.A.S.C. volunteers for their work last year for the Mars Mania events. Sherrilyn Jahrig, our Public-Education Coordinator, won the Nate Ragosin Memorial award for outstanding volunteer service.

During the June 14 meeting it was decided that \$25,000 be donated to the Odysium for an optics display. This display will initially be held at the Odysium but will then travel to other parts of Canada as well. The display will prominently show the generous contribution by the RASC. This display will explain to the public how optical systems and telescopes work.

For visual observing, the highlight of the year was the Venus Transit. Many members went overseas to view this event in its entirety. Destinations included Greece, Egypt, and Sicily. Some members traveled far and wide in our own country. The largest of these trips was an expedition to Fort McMurray, Alberta, which saw the event at sunrise. It is pleasant to report that all members who made the effort to view the transit reported some sort of success.

2004 was also the 50th anniversary for our monthly publication, Stardust. Sherry Campbell put in a heroic effort and managed to produce a full-colour edition for the November issue marking this event. This issue contained some history of the RASC, beginners' articles, articles on different telescopes, and even some of the best Starbust articles. This issue was well received by all members.

As 2004 drew to a close we learned of the efforts of John Cliff and several members of the Edmonton Centre who are working

towards a dark-sky preserve. This dark-sky preserve will potentially encompass several parks and recreational land around the Edmonton region. If all goes well, this will make it the largest dark-sky preserve in Canada. The announcement of the dark-sky preserve is planned for 2005 during the 100-year celebration of Alberta's provincial status.

The Edmonton Centre has had a successful year and we look forward to the challenges and excitement that the 100th anniversary celebration for the Province of Alberta will bring as we move into 2005.

Guest speakers were as follows:

- January 12:** George LaFluer "Construction of his CatsPaw observatory"
- February 9:** Gordon Freeman "Ancient astronomical sites in Alberta"
- March 15:** Jianyong Lu "Solar Activity and its Influences on our Earth's Geomagnetic Environment"
- April 19:** Rajiv Gupta "The history of the RASC Handbook"
- May 10:** Dr. Robert Smith "Sir William Herschel and his life as an astronomer"
- June 14:** Members' night:
Redshift, a musical group formed by some local astronomers, gave a very entertaining performance.
Warren Finlay gave a report on the Northern Prairies Starfest to be held September 17 to 19 at a campsite south of Tofield.
Alister Ling gave a report on the Great Canadian Venus Transit Expedition. The group went to Fort McMurray and had exceptional views of the Venus transit as the Sun rose.
Mark Zalcik gave a report on noctilucent clouds.
- September 13:** Stephen Barnes "Astronomy Down Under. Observing in Australia"
- October 4:** Members' night:
Murray Paulson "Venus Transit in Greece"
Franklin Loehde "Edmonton Centre's, a starry history". He talked about the period from 1932 to 1949.
Luca Vanzella "Venus from Catania, Sicily"
David Roles "Binocular telescope on Mount Graham"
Arnold Rivera "Venus transit from Greece"
Dr. Doug Hube "Venus transit from Egypt"
- November 8:** Members' night:
Craig Makarowski "Venus transit trip to Greece"
Krista Stefan "Venus transit trip to Egypt"
Murray Paulson "Lunar Eclipse and triple shadow transit on Jupiter"
Roger Fell "Video of the Lunar Eclipse made to music"
- December 13:** Members' night:
Roger Rielander "The efforts to create a large Dark-Sky Preserve"
Bob Drew "Construction of a large telescope"

Paul Campbell

Secretary, Edmonton Centre

Membership

Yet another year has passed with our President, Steve Tancock, at the helm. Membership had settled around 211 members this year, compared to the 214 members from last year's count. This slight drop could be blamed on the procrastination of some not renewing their membership on time.

In RASC awards, Mary Lou Whitehorne was presented with the Simon Newcomb Award for her devotion and energy to education in astronomy. Her new book "Skyways" piqued the motivation behind this award.

St. Croix Observatory (SCO)

Whether it was through contractor work, or the yearly SCO "work" party, some additional improvements were done to the Centre's observatory. New patio stones laid, cleaner carpet put down, and inset control put in-place, were just a few of the upgrades that had to be done.

This year the "dark nebula" ascended over Nova Scotia bringing a record-breaking ZERO members' nights to SCO.

Burke Gaffney Award:

This year's Burke-Gaffney Award for best-written article appearing in the 2004 year of Nova Notes is still in the works.

The Murray Cunningham Astrophotography Award

Named after Dr. Murray Cunningham, this award was established by the Halifax Centre in 2003 to promote an interest in astrophotography, including digital imaging. This year the award went to Calum Ewing for his beautiful aurora photo.

Centre's Meetings for 2004

- January 16:** Dave Lane "Abbey Ridge Observatory"
- March 19:** Paul Gray "Dark Nebulae Pioneer, Edward Emerson Barnard"
- April 16:** John Jarvo "Transit of Venus"
- May 14:** Steve Tancock "Extrasolar Planets"
- June 8:** Mary Lou Whitehorne "Astronomy Aotearoa: Land of the Long White Cloud"
- September 17:** Roy Bishop "Light-Pollution Success Stories"
- October 15:** David Turner: "Will The North Star Stop Pulsating?"
- November 19:** Annual General Meeting, and David Tindall's Handbook talk
- December 17:** Pat Kelly "Who Wants to be a Gazer?"

Nova East 2004

Once again the Nova East Star Party was a hit! Attendance was up from last year, reaching record-breaking numbers. The clouds dominated the sky only about half the time. Some dedicated sky gazers stayed an extra night to cram in the last bit of clear skies. The main speaker was Peter Boyer, with this talk, "Juan Dark and Stormy Night and Other Bedtime Weather Stories." Saturday night's feature speaker was Mike Proebstle with his "ARGUS" observatory talk. Other workshop speakers included, Gary Weber,

Sherman Williams, Blair MacDonald, Darren Talbot, Craig Levine, John Jarvo, and Roy Bishop. Dave Lane and Paul Gray entertained the crowd with the Star Parties Rockets. Congratulations go to the 2004 organizing committee for all their efforts towards this Astro event!

Passing(s)

This past February the Centre's members were saddened with the unexpected death of Dr. Bill Thurlow. Bill retired from medicine about two years ago, then pursued his life-long dream of studying astronomy at Saint Mary's University. Bill was one of the most dedicated life members of the RASC; he even attended meetings when he lived in PEI. Over three thousand dollars in donations were collected in Bill's memory, along with his various donations of books and telescopes to the Centre. Bill practiced surgery in Newfoundland, PEI, and Nova Scotia, and was a member of the Athena Astronomy Club in Summerside. Along with having a great passion for astronomy and medicine, he was an avid marathon runner, an environmentalist, and a pacifist. Bill always told wonderful stories packed with enthusiasm, rich in knowledge, and soft in humour. He was an honest and thoughtful friend to many, with such an excitement for life that shows some spirits cannot be stilled. Bill shall be missed.

Andrea Misner

Secretary, Halifax Centre

HAMILTON CENTRE

The Hamilton Centre had another active year in its observing program and public activities, plus preparation for its new telescope, a 16-inch Ritchey-Chretien, which finally arrived in late November. A training program was initiated to familiarize members with this state-of-the-art equipment.

The Centre's monthly meetings were usually held at the Old Steam Museum in Hamilton on the first Thursday of the month. Regular activities included a guest speaker, a swap table for all to trade and sell their treasures, as well as a member 'show & tell' of their latest acquisitions and astro photos, plus a raffle of donated items.

- January 7:** Members' night where members showed whatever they deemed noteworthy
- February 5:** Kevin Hobbs "My Backyard Observatory"
- March 4:** Alan Whitman. (Okanagan Centre)
"Deep Observing in M33 and M101"
- April 1:** Ian McGregor (Mississauga Club) "Cold File - The Case of the Missing Star"
- May 6:** Robert Goodwin (Publisher of Apogee Books)
"History of Space Flight with Raw Recordings from NASA's Archives"
- June 3:** Doug Angle, (Kingston Centre) "Eyepiece and Telescope Optics"

July 8: Gary Colwell presented a PowerPoint slide show highlighting the summer sky. Held at Burlington's new Paletta Lakefront Park.

August 5: (At Paletta Park) an open invitation to the public to attract more members from that area

September 9: Members' night

October 7: Annual General Meeting

November 4: Les Nagy "Astronomical Freeware" available over the Internet. Lots of discussion on the new Trillium equipment that was arriving (the excitement was becoming palatable) plus photos on the recent eclipse.

December 2: Dr. David Gregory "Meteorites – a look into the elusive and sometimes lucrative chase for meteorites around the world"

Outreach activities

Sidewalk Astronomy at Burlington's Spencer Smith Park on April 30, May 28, June 25, July 23, August 27, and September 24
Observatory tours totaled five, which included Cubs, Scouts, and Brownies visiting our observatory and its antique Marsh 5-inch refractor.

March 26: A presentation by Stephen Barnes at Chapters - Hamilton Mountain, promoting astronomy and the Hamilton Centre. Unfortunately the observing portion was clouded out. A number of members were on hand to answer the public's questions. Steve also did an interview on CHML to help promote the event.

April 24: Supporting National Astronomy day, a number of members set up at Bayfront Park in Hamilton. They started with solar observing with the intent to continue into the night showing Jupiter and Saturn. Again clouds ruined the evening event.

October 24: Four members set up scopes at Bayfront Park in Hamilton to show the lunar eclipse to the public. About a dozen people showed up on that cold and windy night. Clouds pretty much ruined the early evening. Happily for the few that stayed, the skies cleared up around 11 p.m. for the finale.

March 20: Messier Marathon event was accompanied by an early potluck dinner. Dinner was great, but due to clouds we ended up watching the movie "Contact" starring Jodie Foster, on our new Sony overhead projector.

May 8: Second Annual Spring Banquet. The featured speaker, Ivan Semeniuk, gave an entertaining talk, "Seven Worlds in Seven Days - New Voyages in the Solar System"

July 10: Annual Family Bar-B-Que. Burgers and sausages were provided with members bringing their own beverages, desserts, and lawn chairs. We weren't the only ones eating...if we could just un-invite the mosquitos.

November 16: This was a planned movie night (Deep Impact) at the Observatory to be followed by observing

of the Leonids. Movie was great and you guessed it, CLOUDS again — no Leonids

KITCHENER WATERLOO CENTRE

Victor Grimble

Secretary, Hamilton Centre

KINGSTON CENTRE

During the past year we began each meeting with “the Beginners’ Sky,” which generally introduced us to a different constellation each month.

We enjoyed guest speakers as well as our own members’ presentations. Most notable were two from Leo Enright, who prepared us for the Venus Transit, and introduced us to John Brashear (optician and telescope-maker), whose Kingston connection was through his boat, the “Phoebe.” Ken Kingdom regaled us with his memories and pictures from the Texas Star party.

Among our guest speakers was a very exciting introduction to webcam astrophotography by Steve Barnes. This had many of us trying to decide if we should try his technique with our digital equipment or purchase a webcam. Antonina Vassilieva-Durham presented her memories of her father working on the Great Tunguska Mystery, June 30, 1908. John Crossen, the President of the Peterborough Astronomical Association, and Founder of the Buckhorn Observatory gave a talk entitled “the Observatory that went Wonderfully Wrong”.

Another highlight was the evening Kevin Kell treated us to the spectacle of the Venus transit, caught on video. We are fortunate to have several members who are involved in astrophotography and like to share their triumphs.

A fun evening was had when the Science Fair winners showed their stuff. Megan Payne, Grade 7, presented her project on “Comets and Shooting Stars”. Kristin Smith, Grade 5, and our newest youth member, presented her project on Mars. She constructed a cockroach-sized rover, and tested its ability to move under varying conditions (freezer, room temperature, and heat lamp). Robin Prest, Grade 6, presented her project entitled “Exploring Mars.” Her “mini rover” was a BIG hit!

We received a Trillium grant from the government. In conjunction with Queen’s University, we purchased a beautiful Meade telescope, which is used monthly at Public Observing sessions atop Ellis Hall.

We participated in Astronomy Day and The Sky is the Limit, despite poor member attendance at the latter. Thanks to Don Cooke. There were a fair number of volunteers at the Fall’N Stars event.

Even though it was a priority with us this year, we are still working on incorporation, and still searching for an Observatory site.

Elections for the 2005 Executive were held at the November meeting. There were volunteers for every post except Vice-President, which was held over until December when Ken Kingdom accepted the position.

Diane Torney

Secretary, RASC- Kingston Centre

Kitchener-Waterloo Centre started 2004 with a new President, Brady Johnson. Brady has been involved in many aspects of the club for a number of years. He has had one of his astrophotos chosen to be in the 2005 RASC Calendar. Under his leadership the executive has tried to consolidate the programs started the previous year. George Peer, a new and enthusiastic member of the club since the spring, has taken over the outreach and education programs and acts as liaison to the Waterloo County School Board. George has had star parties for grades six, seven and eight that have been well attended and popular.

The Centre received from Rick Harnell a donation of a Celestron Nexstar 5i along with a CCD camera, eyepieces and The Sky software. At each monthly meeting this equipment is given on loan to the winner of the draw for use the next month. Many of our members volunteered at our Astronomy Day at Conestoga Mall on April 23 and 24. We also attempted to hold a star party on April 27 but due to the poor weather it was not a success. Doug Bulgin, one of our members traveled with the Toronto Centre to Egypt for the transit of Venus and was able to take our Coronado Solar Scope with him. Doug also provided the Centre with a dark sky location north of Wiarton at his family’s farm. The star party was re-named Starfeast in honor of the masses of mosquitoes that came to dine on the members. In spite of that minor problem, the weather was great and the sky dark.

