



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



ANNUAL REPORT
RAPPORT ANNUEL

2008

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Front Cover Photograph

*2008 General Assembly: Astronomy Night in Canada,
York University, 2008 June 28-30*

—Photo by Rajesh Shukla

ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA—2009

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Belleville:	Don Town	Ottawa:	Barry Matthews
Calgary:	Ross Laurie	Ottawa:	Charles O'Dale
Calgary:	Ryan May	Prince:	Brian Battersby
Charlottetown:	Garth Arseneault	Québec:	Pierre Desrosiers
Edmonton:	Alister Ling	Regina:	Ross Parker
Edmonton:	Mike Noble	Sarnia:	Ron Warren
Halifax:	Pat Kelly	Saskatoon:	Les Dickson
Hamilton:	Roger Hill	St. John's:	Mike Crawford
Kingston:	John Hurley	Sunshine Coast:	Dave Thompson
Kitchener-Waterloo:	Christopher Beckett	Thunder Bay:	Rob Kushneriuk
London:	Craig Levine	Toronto:	David Parfett
C. F. de Montréal:	Patrice Scattolin	Toronto:	Charles Darrow
Mississauga:	Randy Attwood	Toronto:	Tony Horvatin
Montréal:	Frank Tomaras	Vancouver:	Bruce McDonald
New Brunswick:	Tim Doucette	Vancouver:	Cameron Widen
Niagara:	Joe Otonicar	Victoria:	Chris Gainor
Okanagan:	David Player	Windsor:	Mike Mastronardi
Ottawa:	Debra Ceravolo	Winnipeg:	Mike Stephens

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The past year has been both challenging and rewarding for those who lead our organization at the national level. I feel that we have turned a corner in terms of whom we are and why we are here. And we now have our financial house in order. This will allow us to concentrate more on astronomy and less on “fire fighting” in the coming years — an undeniably positive result. My report is divided into two big topic areas:

1. Outside the Society (IYA)
2. Inside the Society (RASC business and administration issues)

1. Outside the Society (IYA)

2008 was the preparatory year for International Year of Astronomy (IYA). A major benefit has been the development of close working relationships with the Canadian Astronomical Society and the Fédération des Astronomes Amateurs du Québec. Collectively we are leading the coordination and delivery of IYA in Canada. This effort was helped by a generous gift from the Trotter Family Foundation (through CASCA), enabling us to hire an IYA Programme Manager for two years, beginning May 2008. We also solicited donations from our membership by direct mail and were delighted to receive over \$16,000 in support of IYA. Significant cash contributions also came from the University of Calgary and Lumec Inc.

The RASC chose to focus its IYA efforts in three distinct areas:

- The development of educational materials
- Stepped up outreach at the local level, and
- The declaration of additional Dark-Sky Preserves across the country.

We have enjoyed substantial success in all three of these.

With the help of our partners, we developed and funded the printing and distribution of several bilingual educational items. These include a set of seven informational astronomy trading cards (similar in concept to sports trading cards), a Sidewalk Astronomer's Handbook that encourages novice star gazers to make and record observations, a full-colour planisphere called a Star Finder with a companion Web site, and an illustrated children's book called Mary Lou's New Telescope, that tells the story of a young girl's experiences with observing and light pollution.

These materials are freely available to our Centres and partner organizations in Canada. They are being used as free handouts at IYA events throughout the year.

Our increased outreach activity revolves around a concept we call a “Galileo Moment.” We are providing opportunities for Canadians to make a personal discovery, learn something new about, or be enlightened somehow by astronomy, often for the first time. Delivery is through local events such as public observing, lectures, exhibitions, planetarium shows, and visits to school and youth groups. As I write this message in June 2009, over 2000 events have been planned or completed and over 430,000 Galileo Moments have been recorded in our national event database. This means our goal of providing 1 million “Galileo Moments” is achievable!

Preserving the night sky for future generations is also an important goal for us. During 2008, we approved new formal requirements for RASC-designated Dark-Sky Preserves (DSP) and Urban Star Parks (USP).