At our Observatory, a great deal of work was done by many members to install the Meade LX200 14-inch, purchased last year. It was installed in our main dome in May and readied for our annual picnic for members and their families, held June 14.

On July 24 we had the grand re-opening for the public to come and visit our facilities. Amazingly, we had 300 people, even though the weather turned cloudy. Dave Schwartz, our observatory director, has spent many hours at the dome to ready the LX200 for the members. It was found to have a gremlin and had to be sent back to the company in September. It was repaired and Dave had it up and running for the training sessions he started in the fall for members. Darryl Archer our First Vice-President had a picture selected by SkyNews this past year for the best picture of Mars from Canada and won a Nikon 4500 Digital Camera. Our Beginners 101 Group, led by Tim Spiegelberg, Peter Clarke, and Kate Baker, continues to draw on average 20 to 25 each month. They gather two weeks after the main meeting. They are primarily a visual group and try to go out observing after their meeting. At our annual party for 2004 we awarded prizes for the Astrophoto contest to Perry Cash for fixed tripod constellations and comets. Dave Schwartz won for the best aurora picture, and Brady Johnson won for the planetary, deep-sky, and best picture overall. Appreciation awards were also given out to Jim Graham, Doug Bulgin, and George Peer for their work over the past year. Many thanks also need to go to all other members who gave on a regular basis to make this year a success.

Our meetings continue to be held on the second Friday of the month at Wilfred Laurier University.

January: Brady Johnson “Discussion, slides re: new equipment”

- February:** Bernd Mueller – Slides and discussion of trip to Canadian Arrow
- March:** Darryl Archer, Neil Hunt “How to build a backyard observatory” and “All about eyepieces”
- April:** Steve Barnes “Video Astrophotography”
- May:** Serge Mammoliti “What’s up in May: Venus Transit and Comets”
- June:** Alen Koebel, Serge Mammoliti “Astrophotography” and What’s up in June, July, and August”
- September:** Doug Bulgin, Peter Pekurar “Venus Transit from Egypt” and “How to build an eight-inch briefcase telescope”
- October:** Oscar Cole-Arnal, Darryl Archer “Asteroids” and “Occultations”
- November:** Dr. David Gregory showed samples from his meteorite collection; Peter Jedicke talked about the RASC.
- December:** Dr. Michael Dixon “Research by CESRF for NASA on how to get to Mars and back on a full stomach”

Brenda Purdy

Secretary, Kitchener-Waterloo Centre.

LONDON CENTRE

A brisk slate of activities kept the London Centre’s 120 members hopping in 2004. In addition to 11 regular monthly meetings and one special meeting, members assisted at Cronyn Memorial Observatory open houses every Saturday in June, July, and August. There were 25 slide shows or star nights presented at various locations, and members often gathered for informal observing sessions at the Fingal Wildlife Management Area. Numerous social events also highlighted the camaraderie of London Centre members.

The Annual Banquet and Awards Night was held March 5 at the Seven Dwarfs restaurant. Guest of Honour was Alan Whitman who talked about hunting the clusters and nebulae within M33, M101, and the Large Magellanic Cloud from the dark skies of Australia. Appreciation awards were presented to David Clark and Robert Duff for the fine work they did coordinating the many Mars events in 2003. Harold Tutt was recognized as Member of the Year because he organized so many star-party activities. At the regular meeting in March, it was announced that David Clark won London Centre’s fifth national Service Award.

To celebrate Astronomy Day on May 1, London Centre went to Cherryhill Mall with the participation of McKittrick’s Cameras. Members set up telescopes and picture displays, and answered questions.

Many London Centre members observed the Transit of Venus on June 8, not just from London but from other locations in Ontario as well as Montreal and even the island of Crete in the Mediterranean.

Dan Williams and Bill Gardner received their Messier Certificates and John Appleyard his NGC Certificate in 2004.

Steve Gauthier continued his service as editor of “Polaris,” publishing 11 issues chock full of exciting news and informative articles.

London Centre Meetings in Room B1073 at Fanshawe College:

- January 15:** Dr. Paul Wiegert, University of Western Ontario Meteor Physics Group, “Unusual Asteroid Orbits”
- February 20:** Dr. Martin Connors (London Centre President 1971-1973), Athabasca University “Auroras”
- March 19:** Members’ night. Neil Ripley “Light Pollution”; Peter Jedicke “Visit to Houston”; David Clark “The Orbit of Sedna demonstrated by ClearSky software”
- April 16:** Gregg McKay, chief engineer for the Canadian Arrow Project, “Getting to the Edge of Space”
- May 21:** Geoff Gaherty, Toronto Centre, “The Great Canadian Variable Star Challenge”
- June 18:** Dave McCarter, London Centre President, “Transit of Venus observed from Crete”; Bill Helps, Aylmer, Ontario “The Sutton Sundial”
- July 16:** Dr. David Gregory showed his meteorite collection and described his activities
- September 17:** Rob Weryk, University of Western Ontario Meteor Physics Group, “Searching for Interstellar Meteoroids with Radar”
- October 15:** Dr. Robert Brooks, University of Guelph: “What’s in Between the Stars?”
- November 19:** Dr. Megan Donahue, Michigan State University, “Cosmology”
- December 10:** Special meeting with Ivan Semeniuk, space science reporter for Discovery Canada “New Worlds of Discovery”
- December 17:** Chris Fleming and Bob Duff, London Centre, “Lunar Observing”

The London Centre is grateful to all its guests who gave these presentations. Each evening ended with a lively social event at the Kelsey’s restaurant on Oxford Street East.

Star Nights and Astronomy Presentations:

- January 14:** Dave McCarter gave his slide show for the 1st Thorndale Scouts and Cubs at the Scout Hall in Thorndale.
- February 16:** Bill Gardner, Dave McCarter, David Clark, and Mike Hanes provided an observing session, slide show, and lecture for the Ingersoll Nature Club.
- February 24:** An observing session was held for the 1st Thorndale Cubs/Scouts and their parents.
- March 2:** Dave McCarter and Harold Tutt did a slide presentation at Galt House private school.
- March 9:** Dave McCarter and Harold Tutt visited the 98th Girl Guides at Westmount Presbyterian Church and gave a slide show.
- March 17:** Dave McCarter and Harold Tutt provided a slide show for the Men’s Organization of Rowntree Memorial United Church.

- April 1:** Harold Tutt gave a slide show to the 79th Brownies at Nicholas Wilson Public School.
- April 7:** Harold Tutt, David Clark, Everett Clark, Dave McCarter, and Bogdan Tudose set up their telescopes at Fingal Wildlife Management Area and showed Venus, Mars, Saturn and Jupiter to the students, parents and teachers from Galt House private school.
- April 28:** Robert Duff arranged a star night called "Astronomy in the Garden" at the London Public Library.
- May 7:** Dave McCarter gave two astronomy lectures illustrated with slides to three classes of grade nine students at Catholic Central High School.
- May 15:** Dave McCarter and Harold Tutt presented a slide show to the students of the Romanian Heritage Language Program at G.A. Wheable Adult Education Centre.
- May 28:** An observing session was held with the students from Catholic Central High School at Camp Olalondo.
- May 29:** There was an observing session for the 98th Girl Guides at Girl Guide Camp Orenda.
- June 4:** An observing session was held for the 79th Brownies at Rock Glen Camp Grounds.
- July 24:** Mike Costa, Richard Gibbens, Dave McCarter, Harold Tutt, Dave Nopper, and Melody MacKenzie set up telescopes — all home built! — for an observing session as part of the Among Friends Summer Camp for Guides, Brownies & Sparks at Camp Orenda.
- July 31:** London Centre members Harold Tutt, Everett Clark, Cliff Johnson and son, Jon Gunning, Dave McCarter, Dustin Wywrot, and Melody Mackenzie set up telescopes for the Girl Guides Diversity Camp at Camp Orenda.
- August 6 - 7:** Second Annual star night at Quai du Vin Winery. Peter Jedicke gave a PowerPoint presentation, while members Mike and Donna Costa, Ingrid Hutchinson, Dave Mooney, Dave Nopper, Dianne Jedicke, Dave McCarter, Harold Tutt, Mike Hanes, and Melody MacKenzie all participated on one or both nights.
- August 7:** Eighth Annual Pinery Star Party and slide show. The slide talk by Dave McCarter was well attended by 850 campers and local people. Dave Clark, Everett Clark, John Bontje, Bram Bontje, Faye Bontje and the rest of the family, Mike Hanes, Harold Tutt, Chris Fleming, Steve Arenburg, Melody Mackenzie, Joe and Tristan O'Neil, and Chris LeMesurier all brought telescopes and helped out.
- August 11:** Fifth Annual Rondeau Star Party and slide show. Dave McCarter gave his usual slide talk and then the skies cleared. Showing the sky through their telescopes were Chris Fleming, Mike Costa, Steven Imrie, Mike Hanes, Elias St. Bryce, Richard Gibbens, Harold Tutt, Glen Spooner, and Dave McCarter.
- August 26:** Dave McCarter gave an astronomy talk at Grundy Lake Provincial Park.
- September 30:** Slide show and observing session at Byron Northview Public School.
- November 6:** Star night for Cubs at Camp Sylvan.
- Other events:**
- May 20:** The "Steaks and Stars Barbecue" was held at Fingal Wildlife Management Area with members of the Elgin Stewardship Council, who run the FWMA.
- May 23:** An Observers' Group Meeting was held at the home of John and Darle Rousom.
- June 20:** There was an Observers' Group meeting in Mike Hanes' backyard.
- December 11:** The annual Solstice Social took place at Joe and Suzanne O'Neil's home.
- During the week of August 16-21, London Centre members volunteered to assist the organizers of the Meteoroids 2004 Conference, which was held on the campus of the University of Western Ontario. The Chair of the Local Organizing Committee was Dr. Peter Brown of the Meteor Physics Group, and a London Centre member.
- The following members were active in the successful program of open houses conducted by the University of Western Ontario at the venerable Cronyn Observatory: David Clark, Everett Clark, Eric Clinton, Mike Costa, Robert Duff, Chris Fleming, Gary Hinks, Peter Jedicke, Dianne Jedicke, David McCarter, Ron Sawyer, Ingrid Hutchinson, Steve Gauthier, Valerie Rausch, Harold Tutt, Justin Wywrot, Mark McCallum, Dan Tremblay, Richard Gibbens, and Gary Wabersich. The Observatory's western horizon was essentially obliterated by a newly constructed wing of the Engineering Building, and new trees and lighting on the front lawn provided additional challenges. But telescopes were permitted on the upper deck of the Observatory.
- More details of all these activities were posted throughout the year on the Web site, www.rasc.ca/london, by Dave McCarter, who served as webmaster. The London Centre also gratefully acknowledges the University of Western Ontario Department of Physics and Astronomy, which continued to provide the server for the London Centre's web presence.
- The London Centre executive met twice in 2004, on June 15 and October 14. At the fall elections, the executive welcomed Ingrid Hutchinson as Centre Secretary and Gary Hinks as National Representative for 2005. Dave McCarter and Steve Gauthier were re-elected as the Centre's 33rd President and Centre Vice-President, respectively, while Bill Gardner changed his role from Centre Secretary to Centre Treasurer. Robert Duff continued as Centre Librarian, and Chris Fleming as Observers' Chair. Mike Hanes took over the position of Chair of Amateur Telescope Making.
- 2005 promises to be just as exciting for the London Centre.

Ingrid Hutchinson
Secretary, London Centre

Notre conseil d'administration a tenu 5 réunions au cours de son mandat. L'événement majeur, au niveau administratif, a été notre projet de fusion avec la Société d'astronomie du planétarium de Montréal (SAPM). Une correspondance postale et des communications par courriels ont eu lieu de mai à septembre. Chaque société a aussi présenté un plan d'ensemble de sa gestion et de ses activités. Après réflexion, le conseil d'administration de la SAPM a écarté tout projet de fusion à court terme. Elle a plutôt proposé des échanges mutuels de nos activités et de nos rencontres afin de mieux nous connaître pour pouvoir fusionner ensuite s'il y a lieu. Cette approche ne rencontrait pas nos besoins. L'idée d'une fusion a été abandonnée.

Concernant nos activités, notre conseil d'administration a jugé bon de concentrer ses efforts sur les quatre secteurs majeurs suivants: le program des conférences, la revue *Astro-Notes*, le site web et, finalement, les soirées d'observations dans deux des parcs-natures de la Ville de Montréal et au terrain de St-Valérien. Nous avons cherché à maintenir et à développer ces activités avant de songer à d'autres projets. Ce sont là les activités qui intéressent le plus nos membres, autant ceux de Montréal que ceux qui demeurent à l'extérieur de notre région.

Sur le plan astronomique, plusieurs de nos membres ont observé le transit de Vénus sur le Soleil, le 8 juin, avec les membres du Club de Dorval. D'autres observateurs étaient dans l'est sur la rive du fleuve, et d'autres enfin près du parc olympique sur la rue Sherbrooke. Des photos ont paru dans le numéro de juin notre revue *Astro-Notes*.

L'éclipse totale de la Lune du 27 octobre a été observée avec le public montréalais, au parc-nature de l'Île-de-la-Visitation. Quelque 50 personnes sont venues voir l'événement. Il y avait quatre télescopes sur le site. Un compte-rendu de la soirée est paru dans *Le guide de Montréal-Nord*, du 10 novembre 2004, p.5. Pour la 5^e année, des soirées publiques d'observation ont été organisées dans ce parc. Il y en a eu quatre en 2004. Une 5^e soirée s'est tenue au parc-nature de la Pointe-aux-prairies.

Nous avons tenu 27 réunions à notre local au Centre des loisirs St-Mathieu au cours de 2004. De février à avril, plusieurs de ces rencontres avaient un caractère informel et certains membres en ont profité pour polir un miroir.

Voici la liste des conférences données par nos membres et par des conférenciers invités:

- 2 mars:** Jacques Boyer «Les solstices d'été et d'hiver»
- 5 octobre:** Pierre Bastien de l'Université de Montréal «La formation des planètes et des planètes extrasolaires»
- 12 octobre:** Marjolaine Savoie du Club de Dorval «Introduction à l'astrophotographie»
- 19 octobre:** Yvon Massicotte «Astronomie de position»
- 2 novembre:** Alain Vincent de l'Université de Montréal «Comment on dessine la surface d'une étoile»
- 9 novembre:** Gilles Guignier du Club de Dorval «L'imagerie astronomique à la webcam et à l'appareil photo numérique»

23 novembre: Gilbert St-Onge «Rapports d'observations sur le transit de Vénus du 8 juin»

Au cours de l'année trois réunions ont servi aux fins de notre Assemblée annuelle 2004 (3 février, 17 février, 27 avril). Une Assemblée générale spéciale a été tenue le 16 novembre pour modifier les Règlements généraux et faire le point sur le dossier de la fusion envisagée avec la SAPM.

Il est à noter qu'il n'y a pas eu de conférences hebdomadaires à la session du printemps au Centre des Loisirs St-Mathieu. Le program des conférences de l'automne a été donné sous le thème de «L'astronomie en images». ce thème sera poursuivi au printemps 2005.

Comme par les années passées, nous avons tenu nos réunions d'été (le ciel du mois) avec le Club de Dorval. Nous le remercions pour nous avoir reçu à Dorval comme club-visiteur.

M. François Chevrefils

Secrétaire, Centre Francophone de Montréal

CENTRE DE MONCTON CENTRE

The year 2004 was packed with diverse accomplishments by the members of our Centre. Our monthly public observing sessions at the Observatory at Université de Moncton are growing in popularity, as are the public observing sessions in Saint John and Fredericton. We have established a bilingual policy for all our meetings and publications. RASC Moncton members Curt Nason (Saint John) and Charles Doucet (Moncton) each regularly contribute to local newspapers with a monthly astronomy article, thus boosting our various public outreach activities.

Our Web site, maintained by Gerry Allain, is working very well and is a positive connection for all of our members. Our new logo was also recently posted on our Web site.

We were fortunate to have local high-school teacher Tim Beatty (who is also a RASC Moncton member), and his science class students, capture on video a possible lunar impact that became a scientific event in 2004.

Our Tri-city (Moncton - Saint John - Fredericton) Astronomy Day displays attracted a good number of people from the public and was a wonderful opportunity for our Centre to continue with its public outreach activities. School group outings were very educational and popular for the students and parents; the lunar eclipse public viewing sessions of October 27, 2004 were outstanding.

Our Cosmic Vacation Spring Star Party weekend was held on the holiday weekend of May 22 to 24 in nearby Norton, NB, and was well attended by our Centre membership. We were very well prepared for the Venus Transit event in June 2004. According to local weather predictions, the Moncton area was predicted to have favourable weather conditions for viewing the transit (observers from the Halifax area showed up in the Moncton area, and also a gentleman from the west coast of the United States drove three days to reach Moncton), but alas our skies remained cloudy! We resorted to using averted imagination to view the eclipse, and had

to look at photos taken by other RASC members from other areas across Canada.

RASC Moncton member Ted Dunphy unveiled the prototype of his astronomical boardgame "Constellation Quest" at the GA (which received favourable reviews by many in attendance). And at the General Assembly, Ted was also officially awarded his Messier Certificate by RASC National Observing Committee Chair, Chris Fleming.

Our AGM and Astronomy Conference was held on November 20, 2004 at the Université de Moncton, and it was our best one yet! It was very well attended by members from our Centre, and a handful of members from the other two Maritime RASC Centres. Charles Doucet, Chair of the RASC Moncton Fundraising Committee, did a wonderful job contacting several different astronomy products dealers for donations to be used as door prizes at our conference. Three of our Centre members formally received their Messier Certificates, presented by President, Adrien Bordage – Congratulations to Charles Doucet, Bob Crossman, and Emma MacPhee!

RASC Moncton Centre Meetings for 2004:

- January 17:** Paul Gray (RASC Moncton Centre)
"Dark Nebulae"
- February 14:** Business meeting.
- March 13:** Business meeting
- April 17:** Curt Nason (RASC Moncton Centre) "RASC Observer's Handbook, Comets section", Roger Thompson (RASC unattached) "CCD Basics," and Dave Driscoll "Sketching at the Eyepiece"
- May 15:** Dave Lane (RASC Halifax Centre) "Designing, building, and using a Backyard Observatory for Research"
- June 19:** Ted Dunphy (RASC Moncton Centre)
"Limiting Magnitudes of Stars"
- September 18:** Paul Gray and Adrien Bordage (RASC Moncton Centre) "Slide show recap of RASC GA 2004 in St. John's, Nfld, and RASC Halifax Centre Nova East 2004 Star Party." Paul Gray gave a presentation regarding his involvement with Supernova Search program in cooperation with Dave Lane of RASC Halifax Centre.
- October 16:** Business meeting.
- November 20:** Annual Astronomy Conferences. Guest speakers: Debra Tigner (RASC Ottawa Centre) "Tim Puckett Supernova Search Team Project"; Dr. David Turner (RASC Halifax Centre) "The Origin of the Constellations"; Curt Nason (RASC Moncton Centre) "A Bird's Eye View of the Night Sky"; Damien Lemay (Past President RASC) "Meteorites" (in French); Peter Ceravalo "The Making Of Comet Odyssey"
- December 11:** Curt Nason "What's up this Month?"; Paul Gray – "Telescopes and limiting magnitudes"; Don Kelly (RASC Moncton Centre) "The Orion Constellation"



L'année 2004 fut remplie d'accomplissements par les membres de notre Centre. Nos sessions d'observations publiques à l'observatoire de l'Université de Moncton accueillent plusieurs visiteurs au courant de l'année, de même que les sessions publiques de Saint-Jean et Fredericton. Nous avons aussi établi une politique de bilinguisme pour nos réunions et publications.

Membres du SRAC Moncton Curt Nason (Saint-Jean) et Charles Doucet (Moncton) contribuent des articles astronomiques aux journaux qui nous permetts d'atteindre plus de gens. Notre site web, entretenu par Gerry Allain, marche très bien et est une connection positive pour nos membres ; notre nouveau logo est sur la page couverture.

Nous avons l'honneur de reconnaître les efforts d'un professeur de l'école secondaire de Riverview, M. Tim Beatty et ses étudiants, d'avoir captée sur vidéo un impact lunaire qui fut un événement scientifique en 2004.

Notre jour d'astronomie en avril fut un effort coordonné dans trois villes (Moncton, Saint-Jean, et Fredericton) par les membres de notre Centre; et nous en avons profité pour éduquer le public. Nos sessions offerts aux écoles sont aussi populaires , et la participation nombreuse du public pour voir l'éclipse lunaire nous montre l'intérêt des gens.

Notre 3^e vacance cosmique en mai à eu lieu à Norton, NB, et divers membres de la province ont participé.

Nous étions prêts pour le Transit de Vénus en juin; selon les prédictions de météo, Moncton était un bon endroit pour y participer. On reçoit des observateurs de la région de Halifax, et un monsieur de l'ouest des États-Unis, mais le ciel demeure couvert! On a du regarder des photos prises par autres membres du Canada.

Membre SRAC de Moncton Ted Dunphy a dévoilé le prototype de son jeu astronomique `Constellation Quest` à l'assemblée générale nationale à St-Jean, Terre-Neuve. Le président du comité d'observation Chris Flemming présenta le certificat Messier à Ted pendant la réunion nationale.

Notre conférence annuelle a eu lieu le 20 novembre 2004 à l'Université de Moncton, et c'était un succès. Nous avons eu des participants de partout dans notre province, ainsi que de Nouvelle-Ecosse et Ile-du-Prince-Edouard. Charles Doucet, président du comité de levée de fonds, a fait du beau travail en communications avec plusieurs compagnies qui nous ont donnés des beaux prix de présence.

Adrien Bordage, président du SRAC Moncton, a profité de l'occasion pour décerner à trois de nos membres les certificats Messiers à Charles Doucet, Bob Crossman, et Emma MacPhee.

SRAC Centre de Moncton, réunions de l'année 2004

- 17 janvier:** Paul Gray sur «Dark Nebulae»
- 14 février:** Réunion d'affaires
- 13 mars:** Réunion d'affaires
- 17 avril:** Curt Nason (SRAC Centre de Moncton) «section du Observer's Handbook sur les comètes»; Roger Thomson (SRAC non attaché) «CCD Basics»; Dave Driscoll «Drawing at the Eyepiece»
- 15 mai:** Dave Lane (SRAC Centre de Halifax)
«Designing, building and using a Backyard Observatory for research»

- 19 juin:** Ted Dunphy (SRAC de Moncton) «Limiting Magnitudes of Stars»; Paul Gray «What's up next month»
- 18 septembre:** Paul Gray et Adrien Bordage (SRAC Centre de Moncton) ont fait une revue de la Réunion Générale Annuelle et le Party d'Étoiles de Nova East 2004. Paul a fait une présentation de son travail avec Dave Lane sur leurs recherches de Supernovae.
- 16 octobre:** Réunion d'affaires
- 20 novembre:** Réunion Annuelle et conférences et élections. Nos invités: Debra Tigner (SRAC Ottawa) «Tim Puckett Supernova Search Team Project»; Dr. David Turner (SRAC Halifax) «The Origin of the Constellations»; Curt Nason (SRAC Moncton) «A Bird's Eye View of the Night Sky»; Damien Lemay (Ancien président du SRAC National) «Météorites»; et Peter Ceravolo «The Making of Comet Odyssey»
- 11 décembre:** Curt Nason (SRAC Moncton) «What's Up this Month? », Paul Grey (SRAC Moncton)– «Telescopes and limiting magnitudes», et Don Kelly (SRAC Moncton) «La constellation Orion»

Emma MacPhee

Secrétaire, SRAC Centre de Moncton

MONTREAL CENTRE

The year 2004 has been a quiet one at the Montreal Centre. After the completion of construction activity at Molson Stadium, the Centre returned to the I.K. Williamson Observatory in the winter of 2003-2004. Although it was nice to be "home," the Board of Directors has been looking to the future of the Centre and reconsidering the possibility of a move. Unfortunately, McGill University's management of the site where the observatory is located is making it very difficult for the Centre to continue using the facilities. Indeed, access to the observatory is now difficult, if not impossible, during the winter months. More on relocation activities at the end of this short report.

The Centre's public outreach activities in association with the Morgan Arboretum continued in 2004. The two lunar eclipses were highlights of this activity, with strong public response to these events. As well, the Centre was again involved with International Space Day activities organized by the Lester B. Pearson School Board, which took place at Laurentide Aviation. Over 1500 schoolchildren had the opportunity to view the Sun via projection, white-light filtering, and hydrogen alpha filtering at the event in June. All participants considered the event an overwhelming success.

The astronomical highlight of the year, of course, was the Transit of Venus in June. A strong contingent of Montreal Centre members gathered at the Surrey Centre in Dorval, along with the Dorval Astronomy Club, to view the event under ideal condi-

tions. Although the weather leading up to the event was poor, the cloud cover dissipated at sunrise allowing us to view the last stages of the transit. Centre members are now looking forward to a repeat in 2012.

After four years of extraordinary effort, Kenneth Gee and David Shuman have stepped down as editors of the Centre's newsletter, Skyward. During their tenure, Skyward became a full colour publication thanks to the support of Centre member, Howard Reynolds. Their efforts were much appreciated by the Centre membership. At the end of 2004, Bettina Forget took over as editor and her first issue has been a spectacular success, featuring a fresh new approach to the newsletter. We sincerely hope that Bettina can continue in this capacity for many years to come.

Although membership in the Centre has been stable, attendance at meetings and talks has been poor. The access difficulties at the I.K. Williamson Observatory have certainly been a factor and, in response, the fall and winter activities of the Centre were moved back to the Montreal Planetarium. Good news is finally here, however, as an agreement has been reached with John Abbott College to enter into a long-term partnership with this local CEGEP. The terms of the agreement finds the Centre with access to state-of-the-art facilities including storage and library space allowing the Centre to keep its extensive library and equipment inventory intact. The Montreal Centre can thank our President, Mr. David Shuman, and Director of Observational Activities Mr. Andrew Fazekas for negotiating the agreement with John Abbott College. We would also like to thank Mr. Eric Schmedt, Dean of Science at John Abbott College, for making this all possible. Mr. Schmedt has agreed to continue to act as liaison between the Montreal Centre and John Abbott College. The big day (moving day) is set for May 7, 2005. The Montreal Centre's future will be very exciting indeed.

At this time, we would like to express our appreciation to the Morgan Arboretum Association and the management and staff of the Montreal Planetarium for their continued support of the Montreal Centre in 2004. During sometimes-difficult times, these two organizations have allowed the Montreal Centre to continue its activities without missing a beat.