The goal of the DSP program is to increase the quality of the night sky and accessibility to dark observing sites. Dark-sky sites

without urban sky glow are located far from urban centres, but the magnificent view of a star-filled sky is worth the trip. A DSP is an area accessible to the public within which the light fixtures minimize contribution to light pollution (glare, light trespass, and sky glow).

The goal of the USP program is to increase the quality of the night sky and accessibility to dark observing sites. Sites in close proximity to urban areas are contaminated by urban sky glow, but they still provide good views of the starry sky. A USP is an area accessible to the public within which all light fixtures minimize contribution to light pollution.

So far in 2009, three DSPs have been designated, and we expect several more by late 2009 or early 2010.

2. Inside the Society (RASC business and administration issues)

Early in 2008, we became aware that recent changes to Canada's charitable tax laws required us to make significant changes to some of our long-standing practices. As part of the process of reviewing our practices, we hired legal counsel who specializes in charities law. They helped us determine which practices needed to change, be clarified, or better documented. This process resulted in changes to our fee structure, increases in our annual fees, and several other aspects of how our Society conducts its routine business.

Most changes were completed in 2008. The last major item is to determine the future of the Life Member program. A proposal on this topic will come before the annual meeting in 2009. In order to avoid surprises in the future, in the spring of 2008 we made a voluntary disclosure to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), describing past practices and actions taken to correct these practices. We have recently received an initial response from CRA, so it is too early to report on anything that may result from the disclosure.

There were many changes at our National Office this year, too. Bonnie Bird, our Executive Secretary, officially retired after many years of stellar service. Her last few months were not easy ones. Due to issues with our upstairs tenant at 136 Dupont Street, we had to relocate the office for several months while we went through a legal eviction process. Events leading up to this relocation, and until the eviction, were very stressful for our staff and Executive Committee. Our former Membership and Publications Clerk, Jo Taylor, was promoted to interim Executive Secretary when Bonnie retired. In the fall, her position was solidified to permanent Executive Secretary. This title does not reflect the nature of this important position, which is really more like that of national office manager.

The tenant problems meant that necessary repairs and upgrades to the apartment would be costly. The building exterior and utility systems also needed significant investment after many years of deferred maintenance. After much study, we concluded that being a property owner and landlord was no longer in the best interests of the Society. Late in the year the building was sold. Net proceeds were \$471,627. In March 2009, we moved into leased office space in Etobicoke. Proceeds from the sale of the building, less moving expenses, will be invested. Income from this will be, in effect, used to pay rent and utilities at the new office.

Throughout the chaos, we have been steadily improving the efficiency of National Office functions with the implementation of iMIS. This is a software suite designed for membership-based

organizations such as ours. Much of this work has been done or led by Toronto Centre member Denis Grey, first as a volunteer (for about two years) and now as a part-time employee.

In summary, I strongly believe that 2008 was a turning point for the RASC, whereby we made several key structural changes to the way we operate. This will enable us to focus more on astronomy

and less on By-Laws, property management, etc. Many thanks to my Executive Committee colleagues, and the many dozens of other volunteers that work at the national level to make this Society the world leader that it is. Keep looking up!

Dave Lane
President

TREASURER'S REPORT

As you know, a lot has happened in 2008 at the RASC, and most of it had a financial impact. In my last report I mentioned two special events: the implementation of a new membership and product sales computer system (iMIS) and, as we are a registered charity, ensuring that our policies and procedures are in compliance with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) requirements.

The iMIS system implementation continued throughout 2008, and will be winding down by the fall of 2009. The implementation costs have been funded from our Endowment Fund. The benefits have already begun, as the system's self-serve options allow our office staff to devolve some functions to the end users (our members and Centre executives).

In 2008, we incurred over \$20,000 in legal fees to obtain the counsel of a charity expert to ensure that we comply with the CRA's regulations. We have changed our practices, and disclosed past non-compliant activities to the CRA. They are now reviewing our submission, and should make a determination shortly. We expect a reduced amount of such legal fees to accrue in 2009.