Mark Bratton

Secretary, Montreal Centre

NIAGARA CENTRE

The Niagara Centre and its members have done their best throughout 2004 to continue our busy schedule of public star nights and events. Centre public events include monthly public star nights held at Fireman's Park, Niagara Falls, weather permitting, from September to May each year, Chippawa Creek Conservation Area for June, July, and August, Rockpoint Provincial Park in August, and Stonechurch Winery in September to coincide with the Niagara Grape & Wine Festival. The winery evening is always a popular yearly event.

For International Astronomy Day, we held a public solar-observing day at a St. Catharines' mall, in front of a Chapters &

Starbucks and an evening public star night at Fireman's Park, Niagara Falls. We were blessed with clear skies and both were well-attended events. All in all it was a successful year of public events.

Below is a list of speakers and topics for our general meetings during 2004:

- January 15:** Philip Downey "The New Map of the Universe"; Les Welgan "Astrophotography"
- February 19:** Members' night: Stan Sammy "Discussion and slides"
- March 18:** Members' night "Slides, Discussion"
- April 03:** Annual Banquet: Guest speaker, Eric Dunn of Cosmic Highway and Cosmic Odyssey TV series "Cosmic Highway: A Traveller's Guide"
- April 15:** Dr. John Percy: "Variable Stars: Action in the Sky"
- May 20:** Members' night "Slides, Discussion"
- June 24:** Members' night "Slides, Discussion"
- September 16:** Members' night "Slides, Discussion"
- October 21:** Niagara Centre elections; Ray Khan "Video Astronomy"
- November 18:** Peter Jedicke with David Gregory "Collecting Meteorites"
- December 11:** Executive Christmas Dinner at Café Amore
- December 16:** Members' Night, Jim Holiko "Video of StarFest 2004," Members' Xmas party at Chatters Bar and Grill.

Les Welgan

Secretary, Niagara Centre

OKANAGAN CENTRE

Public outreach remains a strong feature of the Okanagan Centre in 2004. For International Astronomy Day, member Arlen Burleigh organized a nighttime observing session held in a fairly dark public park in downtown Kelowna. We were overwhelmed by the public response as more than 1000 people attended. Members Arlen Burleigh, Grant Rice, David and Dorothy Player, Jason Henschel, Jim and Bitten Tisdale, Neil and Joan Campbell, and Guy Mackie were very pleased to share views of the Moon, Jupiter, Saturn, and Venus to our appreciative audience that lined up 50 deep at each telescope. We were especially excited to have wheelchair accessibility as Neil Campbell provided a live laptop display of the Moon as seen through his remotely operated telescope.

Our Centre continued the practice of "Sidewalk Astronomy" in the parking lot of a local mall during the first-quarter to full-Moon phase each month and we continued our association with the annual Cancer Relay and a children's festival called the Fat Cat. Visits by members to schools and youth groups to provide observing opportunities, or to share astronomical adventures, remains a rewarding activity for all.

Our inventory of club scopes was augmented by the generous donation by Steve Kee of a tripod mounted 4.5-inch reflector, which Guy Mackie converted to a Dobsonian for easy use by Youth Members.

Saving paper, volunteer work, and a not inconsiderable budget item, our "FOCUS" newsletter was offered primarily in an electronic format with postal mailout greatly reduced. This change was readily accepted by the membership and our newsletter maintains its high quality under the direction of Editor, Terry Adrian, with reduced mailout facilitated by Barry Jeffrey. Our Centre has also adopted new bylaws and been registered in British Columbia as non-profit charitable society.

Our yearly photo contest had five excellent entries with the winning entry being an image of Mars, submitted by Norway resident and Okanagan Centre member Mikkel Steine. Congratulations to all who entered.

The Mount Kobau Star Party was another success this year benefiting from the continued support of many Okanagan Centre members under the direction of Mount Kobau Astronomical Society President, James McRae.

Youth Director, Jim Tisdale, was proud to announce that Youth Member, Reka Moldovan, has accepted a six-week summer work-term opportunity at the TRIUMF particle accelerator, which is a world-class facility doing a wide range of particle-physics research. Reka was the only high-school student selected to participate in the program.

Member Jim Failes received the RASC National Service Award at GA 2004 in St. John's. The award was presented to Jim at the September meeting of the Okanagan Centre, where his generous contributions are recognized and very much appreciated.

Our Centre has volunteered to host the 2005 General Assembly May 19 to 23 in Kelowna, B.C. The site will be the Okanagan University College. Visit www.rasc.ca:8080/rasc for more info.

The list of presentations to our monthly meetings is as follows. Each speaker was presented with a copy of the Failes photo as a thank you.

- January:** Guy Mackie "Are we there yet?"
Guy Mackie "Power of 10 video"
- February:** Richard Christie "Historic Super Nova"
Neil Campbell "Lepus the Rabbit"
- March:** Dan Vollick "General Relativity"
Jim Tisdale "Leo the Lion"
- April:** James Kenester "The New Mars"
Traci Shuster "Large and Small Magellanic Clouds"
- May:** Joint meeting held in Vernon
Roland Klothesvc "Dying stars and their graveyards"
Guy Mackie "Monty Python's Galaxy song"
- June:** James McRae "Back to the drawing board"
Alan Whitman "M101"
- September:** Steve Barnes "Astrophotography"
- October:** Bruce Aikenhead "NASA Engineer, Director General of Canadian astronaut program, and Order of Canada"
Jim Failes "Lunar Eclipses"
- November:** Neil Campbell "Solar Activity and Aurora"
- December:** Bryan Kelso "Newfoundland after the GA, Wildlife and Landscape"

Grant Rice

Secretary, Okanagan Centre

2004 was yet another busy and successful year for the Ottawa Centre.

Our membership remains stable with 412 regular members, 13 youth members, and 41 lifetime members, for a total of 466.

Our popular monthly meetings are held at the Canada Science and Technology Museum, with Mike Earl continuing as Chair until his term expires at the end of 2004. Mike starts with a presentation of new astrophotos taken by members during the last month. This show has grown enormously in quantity and quality. Members are in awe each meeting seeing the newest deep-sky images by Albert Saikaley and Bob Olson, the latest planetary shots by Rolf Meier, solar images by Mike Zeidler, and lunar images by Mike Wirths and Doug Luoma, to name just a few. Mike Earl and Jenn Tigner were also regular contributors. Of course, the largest number of members' images was generated by the Transit of Venus and the lunar eclipse. We have continued with our normal format of four to six members giving talks in their area of expertise. Chuck O'Dale has continued his series on meteorite craters and added talks on Mars geological features, while Roland Prevost continues his "Beginners' Corner." Carmen Rush presented a series on the history of Venus transit observations. Brian McCullough started a new series titled the Ten Minute Moon, covering observing techniques and sketching of lunar features. Paul Comision's "Cutting Edge of Astronomy" series will sadly come to an end in December, as Paul wishes to retire from the post after only 15 years. One change this year was a guest speaker, Tom Harris, who talked for one hour on the future of space exploration in the 21st Century.

The highlight meeting of each year is the Annual Dinner. This year, we were privileged to hear Canadian astronomer, Dr. Jaymie Matthews, describe his work as the science leader for Canada's "humble space telescope," called M.O.S.T. Dr. Matthews described the design, manufacturing, and launch of the telescope, followed by the scientific work and surprising new results. Guests again left with a bounty of door prizes, thanks in particular to large donations by Focus Scientific, Main Sequence Software, Starry Night, Sky & Telescope, and the Ottawa Centre.

Another highlight was the announcement at the 2004 GA that Ottawa has been selected to host the 2006 GA. This will be a special opportunity for Ottawa to celebrate its 100th anniversary with members from across the country. A large contingent of Ottawa members visited St. John's to observe more carefully how a GA is run.

Public outreach and education remains an important part of the Ottawa Centre. Debra Tigner again organized numerous public star parties at nearby Pinhey's Point and the Canada Museum of Science and Technology. The best event had a big crowd and local media at the Museum for the Transit of Venus. The museum's 15-inch refractor was outfitted for the first time with a solar filter and SmartScope was operated remotely and displayed on a laptop. This year we held a successful Astronomy Day at a local Chapters store. Outdoors, visitors viewed the Moon, Sun, and even Venus naked eye during the day, then continued observing

into the evening. Indoors, shoppers were treated to astronomy displays and crafts.

The Centre's Fred Lossing Observatory (FLO), managed by Al Seaman, continues to be well used by members. The Centre was fortunate to receive a donation of a 13-inch Dobsonian reflector that is stored at FLO for members to use.

The SmartScope project is advancing. Part of the year was lost to retrofitting the 16-inch SCT to fix the classic SCT problem of mirror flop. A special clamp was designed and fabricated to fix the mirror in place so that it cannot move. The procedure was handled by Paul Boltwood, Al Seaman, and Tim Cole with great results. The year will end with a regular December meeting, when SmartScope will be operated remotely, displayed on the Museum's large screen, and used to image members' requests (weather in December permitting). If clouds persist, recent images taken with SmartScope will be shown instead.

The Centre's monthly newsletter, AstroNotes, is now successfully produced in two formats – the original black-and-white paper format that is mailed to members, and the new coloured electronic format. There has been quick acceptance of the new format, which reduces printing and mailing costs for the Centre at the same time as delivering a better product to the members.

In the awards department, the Centre was thrilled to see the 40 years of work by Art and Anne Fraser recognized. The national RASC presented a Service Award to Art and the Ottawa Centre added its recognition to Anne. Art has been a Councillor, Recorder, active builder of the Centre's observatory, and Membership Coordinator. Together, they have provided hospitality for 25 years at the monthly meetings. This year's "Observer of the Year" award went to Pat Browne, who submitted her extensive logbook with numerous and methodical written notes and sketches of her observations. The winner of the 2004 Best AstroNotes article went to Chris Teron for his piece titled "Using Astronomical Catalogues in Excel." A Finest NGC observing certificate was awarded to Geoff Meek, a Messier certificate to Chris Teron, and the first Explore the Universe certificate to an Ottawa member went to Robert Lavoie.

Chris Teron

Secretary, Ottawa Centre



Activités

Encore une fois cette année, le Centre de Québec a été impliqué dans plusieurs activités. Le Centre a organisé dix conférences, soit les premiers mercredis des mois de septembre à juin. Les sujets étaient tous variés et très intéressants.

Le Centre a aussi organisé pour ces membres une dizaine de soirées d'observation durant l'année. Parmi celles-ci, notons le marathon Messier qui a eu lieu le 13 mars 2004.

À l'occasion de la journée internationale de l'astronomie du 24 avril 2004, le Centre a organisé une activité consacrée au public. Lors de cette journée, il y a eu des mini-causeries, observation du Soleil et observation du ciel le soir.

Le Centre a organisé pour ses membres le traditionnel Party Hot-dog étoilé qui a eu lieu le 24 juillet 2004.

Finalement à l'occasion de l'éclipse lunaire du 27 octobre 2004, le Centre a organisé une soirée pour le public et ses membres.

Finalement, le Centre est fier d'avoir participé au Festival d'astronomie populaire du Mont-Mégantic qui a eu lieu les 9, 10, et 11 juillet 2004.

Daniel Tardif

Secrétaire, Québec

PRINCE GEORGE CENTRE

2004 was a year dedicated to public outreach, with a focus on educating youth. Youth Days were held regularly throughout the school year, and the Prince George Centre viewed this as a unique opportunity to raise public awareness about our facilities, and to provide an opportunity to expose children between the ages of 10 and 15 to astronomy. Some of the subjects discussed were:

- Types of telescopes, and construction of a very basic refractor
- Construction of a solar pinhole-projection telescope
- Experiment to find out what causes the various features of impact craters

More and more, we find that high-school science teachers are using the facility to enhance their curriculum. This meshes well with one of our newer member's previous background in high-school and college education. There have been many instances of students and teachers traveling from distant towns to Prince George to visit the observatory. Feedback is encouraged so that improvements and adjustments can be made for future visits.

A meteor monitor project was initiated, and although it was not online in time for the Perseids, which was attended by over 100 people, it was able to collect data for the Leonids and Geminids, both of which were obscured by clouds.

The October lunar eclipse was also clouded out, but due to our efforts at advertising the event, the classroom was filled with 50 people. Centre members enlightened the attendees with several short talks and PowerPoint presentations relating to lunar phenomena.

Rajiv Gupta and Steve Barnes visited us this year. Rajiv presented a lecture on Astrophotography at the University of Northern British Columbia, and Steve talked to us about CCD imaging at our observatory. Both gentlemen were very knowledgeable and interesting to talk with.

The 24-inch Cassegrain telescope was equipped with a flip mirror that enables the scope to also work as a $f/4$ reflector. Equipped with an ST9 CCD camera, wide-field views can now be imaged. In Cassegrain mode, the ST6 can still be used for variable-star research and the imaging of globulars, galaxies, and nebulae.

The Web page has been updated and improved, and anyone reading it will soon know what the Centre is all about. Viewing the newspaper archive section will show that more effort has been directed at newspaper coverage, including several interviews and

coverage of some events. Although it took quite a bit of time to construct, the "What's in the Sky Tonight?" section will prove to be an invaluable tool when planning an evening's viewing session. Especially helpful for locating comets and asteroids will be the available Sky Charts.

The PowerPoint library continued to expand, and as a result it was necessary to perform some computer upgrades. Building on the improvements made to the facility last year, our classroom presentations are becoming more polished, diversified, and professional.

2005 will see the initiation of an introductory astronomy course called "New Observers to Visual Astronomy." This course covers basic astronomy concepts as well as an observing program designed to see a sample of all the night sky has to offer. Participation by the public is being encouraged.