Our building costs were very high and rental revenues lower in 2008, due to problems with our long-term tenant, which led to his eviction in July 2008 and the temporary relocation of our office staff for four months. We later decided to sell the building, and, therefore, we did not receive rental income for five months, on top of the four months of extra rent from the temporary quarters. It was a happy ending, though, as our building was sold at full asking price just before Christmas. The financial implications of the sale will not show up until 2009.

The stock market decline in 2008 has affected our investment returns. The loss from our mutual funds was greater than our interest income, despite the former comprising less than 10 percent of our total portfolio. We did sell our two worst performing funds in 2008, and are still holding on to the other three. So far in 2009, we are close to breaking even in the funds, but interest rates on our

GIC and savings accounts have dropped substantially. We intend to review our investment strategy later in 2009.

We did have some positive factors. Our publication sales have benefited from the appreciation of the US dollar against the Canadian dollar. A large number of donations received for our IYA program enabled us to fund a larger program with a smaller draw from the Feibelman Fund. Our committee expenses have dropped due to the disbanding of the Board Pilot Committee.

Speaking of IYA, we have received a grant from CASCA to fund the placement of an IYA coordinator for a two-year period. The financial statement shows this item as a donation income, offset by IYA expenses.

As stated in my previous report, we have moved to a self-sustaining membership model, by voting for an increase in membership fees at the 2008 AGM. The financial impact from this measure will be felt in 2009, as membership revenues are deferred by six months for accounting purposes. Even without this factor, 2008 membership revenues were slightly higher than 2007.

In summary, we realized substantial deficits in 2007 and 2008, mainly due to the implementation of our new membership system, the International Year of Astronomy (IYA) program, and the other factors mentioned above. We expect 2009 to have a substantially lower deficit, as IYA will be in progress, but the other extraordinary expenses will be (or have already) wound down. We will receive the benefit of the self-sustaining membership model. Our financial assets in 2009 will receive a one-time boost of \$470,000 from the sale of our National Office building.

Our finances have greatly benefited from the generosity of our many contributors, in both time and money. We are very grateful to those individuals, and we will continue to strive for a better RASC.

Mayer Tchelebon
Treasurer

SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

Our Society continues to grow and thrive in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. Thankfully, the meltdown at National Office has ceased and we are back on an even keel. While it was traumatic for a prolonged period (too long, from some perspectives), we have grown and matured a bit, as well. We went through some very momentous changes in 2008—increased fees to reflect actual membership costs; changed to a new membership computer system; sold our long-time National Office and moved to our leased space; saw Bonnie Bird retire.

Special thanks go to our new Executive Secretary, Jo Taylor, for her unflinching devotion and attentiveness to the details that keep our machinery well oiled and functioning smoothly. She was joined late in the year by Francis Knowles, our part-time Membership and Publications clerk. Thanks to him, too, for his organizational abilities and support.

Membership numbers have once again held relatively steady, slightly less than 2007—see the chart below. IYA2009 activities were in full swing as the year closed, with publications ongoing, Web sites being finalized, and many people across the country gearing up for the 2009 festivities.

It is traditional and correct that we honour here our Members who passed away through the year. On behalf of the Society, I extend sympathies and condolences to the families and friends of the following deceased Members: Haro Degroot (Belleville); Don Brown (Edmonton); James Fawns (Mississauga), Reg Henderson (Halifax); Lewis Smith (Niagara); Kenneth Perins, Russell Surtees (Ottawa); Walter Essar (Saskatoon); Robert James Kilgour, Otto Skalicky (Toronto); George Ball, Dr. J. Climenhaga, Blair Pellatt (Victoria); James Meredith (Windsor); Donald Hume, Firmin Michiels (Winnipeg).