Glen Harris

Secretary, Prince George Centre

REGINA CENTRE

The year 2004 proved to be another active and productive year for the Regina Centre. Club members were busy with many astronomical endeavours including public outreach, education, personal observing, star parties, fighting light pollution, and making plans to further develop the club's dark-sky observing site at Davin.

Like members in other Centres across the country, club enthusiasts took time out of their busy schedules to provide a variety of astronomy presentations and public observing sessions. Numerous public viewing nights were held at the Saskatchewan Science Centre in Regina, libraries, and at Wascana Park for solar viewing on Canada Day and Pile O' Bones Sunday. Throughout the year a number of observing sessions were held for local Cubs, Scouts, Girl Guides, as well as nearby towns and summer camps. Through the ongoing dedication of a group of hardcore volunteers, the club's Saskatchewan Millennium Telescope located in Regina's Kalium Observatory continued to provide the public with a place to observe the night skies on most Friday nights.

The Regina Centre enjoyed a number of member events in 2004. These included a Messier Marathon in March at member Scott Wilson's acreage with 14 members attending, a number of lunar observing nights, a club night at the IMAX theatre watching the new International Space Station show followed by observing at the dark site in Davin. A new-member night was also held at Davin in October.

This past year's eighth annual Saskatchewan Summer Star Party (SSSP 2004) was a great success! Thanks to the hard work of numerous people in the Regina and Saskatoon Centres, there were over 230 people in attendance from across Canada and the northern United States. Its magnitude 6.8 skies, deluxe accommodations, and wonderful presentations continue to bring back as well as entice new amateur astronomers. The SSSP 2004 Father Lucien Kemble guest speaker was Joshua Roth from Sky and Telescope Magazine. His great presentation was entitled "New

Chapter in Cosmology: Dark Energy and the Accelerating Universe.”

Members also formed a committee to further plan and develop the club's dark-sky observing site at Davin, located some 30 kilometres east of Regina. The most exciting Davin development was the club's acquisition of the personal observatory of the late and renowned amateur astronomer, Father Lucien Kemble. This donation from the Franciscan Friars of St. Michael's Retreat was obtained through the work of Sam Ferris and Peter Bergbush. The donation included Father Kemble's observatory and private library of some 92 books including correspondences, hand written notes, and observing logs. The roll-off roof observatory was dismantled, moved, and reassembled through the backbreaking efforts of ten members on one cool but sunny fall day in September. The observatory was moved from St. Michael's retreat in Lumsden to the Regina Centre's dark-sky observing site in Davin about 60 kilometres to the east. The club plans to use the observatory to provide a permanent home for its 10-inch Meade LX6 telescope.

On September 28 a declaration was signed creating a unified Cypress Hills Dark-Sky Preserve. This unified preserve includes Cypress Hills Centre Block (SK), Cypress Hills East Block (SK), Cypress Hills West Block (AB), and Fort Walsh National Historic Site (SK). Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park (CHIPP) is now the largest Dark-Sky Preserve in Canada with a total of 39,600 hectares (97,800 acres). Representing the RASC at the ceremony were Bob King (Calgary, AB), Vance Petriew (Regina, SK), and Richard Huziak (Saskatoon, SK).

Closing out the year were a newly redesigned Web site for the club's Saskatchewan Millennium Telescope and a club Christmas party where members enjoyed an evening of fine company, astronomy chit chat, and planning for that next observing session.

Alden Foraie

Secretary, Regina Centre

ST JOHN'S CENTRE

The St. John's Centre had a great year for our relatively small Centre. Without a doubt, the highlights of 2004 were hosting the Society's GA, the Venus Transit, and our star party, called Star-B-Que.

The GA had been something we were planning and looking forward to for well over a year before the actual event. Although nothing is perfect, we think things went very well, and attendees seemed to be having a wonderful time at the event. Many thanks to Garry Dymond for his tireless efforts as Chair of our GA Committee. Nothing would have happened without his leadership. Also, thank you to all the volunteers who helped make it happen!

The Venus Transit took place in St. John's on June 8. Our public event was at Signal Hill, and was a huge success with the media and the public. We had excellent attendance and a good working relationship with the National Park at Signal Hill. For

information and pictures, visit our Web site at <http://www.sji.ca/rasc>.

Friday night at our annual Star-B-Que turned out to be an excellent event, with good viewing, and many from the public in attendance. There were some leftover prizes from the public drawing. We drew these for the volunteers. Volunteer's names were put in a hat and several books, a T-shirt, and an eyepiece, etc., were given out.

Here is a summary of our meeting year:

- January:** Christmas Show and Tell. Bring Your New Telescope Workshop
- February:** Dr. John Percy (University of Toronto) "Life in the Universe"
- March:** Discussion of Mars Rovers and Mars
- April:** NOVA video, GA Discussion
- May:** Dr. A.M. Sharan (MUN) "Synthesis of a Software for a Study of Solar and Lunar Eclipses from 4000 BC to 2300 AD"
- June:** Paul Doucet (MUN student) "The First Stars"
- September:** Summer Reprise: AGM, Transit, and Star-B-Que, including pictures
- October:** Gerry Squires (Nfld. and Lab. Geological Survey) "Terrestrial Impact Cratering"
- November:** John Hawkin (MUN Ph.D Student) "An Introduction to Globular Clusters"
- December:** Annual Wine and Cheese. Brief talk by Garry Dymond on the "Meteorite Impact Advisory Committee"

Note: the acronym "MUN" refers to "Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Summaries of all these talks can be found on our Web site. Amongst our educational activities this year, Garry Dymond has continued planetarium shows for the public at the Marine Institute. In addition, members have appeared on the radio and helped out at public events such as our annual Star-B-Que and the Venus Transit.

Good luck and clear skies!

David Bourgeois

Secretary, St. John's Centre

SARNIA CENTRE

The Sarnia Centre was delighted when Dr. Robert Garrison accepted our invitation to present public lectures to the interested Sarnia community in March 2004. Dr. Garrison is Professor Emeritus of Astronomy at the University of Toronto and Past President of the RASC. Dr. Garrison displayed his extensive enthusiasm and astronomical experience through two presentations on consecutive nights: the first was entitled, "Old Skies, New Eyes - The Process of Discovery"; the second lecture was entitled, "Some Bizarre Stars I have Known - The Interpretation of Stellar Spectra." Both lectures were thoroughly enjoyed by an audience consisting of local members of the RASC and the public.

SASKATOON CENTRE

International Astronomy Day on April 24 was an excellent opportunity for us to pass on our enthusiasm for astronomy to the public. We marked the occasion by setting up a display at Lambton Mall in Sarnia. At the heart of the display were two telescopes (4-inch and 8-inch) set up for visitors to examine up-close. The display also included eye-catching astronomical photographs, books, pamphlets, and take-home sky charts. The Sarnia Centre members tending the display fielded a host of questions from interested visitors during the day-long event. All visitors to the display were invited to a follow-up public observing session to be held that evening at Mike Weir Park, which unfortunately was clouded out. We also setup a similar display during Sarnia's annual July Hobbyfest, an event that allows local clubs, societies, and organizations the opportunity to share interest in their hobby with the public.

On May 30, members from the Sarnia and London Centres participated in a fascinating tour of the Elginfield Observatory, a University of Western Ontario research facility located about 25 km north of London. Special thanks go out to Dr. David Grey for conducting the tour.

Like the rest of the world, members of the Sarnia Centre eagerly anticipated the rare Transit of Venus across the Sun on June 8 – the first such event visible since 1882. Clear skies were generously provided to us on transit day as several members gathered at our Fleming Road observing site before sunrise in preparation for the event. When the Sun cleared the horizon, we were surprised and delighted to discover that we could see the black disk of Venus on the Sun with the naked eye through the slight horizon haze. Once the Sun had climbed high enough to clear the natural "horizon-haze" filter, we had several other methods available to observe the transit. One telescope was equipped with a solar filter to allow for direct viewing, while indirect viewing was provided by projecting the image of the transit from another telescope onto a white board. A few members brought welders' glasses and other devices (normally used to observe solar eclipses) through which the transit could be observed without the use of a telescope. This memorable experience left all of us looking forward to the next Transit of Venus, visible from North America as a sunset event on June 5, 2012.

Our late summer star party/Bar-b-Que was held at Centre member Don Stefanik's farm near Forest in September. Everyone present was treated to exceptionally clear dark skies and excellent food (courtesy of Don and his wife Carol).

A clear highlight for the year was our October meeting where we hosted renowned meteorite collector Dr. David Gregory. Dr. Gregory gave a fascinating presentation outlining common methods for prospecting of meteorites, and a description of several famous meteorites found on Earth. Following the presentation, Dr. Gregory unveiled some of the prized specimens from his meteorite collection, which he allowed everyone present to handle. These included iron meteorites, a rare lunar meteorite, and specimens known to have originated from Mars and the asteroid Vesta.

As always, Marguerite Hamilton did an excellent job all year long preparing *Urania*, our regular newsletter. We wish everyone clear skies in 2005!

Paul Bessonette

Secretary, Sarnia Centre

2004 proved to be another active year for our Centre. Enthusiasm amongst the membership remains high. We have an active group of observer's who are using the facilities at Sleaford Observatory frequently, as weather permits.

Our club continues to have a good relationship with the Physics Department at the University of Saskatchewan, and our meetings are now held monthly on campus in the Physics Building. Our shared responsibility, with the Physics Department, for the Sleaford Observatory has worked out very well.

Astronomy Day was quite successful in that we had a good turn out of volunteers for our display and for the following public star night. Attendance of the public at both events however was somewhat wanting.

The Saskatchewan Summer Star Party was a great success with clear skies and over 200 registrants in attendance.

The entire Cypress Hills Park, both the Saskatchewan and Alberta sides, has just recently been declared a DARK SKY PRESERVE, thanks to the park managers, government officials and Centre members like Rick Huziak.

For the first time in many years, our club took part in a revitalized hobby show at the Prairie Land Exhibition. We put together a stunning display, which the thousands in attendance had a chance to enjoy.

Good leadership for our Centre continues with the election of our new Centre President, Ron Waldron. One of Ron's first initiatives was to host a workshop for Centre members at our November general meeting to plan for the future of our Centre. This turned out to be even more successful than expected and will allow us to organize our thoughts and ideas into an executable plan for the years to come.

Our membership looks forward to another interesting and eventful year in 2005.

Al Hartridge

Secretary, Saskatoon Centre

THUNDER BAY CENTRE

The Thunder Bay Centre membership has grown slightly in 2004. More members have become involved in Centre activities, presentations, and administration.

With their wide range of expertise and experience, many of the general meeting presentations were conducted by our members. Topics presented included: aurora borealis (John Bakkelund), optical-filter properties (Ted Bronson), computer-aided telescope tracking (Dave Gallant), report on archeo-astronomy (Shirley Godfrey), and an account of the planetary grouping in April 2004 as viewed from Terrace B.C. (Heero Huitsing). Other presentations included: Mythology in Astronomy (Bruce Miron), Transit of Venus – History and photos (Ted Bronson), and software demonstrations (Bruce Miron). Randy McAllister kept us up

to date on his observatory modifications.

Ted Bronson ran the Basic Backyard Astronomy course at Confederation College and received an excellent turnout. This eight-week course is geared for the beginner and covers all aspects of astronomy and observing equipment at a general level. Familiarization with the night skies is included in the field exercises.

This year the Thunder Bay Centre hosted two major Stargazing Weekends at Provincial Parks. These events were held at:

(1) **Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park** (July 16) – A slide presentation was attended by about 40 campers and other interested stargazers from the area. Centre members had telescopes and binoculars available to give a tour of the skies following the slide talk.

(2) **Quetico Provincial Park** (August 11, August 13) – A presentation at the amphitheatre on the Perseid meteor shower was given by Dave Gallant, followed by a sky tour and meteor observing on the 11th. For the 18th Annual Quetico Weekend (August 13) Ted Bronson did a slide talk on general astronomy to about 50 campers and local interested stargazers. After the presentation we again went out under the dark Quetico skies for some stargazing.

Astronomy Day was held on April 24, with an exhibit set up at the Arthur Street Marketplace Plaza. Centre members had telescopes and equipment on display along with literature and photographs. We had many questions from the public concerning our Centre and astronomy in general.

On June 10 our Centre hosted a visit by National President Rajiv Gupta. During his visit Rajiv did an interview with CBC Radio. He also visited Sir Winston Churchill High School from which he graduated. After dinner with Centre members he did a presentation on “Astrophotography – Imaging the Heavens” for the public and Centre members.

Centre members also participated in sessions with groups including Cubs, Scouts, Brownies, Guides, and church groups (children and adults). The Transit of Venus on June 8 was glimpsed from the Hillcrest Park and Mission Marsh sites despite the fog and broken-cloud conditions. Two Centre members traveled to other locations to observe the transit (Charleston, South Carolina and Luxor, Egypt). Unfortunately, the skies clouded over so the total lunar eclipse in October could not be seen from our area.

The final event of the year was the Centre membership party at the Bronson residence on December 5. Stories of the past year’s experiences were exchanged. A toast was made to our prosperous Centre, its good year in 2004, and to favourable observing sessions in 2005.

Ted Bronson

Secretary, Thunder Bay Centre

TORONTO CENTRE

It was a memorable year for observing and public education, with much effort devoted to the Transit of Venus, and three star parties at the Ontario Science Centre to mark the total lunar eclipse of November 8, 2003, the 35th anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon landing, and the first anniversary of the great Ontario blackout of

2003. Despite poor weather on July 20, the Apollo anniversary event was still well attended, and the event on August 14 was very successful. There were three other events at the Science Centre, including International Astronomy Day. A “Stargazing for Beginners” workshop was held at the E.C. Carr Astronomical Observatory (CAO) in May. These were in addition to the usual monthly deep-sky and City Observing Sessions, and attempts to observe the Perseid and Leonid meteor showers. This year, the City Observing Sessions were held at Bayview Village Park in North York. The Deep Sky East sessions were held at Long Sault Conservation Area.

Fourteen members and friends of the Toronto Centre travelled to Egypt to view the entire transit of Venus on June 8, 2004 from Hurghada, Egypt under the leadership of Ralph Chou, while over 70 members gathered at Cathedral Bluffs Park in Scarborough to view the end of the event under mostly clear skies.

The Public Education Committee enjoyed a very successful year. Thousands of people visited the Toronto Centre’s booth at the Hobby Show, and many members continued the tradition of bringing their telescopes to the David Dunlap Observatory’s public nights during the summer. Although there were only two school presentations this year, the Committee presented badge programs for two Girl Guide, three Brownie, and three Wolf Cub groups, and spoke to three student groups. Program presentations were delivered to two Guide-Area Day events with over 200 Guiding leaders attending each one, and there were community events in Thornhill and Newmarket. In August, an astronomy presentation and star party were held at the CAO for the L.E. Shore Memorial Library of Thornbury.

Ivan Semeniuk assembled an excellent series of lecture meetings. They were:

- September 24, 2003:** Hugh Gregory, Vancouver Centre “Soviet Space Disasters”
- October 22, 2003:** Dr. Peter Martin, University of Toronto “The International Galactic Plane Survey”
- November 19, 2003** Ivan Semeniuk “Mars: the Next Step”
- January 21, 2004:** Dr. Alain Berinstain, Canadian Space Agency “A Greenhouse on Mars”
- February 18, 2004:** Dr. Ken Crosswell “Magnificent Mars”
- March 24, 2004:** Dr. Geoff Marcy, University of California Berkeley “Extrasolar Planets and Prospects for Life”
- April 21, 2004:** Dr. Anthony Noble, Sudbury Neutrino Observatory “Searches for Dark Matter in the new SNOLab Facility”
- May 19, 2004:** Dr. Thebe Medupe “Cosmic Africa”

On November 23, 2003, the joint meeting of the Toronto Centre with the Royal Canadian Institute for the Advancement of Science was addressed by Dr. Marten H. van Kerkwijk of the Department of Astronomy and Astrophysics of the University of Toronto. His topic was “Supernovae and Neutron Stars: A Short Tour of Extreme Astrophysics.”

Members’ Night programs, organized by Paul Markov, included a monthly “The Sky This Month” presentation by Geoff Gaherty, and presentations on a variety of observing equipment and aids, digital astrophotography, simulation software, organization of the Toronto Centre, astronomical material in archives in Toronto and Quebec City, Greenbank Radio Observatory, Kitt

Peak National Observatory, the Mauna Kea Observatories, a space shuttle launch, amateur observatories, star party tips and tricks, the General Assembly, the RASC lunar observing certificate, CCD video imaging, telescope basics, and the Transit of Venus.

Denis Grey and Leslie Harvey are to be congratulated on the high quality of *Scope*. The newsletter has been published on time and on budget, with excellent coverage of Centre events and well-written articles supplied by many members. Last year Council established the Ostrander-Ramsay Award for astronomical writing. The first recipient, Randy Attwood, was presented with the award at the annual Open House and Awards Picnic at the CAO on May 15, 2004.

The Toronto Centre's Internet presence was managed by Geoff Gilmour-Taylor, Andy Schuh, and Rajesh Shukla, who operated the Web site and listserver. High-speed Internet access has been established for the CAO with Grant Communications of Collingwood. Over 225 members participate in the listserver, which carried 2550 messages in 2003-2004.

Membership in the Toronto Centre stood at 763 regular, 43 youth, and 84 life, with 136 associates, for a total of 1026 members in 2004. It is with regret that we record the deaths this year of John Sinclair, a member since 1998, Robert Osborne, a member since 2000, Boris Dyke, a member since 1984, Robert G. Watson, who joined in July, and Harlan Creighton, Past President of the Centre, former national Recorder, national Librarian, Editor of the National Newsletter, and Life Member since 1956. In late 2003, Jim Walker, a member since 1999, passed away. Mr. Walker generously bequeathed his entire collection of astronomical equipment and books, including a Televue 101 refractor and an 8-inch Newtonian reflector.

The CAO saw much use this year, with volunteer supervisors on site every clear weekend to open the facility. Work is continuing on finishing the lower level of the residence building, and wiring and concrete footings were installed for a second observatory building, which was to be installed before this winter. All window frames have been repaired and repainted.

Fifty-five members and guests attended the Annual Open House and Awards Presentation at the CAO in May. This year's award recipients were Tim Hunter, the Bert Winearls Award; Brian Cheaney, the Andrew Elvins Award; Guy Nason, the Bertram J. Topham Award; and Ed Hitchcock, the Jesse Ketchum Award. Citations were published in the June/July 2004 issue of *Scope*.

Clear skies greeted the 110 members who attended the Seventh Annual Algonquin Adventure Weekend in September. Thanks are due Bob and Lillian Chapman for organizing this event, which was sold out once again.

A telescope loan program has been set up to give members the opportunity to "test drive" telescopes before they buy. John Bohdanowicz administers the program, which has two 8-inch Dobsonian telescopes and a 6-inch equatorial Newtonian in circulation.

This year's recipient of the Gold Medal of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, Toronto Centre is Adam Hincks of Toronto, who is studying observational cosmology for a Ph.D. at Princeton University. The recipient of this year's astronomy prize at the Toronto Science Fair is Taras Pankov.

All of the Centre's achievements would not be possible with-

out countless hours of volunteer work on the part of the membership. The Centre acknowledges the contributions of Geoff Brown, Geoff Gilmour-Taylor, Geoff Gaherty, Brian Cheaney, Leslie Harvey, Dietmar and Millie Kupke, Jim Low, Denis Grey, Paul Markov, Ostap Mojsiak, Frank Smith, Dave Sage, Lucy Winnicki, Rajesh and Diane Shukla, Andy Schuh, John Bohdanowicz, and many others. Special thanks are due Bob and Lillian Chapman for their work on the Annual Algonquin Adventure and promotional items, and to Andy Schuh and Guy Nason for their work with the Observational Activities Committee.

In closing, I wish to recognize Tim Hunter, our Treasurer, First Vice-President Brian Cheaney, and Councillors John Ginder and Robert May, who are retiring from their positions as of this Annual Meeting. Their contributions to the business of the Toronto Centre are much appreciated. Thanks are due to Carruthers, Shaw and Partners Architects for the use of their facilities for Council meetings, and to Parks Ontario for the use of the parking lot at Forks of the Credit Provincial Park for Deep-Sky Observing West sessions. I also thank the Ontario Science Centre for its continued hospitality in providing the facilities and audio-visual support for our meetings and public events. On behalf of the Council, I thank all members for your continued trust and support of our work.

B. Ralph Chou

Secretary, Toronto Centre

VANCOUVER CENTRE

The Vancouver Centre worked hard to deliver a high-quality speaker program and we thank Barry Shanko for his efforts:

Three related talks featured speakers from the Department of Physics and Astronomy at University of British Columbia (UBC). Jeremy Heyl spoke about how astronomers find their way in the High-Energy Universe. Harvey Richer and Ingrid Stairs talked about a high-energy millisecond pulsar and its traveling companions. Their detective work led to the identification of a young white dwarf and then to the oldest known planet. Evgenya Shkolnik, followed up with the story of an unusual planetary discovery, one in which the planet heats the star that it orbits.

Three other speakers reviewed their exploration tools. Anna Sajina, UBC, discussed Infrared Astronomy and the new Spitzer Space Telescope. Jaymie Matthews, also at UBC, brought us up-to-date on MOST, his suitcase full of science. From launch to its first results, the project has exceeded the team's expectations. Dr. John Hutchings, Hertzberg Institute for Astrophysics and Canada's Project Scientist for the Webb Telescope described the James Webb Space Telescope and Canada's role in it. As you know it will replace Hubble, the world's most beloved Eye in the Sky.

Dan Falk posed the question "Is there a theory of the Universe so complete and simple that it can fit on a T-shirt?" (We have a supply of t-shirts waiting to be printed.)

Dr. Julio Navarro detailed how the Milky Way galaxy cannibalizes the neighbourhood. (Reminded me of the old Pac Man

Game on a giant scale.)

Our own Eric Dunn entertained us with a reprise of his GA 2003 talk – “Up Kitt Peak Without a Paddle: Confessions of a Rain-Soaked Astronomer.”

Members’ Nights brought our President Bill Ronald with his travelogue “The ‘Unofficial’ RASC Vancouver Centre Expedition to Time the Transit of Venus”. Now that he’s had some practice, the next time will be “Official.” Then Bob Parry shared his latest project - the bashful telescope mount. Those of you who witnessed his efforts or have built your own equipment can relate to Bob’s quote “It was working just fine last night.”

Tonight, of course, we have the AGM and Lee Johnson’s Amateur Hour. Lee will be taking a sabbatical but has generously sublet his spot to Craig Breckenridge. Lee has discovered there are some polysyllabic words he has yet to master so he’s taking time off to work on their pronunciation. We look forward to the return of his sesquipedalianistic proclivity.

The Centre was also involved in a series of viewing events, split between members and the public. For the former we had:

- Two attempts to complete a Messier Marathon
- Both a Spring and Fall Star Quest at Merritt and
- The Mt. Kobau Star Party

For the latter:

- A planetary alignment viewing
- Astronomy Day
- The annual Fraser River Festival
- The Perseid Meteor Shower observing at Aldergrove Lake
- Sidewalk Astronomy
- The Manning Park Star Party and Outreach straddled both camps.

Finally, special mention goes to Norman Song who organized and helped popularize the Richmond Rotary Club Auction – An evening with an astronomer, which has become a popular fund raiser for that group.

Ron Jerome

President, Vancouver Centre

VICTORIA CENTRE

The Victoria Centre and its members have enjoyed a busy and exciting 2004.

Special Events for the Victoria Centre this year include:

Anniversary – This year the Victoria Centre turned 90 years old. The Victoria Centre held its founding meeting on March 6, 1914 and the following month, the National Council of the RASC welcomed the new Centre to the fold. Our regular March 10, 2004 meeting honoured this milestone with cake, coffee, and a special lecture by our Centre historian, Bill Almond. Also celebrating a birthday this year, the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory (DAO) Centre of the Universe turned three on June 10, 2004.

George Ball Observatory – Our Honourary President, George Ball, has generously offered his astronomical equipment to the RASC Victoria Centre. On April 1 the dome and telescope

were moved and will be stored until a suitable permanent location is found. Council held a special meeting on April 28 at the new residence of George Ball for the purpose of honouring his thoughtful donation. President Chris Gainor presented George with two photo albums from the day of the move and a Certificate of Appreciation from the RASC Victoria Centre

Star Party – The Annual RASCAL Star Party organized by Rich Willis was held at the Victoria Fish and Game Reserve. It was well attended by both RASC members and the public, although due to the overcast skies, the focus was on lectures, socializing, buying sprees, and door prizes.

Venus Transit - There was great excitement on June 8 for the Transit of Venus when RASC members were treated to an as-it-happens experience at the DAO Centre of the Universe. A live Internet link with a location in Paris, France provided audio and video that was projected onto a BIG screen. One member joined an RASC-hosted tour to Egypt to view the event.

Eclipse – This year provided clear skies on October 28 for a spectacular full-Moon total lunar eclipse. Many RASC Victoria members participated in a public-viewing event at the Centre of the Universe and at Cattle Point sharing their time and telescopes. Public attendance at each location averaged 200 people. Other members who set up scopes in local parks in and around Victoria, also saw much of the public take an interest in the events of the night sky.

Monthly Events:

Regular Meetings were held every second Wednesday of the month except July, August, and November at 7:30 p.m. at the University of Victoria in the Elliot Building Room 061.

Astronomy Cafe was hosted this year by Bruno Quenneville as an informal get-together every Monday night.

The **New Observers’ Observing Group** was hosted by Sid Sidhu, every fourth Friday of the month. This year the weather was not so cooperative but did provide six good observing sessions.

Astronomical Imaging was hosted by Bill Almond on the third Wednesday night of the month except for June, July, and August at the Almond Observatory. (AKA, “the nut house!”) This year provided five months of good viewing. Joe Carr and David Lee regularly generated a lot of interest when they brought an armload of new equipment to try out. The program is now looking forward to imaging the great winter showpieces.

Outreach Programs:

The **School Telescopes Program** provides an opportunity for school-age children to look through a telescope and enjoy the wonders of the night sky. The program began in 1996 under the leadership of Sid Sidhu with the assistance of the Centre’s dedicated volunteers and students from Pearson College. This year the program reached 1600 children in 15 schools, providing telescopes to the schools, classroom presentations, and night-sky viewing sessions.

Public Observing at the Centre of the Universe included Saturday Star Parties from April through October and Stargazer Sundays in July and August. The dedicated Victoria Centre volunteers joined the staff and shared their telescopes and knowledge of the stars.

At **Pearson College of the Pacific**, Bill Weir spearheaded and maintained a very active observing program with the astronomy student group. The program is focused on viewing skills, the use of astronomical telescopes, and learning about the night sky.