James Edgar

Membership Statistics 2000-2008

Centre	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Belleville	32	35	33	32	29	26	N/A	N/A	N/A
Calgary	317	313	278	302	323	321	315	315	310
Charlottetown	24	22	21	20	19	20	16	18	15
Edmonton	258	255	241	261	267	271	262	249	222
Halifax	157	162	152	171	197	214	196	186	172
Hamilton	76	80	82	91	91	113	114	122	109
Kingston	98	106	125	128	110	132	145	146	152
Kitchener-Waterloo	118	104	101	127	127	133	114	106	95
London	101	104	99	112	115	119	118	115	115
Mississauga	120	103	53						
C.F de Montréal	23	28	32	32	30	40	39	36	38
Montréal	107	99	105	109	108	121	116	106	102
New Brunswick	79	88	78	75	70	59	62	46	29
Niagra	97	104	101	114	123	117	109	97	91
Okanagan	88	86	85	83	85	92	87	70	61
Ottawa	410	416	396	447	469	500	480	457	431
Prince George	79	67	82	75	40	43	42	25	N/A
Québec	35	44	40	39	38	38	45	50	63
Regina	48	55	53	47	53	59	56	47	30
St. John's	47	52	49	51	44	54	54	45	47
Sarnia	24	25	27	27	32	26	27	27	31
Saskatoon	71	78	76	70	67	73	70	73	76
Thunder Bay	37	41	40	39	41	43	39	38	32
Toronto	506	610	622	748	841	889	886	775	792
Vancouver	263	256	238	267	291	313	292	294	275
Victoria	173	188	177	186	192	200	188	200	159
Windsor	98	94	89	105	122	125	120	107	102
Winnipeg	169	157	136	132	140	136	114	105	99
Unattached	530	561	512	538	591	610	575	552	558
Honorary	15	14	15	15	14	14	13	13	13
Total	4216	4347	4138	4443	4655	4901	4688	4420	4230

Membership by Type

Type	Number	% of Total
Ordinary	3749	89.2
Life	338	7.9
Youth	119	2.8
Honorary	(15)	n/a

Membership by Country

Country	Number	% of Total
Canada	3910	93
USA	262	6.2
Other	29	0.8

AUDITOR'S REPORT

Tinkham & Associates LLP

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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, 2008 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 Society'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.

In common with many charitable organizations, the Society derives 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 revenue, excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures, assets or unrestricted net assets.

In our opinion, except for the effect of adjustments, if any, which we might have determined to be necessary had we been able to satisfy ourselves concerning the completeness of the donation 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, 2008 and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

TORONTO, Ontario

April 1, 2008

Tinkham & Associates LLP
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
LICENSED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

BALANCE SHEET

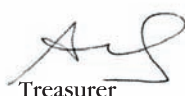
As at December 31	2008	2007
Assets		
Current		
Cash	\$ 344,425	\$ 358,959
Short-term investments (note 3)	283,474	292,091
Accrued interest receivable	2,767	4,727
Accounts receivable	74,684	56,366
Inventory	21,941	29,887
Prepaid expenses	12,728	13,374
	740,019	755,404
Capital assets		
Office building, furniture, equipment, library (nominal value)	1	1
	\$ 740,020	\$ 755,405
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued charges	\$ 93,937	\$ 55,888
Deferred revenue		
Membership fees for ensuing years	102,820	90,124
Jounal subscriptions	10,063	14,707
Unamortized life membership fees (note 4)	66,405	69,900
	273,225	230,619
Net Assets		
Invested in capital assets	1	1
Unrestricted	73,623	86,917
Internally restricted (note 6)	393,171	437,868
	466,795	524,786
	\$ 740,020	\$ 755,405

On Behalf of the Board

See accompanying notes to financial statements



President



Treasurer

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

	Invested in Capital Assets	Internally Restricted (schedule 1)	Unrestricted	2008	2007
Year ended December 31					
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 1	\$ 437,868	\$ 85,242	\$ 524,786	\$ 533,361
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures for the year	-	-	(8,575)	\$ (57,991)	\$ (8,575)
Transfers	-	(44,697)	10,250	-	-
Balance, end of year	\$ 1	\$ 393,171	\$ 73,623	\$ 466,795	\$ 524,786

See accompanying notes to financial statements

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

Year ended December 31	2008	2007
Revenue		
Membership fees	\$ 144,375	\$ 140,646
Publication revenue		
Journal	34,476	28,469
Observer's Handbook	97,828	96,565
Beginner's Observing Guide	10,194	13,500
Observer's Calendar	54,141	48,335
Skyways	941	1,769
Explorons l'astronomie	158	2,366
Shipping and Handling	27,179	25,657
International Year of Astronomy	15,051	-
Other	101	619
	240,069	217,280
Miscellaneous income		
Donations	63,941	51,689
Grants	-	5,374
Interest on investment	(1,462)	12,500
Rent	8,112	16,239
Promotional products	4,434	7,126
Other income	297	4,201
	75,322	97,129
	459,766	455,055
Expenditures		
Publication costs		
Journal	50,276	46,794
Annual report	1,805	2,914
Cost of publications sold	32,573	37,358
Observer's Handbook	16,812	16,233
Beginner's Observing Guide	1,532	5,586
Observer's Calendar	-	16,866
Skyways	-	1,296
Explorons l'astronomie	-	144
Other	-	42
	118,002	127,400
Operating costs		
Office salaries and employee benefits	79,468	61,938
Membership services	73,496	107,807
Office expenses	56,418	58,664
Services	57,053	43,472
Committees	17,406	32,319
Travel expenses	14,232	14,505
Cost of promotional items sold	3,612	4,963
International Year of Astronomy	82,475	-
Building	15,595	12,462
	399,755	336,230
	517,757	463,630
Excess of revenue over expenditures	\$ (57,991)	\$ (8,575)

See accompanying notes to financial statements

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2008 December 31

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) Inventory

Inventory is comprised of publications and promotional items for re-sale and is carried at the lower of cost and net realizable value. Cost is determined on an average cost basis.

(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. The total cost of capital assets expensed in the current year is \$5,787.

(d) Membership fees

Membership fees received in the first half of the year are recognized during the current year. Those received in the second half of the year are recorded as deferred revenue and recognized in the following year. New life memberships received are credited to Unamortized life membership fees liability account, as per Note 4. Five percent of the life membership fund is transferred at the beginning of each year to membership fees revenue and five percent of the internally restricted net assets (Life Membership Fund) is transferred to Unrestricted net assets.

(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

R.A.S.C. Journal subscription revenues are amortized into income over the subscription period.

(g) Contributed materials and services

The organization is dependant 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

(h) Financial instruments

Financial assets and financial liabilities are initially recognized at fair value and their subsequent measurement is dependent on their classification as described below. Their classification depends on the purpose, for which the financial instruments were acquired or issued, their characteristics and the Society's designation of such instruments. Settlement date accounting is used.

Financial Instrument	Classification
Cash	Held for trading
Investments	Held for trading
Receivables	Loans and receivables
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	Other liabilities

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

(i) New accounting pronouncements

Effective for fiscal years beginning on or after October 2, 2008, CICA handbook Section 1000 has been amended to focus on the capitalization of cost that truly meets the definition of an asset and de-emphasize the matching principle.

Effective for fiscal years beginning on or after January 1, 2009:

CICA handbook Section 4400 has been amended for the treatment of net assets invested in capital assets and for the presentation of revenues and expenses;

CICA handbook Section 4460 establishes disclosure standards for not-for-profit organizations that choose to classify their expenses by function and allocate expenses from one function to another.

3 Short-term investments

		2008	2007
Mutual fund investments with Scotia McLeod	Cost	Market	Market
Ivy Canadian Fund	\$ 27,652	\$ 20,365	\$ 24,181
MacKenzie Cundill Value	12,500	8,774	11,769
Scotia Canadian Dividend	25,842	17,754	24,255
Trimark Canadian Endeavour	25,000	-	20,368
Brandes Global Balanced	12,500	-	11,218
	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 92,091
Matures June 6, 2008, bearing interest at 4.28%	-	-	\$ 100,000
Matures June 22, 2008, bearing interest at 4.35%	-	-	\$ 100,000
Matures June 6, 2009, bearing interest at 3.1%	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	
TD Mortgage Corp. guaranteed investment certificates			
Matures June 24, 2009, bearing interest at 3.25%	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	
Manulife Investment Savings Account	\$ 76,576	\$ 76,581	
	\$ 340,070	\$ 283,474	\$ 292,091

4. Unamortized life membership fees

	2008	2007
Life membership fees as of January 1	\$ 69,900	\$ 73,573
Deduct: Amortization to income	(3,495)	(3,679)
Balance, December 31	\$ 66,405	\$ 69,900

5. Statement of cash flows

A statement of cash flows is not provided as the required cash flow information is readily apparent from the other financial statements.