By taking to the sidewalks around Victoria, the **Sidewalk Astronomy** program, with Blaire Pellatt and RASC Victoria members, brings the opportunity for celestial observing to the public. This year was a “lean” year for sidewalk astronomy due to a few unpredictable events and the weather, which made a regular observing night impossible. (We can always blame the weather.) There were a couple of sessions at the Oak Bay Library, which were enthusiastically received by the public averaging 35-50 people. The wonderful response from the branches of the Victoria Public Library has made this a very good choice to conduct further sessions. Next year promises a much busier schedule and Blaire has a few surprises, which are bound to attract some attention.

Astronomy Day in Victoria celebrated at The Royal British Columbia Museum on April 24 with daytime activities including lectures, multimedia presentations, a Solar System scale model, a display comparing the diameters of famous telescope mirrors and lenses, astronomical images taken by members, hands-on activities such as telescope mirror grinding and solar observing, a children’s activity table, story telling by the Wizard, and an Ask an Astronomer Booth. In the evening, the public was invited to the DAO Centre of the Universe for night-sky viewing. The event was organized by Sid Sidhu and ran smoothly due in large part to Sid’s efforts and the many new and returning members who volunteered their time and equipment.

Committees:

An **Observing Site Committee** was formed on February 26, 2004 chaired by Dave Bennett. “The purpose of the project is to investigate and then find or create one or more observing sites for the Victoria Centre of the RASC.” A Site Survey was made available for members and results were posted on the members’ Web site. This committee remains active in pursuing a permanent site.

Light-Pollution Abatement Committee met with the Planning Department at the Saanich Municipal Hall, regarding a lack of application of their Light-Pollution Bylaw at Save-On-Foods store.

The **Membership Committee** reported 199 registered members as of the end of September. Membership has risen over the same time last year but generally remains fairly constant from one year to the next.

The RASC Victoria Centre **Library** is run and maintained by Sid Sidhu, and available for the benefit of Centre members. Thirty new books were graciously donated this year by many members.

Awards:

Several awards are presented at the Annual Christmas Dinner and General Meeting usually held in November.

The **Newton-Ball Award** was named for Jack Newton and George Ball for their outstanding service to the Centre. Each year the award recognizes a member for his or her personal dedication to activities past or present that have benefited all members of the Victoria Centre.

The **Ernie Pfannenschmidt** Annual Award for Amateur Telescope Making was introduced in 2003 in memory of Earnie Pfannenschmidt.

The RASC Victoria Centre **Award for Astrophotography** will be introduced this year

Meeting Schedule:

- January 14:** Astro Imaging - lunar eclipse video and members show-and-tell
- February 11:** Don Morton “Recollections of a Canadian Astronomer”
- March 10:** RASC Victoria Centre’s 90th Anniversary
- April 14:** Jean-René Roy “The Latest Science from Gemini”
- May 12:** Steven Courtin “The Evolution of the Ecliptic Calendar”
- June 9:** Chris Gainor “The Story of Mars Exploration & Astro Imaging”
Joe Carr “Mars”; David Lee “Astrophotography”
- September 8:** Members Night
- October 13:** Dr. Gregory G. Arkos “From Schiaparelli to Spirit: A history of the human exploration of Mars”
- November 20:** Victoria Centre Annual General Meeting
- December 8:** Doug Johnstone “The JCMT: Past, Present, and Future”

Li-Ann Dorrance

Secretary, Victoria Centre



For the Windsor Centre, 2004 was, for the most part, a very good year. Henry Lee had been the sole founding member of our Centre still with us until his passing on January 6, 2004. We remember Henry with great respect for his valuable work in supporting the efforts of the Society and the Windsor Centre, as well as his inspiring involvement within the community in teaching many individuals about astronomy. His remembrance to the Windsor members is honorably fixed by the fact that the main telescope at the Hallam Observatory bears his good name. Though Henry will be missed by all of us, his fine example will continue to encourage us in our own personal discovery of the heavens and in sharing with others what we know about astronomy. We are genuinely grateful to his wife Mamie for her kindness in helping to actively support various Windsor Centre activities through the years.

Steve Pellarin organized a group of 11 people to visit the Detroit Science Centre on March 27. They viewed an exhibit about Mars. We continued to have a public display for Earth Day on April 25 at Ojibway Park. The Centre had a special observing session at the Hallam Observatory on June 8 to view the transit of Venus, where 21 members with seven telescopes participated. This rare event was a truly remarkable sight. Venus looked comparatively so much larger than Mercury in front of the Sun. Our

Annual Picnic was held once more at the Hallam Observatory on June 12. On the night of October 27/28, during the total eclipse of the Moon, we had public observing at three sites for interested persons who attended. During the year, some members gave talks on astronomy to a number of public groups at the observatory and other locations. This year also saw the beginning of monthly public observing nights at the observatory. Our December Social was held at our new monthly membership meeting place at the Knights of Columbus hall near Windsor on December 3. Steve Pellarin became the most recent recipient of the Centre's Service Certificate. A special "thank you" goes to Ivan Semeniuk, a science journalist specializing in astronomy, who had recently assisted on a documentary about rovers on Mars for the Discovery Channel. At the University of Windsor, Ivan gave a wonderful presentation on recent planetary exploration in our Solar System. Steve Mastellotto has served quite well during his first year as President of our Centre, of which we are sincerely appreciative. Once more genuine thanks go to Peter Bondy, who skillfully chaired the Observatory Committee, working beyond what he had to on matters concerning the observatory. Well-deserved appreciation is expressed to the Windsor Centre members who have been speakers at the membership meetings, have given education talks, and have as well been involved in further improvements to the observatory. Thanks go as well to those persons who assisted in other important ways related to the rest of the members and the local public, all of whom helped to make this year an excellent one for our Centre.

The writer of this report would like personally thank Dave Panton, our Centre's diligent Recording Secretary, for looking up many needed facts. The Windsor Centre held nine membership meetings, three council meetings, two socials, one members' observing session, one public observing session, and one public display. Membership meetings were as follows:

- January 20:** Dan Taylor "Progress Against Light Pollution in Essex County"
February 17: Juliana Grigorescu "The Life of a Star"
March 16: Steve Pellarin "Telescopes at Kitt Peak"
April 24: Ivan Semeniuk "Between Heaven and Earth"
May 18: Dr. William Baylis University of Windsor, Department of Physics "Strings, Mbranes, Loops, and Kinks in the Elegant Universe"
June 15: Rev. Harry Brydon "What if Life were Found Elsewhere in the Universe?"
September 21: Dan Taylor "Light-Pollution Committee Report"
October 19: David Gregory "Meteorite Collection"
November 16: David Sobocan "Astronomical Photographs Good and Simple"

C. Joady Ulrich

Secretary, Windsor Centre



The past year saw a continuation of the high level of participation in the Winnipeg Centre of the RASC with a growing membership

(140) and an increase in the activity level of long-standing and new members. Meetings were characterized by a growing attendance to the point that discussions are underway to obtain a larger meeting room: most monthly meetings had an attendance of 70 to 90 people. An informal observing and astrophotography group has been established with the effect of increasing the number of people who are actively going out into the night sky. Ten members have received Messier Certificates and four are working in that direction. Three have been awarded the "Finest NGC" certificate and two more are underway. Three members are working on the "Herschel 400" certificate. Six members have received the Explore the Universe certificate and three more are on the way. Training courses to use the club's 12-inch Meade and 14-inch Dobsonian continued slowly through the year with several new users approved.

Monthly member observing sessions proved to be popular, especially during the lunar eclipse and the Perseids. Public-observing nights were held in conjunction with Astronomy Day and the lunar eclipse and a number of organizations prevailed upon members to visit their sites and present a sky show. The Saskatchewan Summer Star Party was well attended, but the annual mad drive to Arizona in March attracted only four participants. The Winnipeg Centre remains very healthy, both in finances and membership.

Meetings and Topics:

- January:** Robert Dyck: "The Mars Express"
February: Ron Berard: "Wide-Angle Astrophotography"
March: Sean Ceaser: "The Messier Marathon"
April: Kevin Black: "Astronomy – Arizona versus Manitoba"
May: Jay Anderson: "Searching the Closets of the Universe"
June: Rajiv Gupta: "The Observer's Handbook: 96 Years and Going Strong"
July: Annual Barbeque at Glenlea Observatory
August: Robin Woods: "Where is Everybody? Are we alone in the Universe?"
September: Ron Berard: "From the Cosmic Egg to the Big Bang: A brief history of Cosmology"
October: Jay Anderson: "The Amateur's Universe"
November: Lindsay Price: "Things I have Learned about Radio Astronomy"
December: Jay Anderson: "Home, Sweet Home – Our Milky Way"
Events: Member Observing Nights were held in all months but July
January: Mid-winter Potluck
May: Astronomy Day
July: Spruce Woods Astro Weekend
August: Big Whiteshell Star Party
September: Bird's Hill Park Star Party

CENTRE TREASURERS' REPORTS FOR FISCAL YEAR – 2004

		Belleville	Calgary	Charlotte- town	Edmonton	Halifax	Hamilton	Kingston	Kitchener- Waterloo	London
REVENUE										
Membership	Membership fees – regular	1,007	5,275	346	4,276	3,429	1,417	2,225	2,255	2,753
	Membership fees – youth		594	13			22			
	Membership fees – basic surcharge		55				1,027	620	665	
	Membership fees – special surcharge/Associates		2,929				120			
	Life membership grants		299		193	458	35	141		141
Donations/Fundraising	Donations			46	15	4,738	225	377	117	
	Fundraising/Sponsorship/Grants		648	470			75,780	15,767	498	
Educational/Activities			798				200	25		
Interest and Dividends			635		9	51	32	226		116
Publication Sales	Sale of Observer's Handbooks					350		80		
	Sale of Observer's Calendars		1,210	360		869	179	480	252	394
	Sale of Beginner's Observing Guides		230			149	80			240
	Other Publication Sales				60	340	20			
Subscriptions	Astronomy/Sky & Telescope magazine							496		
	Other									289
Product Sales	RASC promo items					269	122			
	Other items	55				409	246			
Advertising										
General Assembly	General Assembly – including travel grants									
Events	Star Parties	573	1,286			3,604				575
	Annual Dinner		1,319				1,953	775		
Observatory site or equipment rentals/loans			771		300		319			30
Miscellaneous			200		78,690		261	49		40
TOTAL REVENUE		1,635	16,249	1,235	83,543	14,666	82,038	21,261	3,787	4,578
EXPENDITURES										
Library								82	215	102
Publications	Newsletter	94	3,512		3,479	1,060	103	393		235
	Observer's Handbook					279		120		
	BOG		140			120				374
	Observer's Calendar			272	926	664		546		364
	Other Publications		35			290				
Events	Meetings	77			281	340	160	30		
	Star Parties	575	2,927			2,728	2,087	304		
	Annual Dinner	227	1,668	24				1,154	1,184	
	Astronomy Day	60			270				66	
	Other Events		929	70						
Product Expenses	RASC promo items					65		55		70
	Other items	75		25		110	221			44
Advertising				65						
Travel	General Assembly and Council Meetings				452		90			
	Speaker Travel Assistance				519				20	120
Equipment and Supplies		244	96		128	296	59,188			126
Office Administration			664		189	149	130			105
General Expenses and Audit		5			350	25		253		
Educational Activities			500					15,696		
Insurance			2,270			1,208	1,080			
Awards and Donations			189	215	752			141		170
Observatory and Site Expenses			2,164			3,639	2,076	188	5,350	451
Depreciation					4,952					
Miscellaneous			1,254		41,767	147	114	639		12
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		1,357	16,348	671	54,065	11,120	65,249	19,601	6,835	2,173
SURPLUS OR (DEFICIT) ON OPERATIONS		278	(99)	564	29,478	3,546	16,789	1,660	(3,048)	2,405
ASSETS	Liquid Assets	1,660	25,880		107,710	13,906	19,919	18,423	3,464	23,535
	Capital Assets		98,475		47,284	16,998			55,000	20,761
LIABILITIES						1,858	13,282			

CENTRE TREASURERS' REPORTS FOR FISCAL YEAR – 2004

		Moncton	C.F. de Montréal	Montreal	Niagara	Okanagan	Ottawa	Prince George	Québec	Regina
REVENUE										
Membership	Membership fees – regular	1,358	2,350	3,902	1,919	1,318	9,039	1,448	563	973
	Membership fees – youth				51	44				
	Membership fees – basic surcharge				411	270			512	201
	Membership fees – special surcharge/Associates				90				996	
	Life membership grants			211	70	35	704		88	53
Donations/Fundraising	Donations	50	385		216	183	2,074	220		1,252
	Fundraising/Sponsorship/Grants	567		191	311		3,120	1,000		200
Educational/Activities						141		1,128		
Interest and Dividends			2	1,271	172	1	378			
Publication Sales	Sale of Observer's Handbooks	15			5					15
	Sale of Observer's Calendars	910		270	361	456	1,484	1,142	245	160
	Sale of Beginner's Observing Guides				119	45				
	Other Publication Sales		915		5					
Subscriptions	Astronomy/Sky & Telescope magazine				1,851					
	Other									1,950
Product Sales	RASC promo items	30			320	132				
	Other items	40			210	392		223		
Advertising		25	300							
General Assembly	General Assembly – including travel grants									
Events	Star Parties	455								419
	Annual Dinner	250			2,870		1,782			
Observatory site or equipment rentals/loans					215	455	1,232			
Miscellaneous		7	54	92	339	2,000		633	114	
TOTAL REVENUE		3,707	4,006	5,937	9,535	5,472	19,813	5,794	2,518	5,223
EXPENDITURES										
Library			71	105						50
Publications	Newsletter	233	285	672	217	293	3,828			
	Observer's Handbook				60					15
	BOG				96	138				
	Observer's Calendar	452			234	362	2,746	1,450	318	36
	Other Publications								47	
Events	Meetings	310			320		482		148	
	Star Parties	300	63							66
	Annual Dinner	411			2,730		2,087			
	Astronomy Day						61			
	Other Events			22						
Product Expenses	RASC promo items	144			204	190				
	Other items	142	45			110				
Advertising								213		
Travel	General Assembly and Council Meetings					1207		256		110
	Speaker Travel Assistance	367				88	722		290	
Equipment and Supplies				244	420	75		2,218		818
Office Administration			2,790	1,830	139	487	629	357	850	1,214
General Expenses and Audit					24	187	841	499	32	100
Educational Activities		44				103				
Insurance			604	791			4,940	1,399		417
Awards and Donations			143			100				
Observatory and Site Expenses			655	60	9,966		1,548	5,196	460	417
Depreciation					734		15,366			
Miscellaneous		34		155	1,926	1,050	546	465	83	1,356
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		2,437	4,656	3,879	17,070	4,390	33,796	12,053	2,228	4,599
SURPLUS OR (DEFICIT) ON OPERATIONS		1,270	(650)	2,058	(7,535)	1,082	(13,983)	(6,259)	290	624
ASSETS	Liquid Assets	3,019	5,309	67,808	6,362	3,443	26,321	1,093	1,178	3,725
	Capital Assets		12,516	60,000	19,054	3,000	81,733	75,000	3,000	54,960
LIABILITIES			350			1,000	2,834			

CENTRE TREASURERS' REPORTS FOR FISCAL YEAR – 2004

		St. John's	Sarnia	Saskatoon	Thunder Bay	Toronto	Vancouver	Victoria	Windsor	Winnipeg
REVENUE										
Membership	Membership fees – regular	912	502	1,196	714	15,175	5,070	3,039	2,472	2,096
	Membership fees – youth						139			
	Membership fees – basic surcharge	228		512			1,702	346		636
	Membership fees – special surcharge/Associates									
	Life membership grants			53	17	1,461	299	387	53	53
Donations/Fundraising	Donations		46	366	50	23,955	134	243	4,664	480
	Fundraising/Sponsorship/Grants			123	170		1,308	1,000	3,210	
Educational/Activities		1,802							890	
Interest and Dividends		2		3		2,577	176		3	60
Publication Sales	Sale of Observer's Handbooks	20					179			
	Sale of Observer's Calendars	413	160	1,465	190	3,556	1,143	772	585	359
	Sale of Beginner's Observing Guides	15					330	54		
	Other Publication Sales									
Subscriptions	Astronomy/Sky & Telescope magazine					514	11			
	Other			35						
Product Sales	RASC promo items					408	350	12		
	Other items						44			
Advertising										
General Assembly	General Assembly – including travel grants									
Events	Star Parties			8,493				630		
	Annual Dinner							1,375		
Observatory site or equipment rentals/loans				65		3,950				
Miscellaneous						2,078	46		1,481	
TOTAL REVENUE		3,392	708	12,311	1,141	53,674	10,931	7,858	13,358	3,684
EXPENDITURES										
Library								322	66	88
Publications	Newsletter		20	324	130	5,459	897	1,317	109	1,235
	Observer's Handbook	149					167			
	BOG	250					250	88		
	Observer's Calendar	136	109	1,728	227	2,917	864	694	437	
	Other Publications									
Events	Meetings		138		60	980	472	142	618	175
	Star Parties	158		8,163				50		
	Annual Dinner							1,808	318	
	Astronomy Day						380	771	238	
	Other Events			120	383					
Product Expenses	RASC promo items					438	276	60		
	Other items			11			53	75		
Advertising		80						205	398	
Travel	General Assembly and Council Meetings		291				641	577		
	Speaker Travel Assistance		289	312						
Equipment and Supplies				319	12		210	61		
Office Administration				53		2,687	71	172	42	105
General Expenses and Audit				80	51	1,875	790	50	229	12
Educational Activities				133	973	197	309	384		11
Insurance				429						737
Awards and Donations						587		811		283
Observatory and Site Expenses				663		12,845	250	5,377	27,653	272
Depreciation				512		15,150	1,000			
Miscellaneous			6				260		30	144
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		773	853	12,848	1,836	43,135	6,890	12,964	30,138	3,062
SURPLUS OR (DEFICIT) ON OPERATIONS		2,619	(145)	(537)	(695)	10,539	4,041	(5,106)	(16,780)	622
ASSETS	Liquid Assets	6,383	875	21,253	1,262	95,880	24,746	3,920	6,724	7,904
	Capital Assets			10,841		391,637	11,280	60,340	45,000	
LIABILITIES						204,886		100		

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pjedicke@yahoo.com

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MONCTON CENTRE

c/o Dr. Francis Leblanc
Département de physique et d'astronomie
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Newsletter Editor: Bettina Forget

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Programs: Ted Bronson
Media Contact: Ted Bronson
Librarian: John Bakkkelund
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2004 AWARD WINNERS

Service Award: David Clark (London), Jim Failes (Okanagan), Art Fraser (Ottawa), Guy Nason (Toronto), Stan Runge (Winnipeg)

Chant Medal: (not awarded)
Ken Chilton Prize: (not awarded)
The Plaskett Medal: Dr. Jo-Anne C. Brown (University of Toronto)

Simon Newcomb Award: Mary Lou Whitehorne (Halifax)

MESSIER CERTIFICATE

Andrew Beaton (Toronto)
Tim Bihuniak (Edmonton)
Trent Bjorndahl (Edmonton)
Leo Brodeur (Kingston)
Bob Crossman (Moncton)
Jnani Cevvel (Edmonton)
George Charpentier (Saskatoon)
Charles Doucet (Moncton)
Philip Downey (Niagara Falls)
Ray Drouillard (Windsor)
Ted Dunphy (Moncton)
Marie Fisher (Sarnia)

Alden Foraie (Regina)
Daniel LeBlanc (Moncton)
Norman Leier (Regina)
Emma MacPhee (Moncton)
Christopher Mulders (Calgary)
Christopher Novak (Montreal)
Roy Ramdeen (Edmonton)
Larry Scott (Saskatoon)
Joseph Shields (Belleville)
Chris Teron (Ottawa)
Norm Willey (Victoria)

NGC CERTIFICATE

John Appleyard (London)
Robert Brann (Regina)
Robert Chapman (Toronto)
Sam Ferris (Regina)
Geoff Meek (Ottawa)
Joseph Shields (Belleville)
Tenho Tuomi (Saskatoon)

EXPLORE THE UNIVERSE CERTIFICATE

Terrill Bartlett (Canadian, Texas USA)
Ted Bronson (Thunder Bay)
Ralph A. Croning (Winnipeg)
Kevin Gallant (Regina)

Arlyne Gillespie (Kingston)
Robert Lavoie (Ottawa)
Curtis E. McEwan (Toronto)
David Mooney (London)

F. Lindsay Price (Winnipeg)
Douglas Stuart (Thunder Bay)
Tenho Tuomi (Saskatoon)

Below is a list of former winners of the Chant Medal, Ken Chilton Prize, Plaskett Medal, Service Award, and Simon Newcomb Award. For names before 1990 please refer to "Looking Up – A History of the RASC" by Peter Broughton.

CHANT MEDAL

The Chant Medal of the Society was established in 1940 in appreciation of the great work of the late Professor C.A. Chant in furthering the interests of astronomy in Canada. The medal is awarded not oftener

than once a year to an amateur astronomer resident in Canada on the basis of the value of the work carried out in astronomy and closely allied fields of original investigation.
1993 Mary Lou Whitehorne (Halifax)

1995 Paul Boltwood (Ottawa)
1996 David Lane (Halifax)
1998 Bertus (Bert) Rhebergen (Hamilton)
2001 Richard Huziak (Saskatoon)
2002 Dr. Roy Bishop (Halifax)

KEN CHILTON PRIZE

The Chilton Prize was established in 1977 by the National Council of the Society in remembrance of Ken E. Chilton, an active member of the Hamilton Centre. The prize is awarded annually to an amateur astronomer, resident in Canada in recogni-

tion of a significant piece of astronomical work carried out or published recently.
1990 Doug George (Ottawa)
1995 Paul Gray, David Lane (Halifax)
1996 Raymond Thompson (Toronto)
1997 Heather T. Cameron (Halifax)

2001 Michael Boschat (Halifax)
2002 Vance Petriew (Regina)
2003 Doug George (Ottawa), Peter Ceravolo (Ottawa), Paul Boltwood (Ottawa), Jon Buchanan (Ottawa), Glenn LeDrew (Ottawa)

THE PLASKETT MEDAL

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada and the Canadian Astronomical Society together present an award in recognition of the pivotal role played by John Stanley Plaskett in the establishment of astrophysical research in Canada. The award is made to the graduate from a Canadian university who is judged to have submitted the most outstanding doctoral thesis in astronomy

and astrophysics in the preceding two calendar years. An award need not be made every year.
1991 Paul Charbonneau (Montreal)
1992 Eric Poisson (Alberta)
1993 Pierre Brassard (Montreal)
1994 Grant Hill (Montreal)
1995 Michael Richer (York)
1996 Gordon Squires (Toronto)

1997 Alain Beauchamp (Montreal)
1998 Dean McLaughlin (McMaster)
1999 Stéphane Charpinet (Université de Montréal)
2000 Alexei Razoumov (British Columbia)
2001 Peter Brown (Western Ontario)
2002 Edward W. Thommes (Queen's)
2003 Tracy Webb (Toronto)
2004 Jo-Anne C. Brown (Toronto)

SERVICE AWARD

The Service Award was established in 1959 and takes the form of a bronze medal presented to members who have performed outstanding service to a Centre or to the National Society. Below is a list of recent winners of the Service Award.

1990 Mary Grey (Ottawa)*

1991 Don Hladiuk (Calgary)
Ian McGregor (Toronto)

1992 Jean-Marie Frechette (Quebec)
Michael Watson
(Unattached, Canada)

1993 Eric Clinton (London)
David Tindall (Halifax)

1994 Randy Dodge (St. John's)
Garry Dymond (St. John's)
Mel Rankin (Edmonton)

1995 Ron Gasbarini (Niagara)
Patrick Kelly (Halifax)

1996 Sidney Lee (Calgary)*
Robert Venor (Montreal)*
Abbe Alphonse Tardif (Quebec)

1998 David Lane (Halifax)
Roger Hill (Hamilton)
Sandy Ferguson (Saskatoon)

1999 John Mirtle (Calgary)
Ralph Chou (Toronto)

2000 Phil Johnson (Calgary)
2001 John Rousom (London)
David G. Turner (Halifax)

2003 David McCarter (London)
2004 David Clark (London), Jim Failes
(Okanagan Centre), Art Fraser (Ottawa
Centre), Guy Nason (Toronto Centre),
Stan Runge (Winnipeg Centre)
* deceased

SIMON NEWCOMB AWARD

This award was instituted in 1978 to recognize literary ability among non-professional members of the Society.

1994 Michael S.F. Watson
(Unattached, Canada)

1999 Terence Dickinson (Toronto)
2001 Dan Falk (Toronto)

2002 David Levy (Kingston)

2003 Alister Ling (Edmonton)
2004 Mary Lou Whitehorne (Halifax)

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Dr. R.B. Baldwin (United States)
Dr. F.M. Bateson (New Zealand)
Dr. David L. Crawford (United States)
Dr. A. Dollfus (France)
Rev. Robert Evans (Australia)

Dr. Owen Gingerich (United States)
Dr. Stephen W. Hawking (United Kingdom)
Dr. Jean Meeus (Belgium)
Dr. Patrick Moore (United Kingdom)

Dr. Jay Pasachoff (United States)
Dr. P.J.E. Peebles (United States)
Mr. Leif Robinson (United States)
Dr. Carolyn Shoemaker (United States)
Dr. A.R. Sandage (United States)

PAST ELECTED OFFICERS OF THE RASC

Below are lists of former Honorary Presidents, Presidents, Secretaries, and Treasurers of the RASC. For names before 1990, please refer to *Looking Up – A History of the RASC* by Peter Broughton.

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1989-1993 Ian Halliday
1993-1997 Alan Batten
1997-2001 Jack Locke
2001-2005 Roy Bishop

Presidents

1990-1992 Damien Lemay
1992-1994 Peter Broughton
1994-1996 Doug Hube
1996-1998 Doug George
1998-2000 Randy Attwood
2000-2002 Robert Garrison
2002-2004 Rajiv Gupta
2004-2006 Peter Jedicke

Secretaries

1987-1993 David Tindall
1993-1996 Randall Brooks
1997-1999 Raymond Auclair
1999-2005 Kim Hay

Treasurers

1989-1992 Karl Miller
1992-1994 Terry Hicks
1994-1998 Rajiv Gupta
1998-2004 Michael Watson
2004-2006 David Clark

GENERAL ASSEMBLIES – 1990 - 2006

The following Centres hosted the General Assembly from 1990 to 2004:

1990 Ottawa Centre
1991 Vancouver Centre
1992 Calgary Centre
1993 Halifax Centre
1994 St. John's Centre
1995 Windsor Centre
1996 Edmonton Centre
1997 Kingston Centre
1998 Victoria Centre
1999 Toronto Centre
2000 Winnipeg Centre
2001 London Centre

2002 Montreal Centre
2003 Vancouver Centre
2004 St. John's Centre

The following Centres will host the General Assembly in the future.

2005 Okanagan Centre
2006 Ottawa Centre

CENTRE ADDRESSES / ADRESSES DES CENTRES

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