6. 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 National Council. The P.M. 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.

The Life Membership Fund was established as a result of a change in accounting policy to conform with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles in 2005. The Centre Projects Fund, established in 2005, is used to encourage and facilitate the development of its member Centres. In addition, the National Council has segregated a significant donation received from the Estate of the late Walter Feibelman into a separate fund in 2005.

All disbursements from these funds must be approved by the Board of Directors. See schedule 1 attached for details of the continuity of these funds.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

5. Subsequent Event

On March 20, 2009, the organization sold the property at 136 Dupont Street for proceeds of \$499,000, which will be recognized in revenue in 2009.

Schedule 1: Internally Restricted Net Assets

						2008	2007
	W. Feibelman Fund	Centre Projects Fund	Life Membership Fund	Ruth Northcott Fund	P.M.Millman Endowment Fund	Total	Total
Fund balance, January 1	\$ 41,145	\$ 3,721	\$ 41,611	\$ 96,368	\$ 254,331	\$ 437,868	\$ 448,118
Transferred from Unrestricted net assets:							
Interest	(115)	(12)	-	(268)	(708)	(1,103)	6,604
Donations	-	2,703	-	389	317	8,420	8,420
Expenses	(18,168)	-	-	(4,899)	(23,936)	(47,003)	(29,383)
Inflation adjustment	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,109
	(18,283)	2,691	-	(4,778)	(24,327)	(44,697)	10,250
Balance, December 31	\$ 22,862	\$ 7,104	\$ 41,611	\$ 91,590	\$ 230,004	\$ 393,171	\$ 437,868

ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES—2008

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

Minutes of the Annual Meeting held 2008 June 30 in the Computer Science A Room of York University, Toronto, Ontario

The meeting was called to order at 8:37 EDT by the Chair, RASC President Dave Lane, who welcomed members, delegates, and guests to the 2008 Annual Meeting and thanked the Hamilton, Mississauga, and Toronto Centres for hosting the 2008 General Assembly. This was greeted with a warm round of applause. Dave Lane gave a short description of the issues with our tenant at 136 Dupont.

President Lane called the roll of Centres—24 Centres were represented (Belleville, Calgary, Charlottetown, Edmonton, Hamilton, Halifax, Kingston, Kitchener-Waterloo, London, Mississauga, Montréal, Centre Francophone de Montréal, New Brunswick, Ottawa, Prince George, Regina, St. John's, Sarnia, Saskatoon, Thunder Bay, Toronto, Vancouver, Victoria, and Winnipeg); plus several unattached members and guests were present. There were approximately 75 members in attendance.

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted as presented.

2. MINUTES OF THE 2007 ANNUAL MEETING.

MOTION AM0801 Moved by Colin Haig, seconded by Kim Hay, that the Minutes of AM 2007 as presented in the Annual Report 2007 be approved.

MOTION AM0801 was CARRIED

3. REPORTS:

3.1 OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

President Dave Lane gave a brief overview of the past year's activities, highlighting some of the turmoil dealt with by the Executive during the past few months.

1st VICE-PRESIDENT

Vacant

2nd VICE-PRESIDENT

Mary Lou Whitehorne reported on some of her activities, especially the resolution of charitable activities issues and Centre fee collection.

SECRETARY/RECORDER

James Edgar thanked Bonnie Bird and Jo Taylor for their unstinting support through the year.

He then went on to name all the members who had passed away in the last year, pausing for a moment of silence to honour their passing (attached as Appendix "A").

TREASURER

Mayer Tchelebon reported that we have a number of outstanding extraordinary expenses, plus our investments have suffered as a result of the Mutual Funds losing ground in the past year.

Our tenant issues and the required renovations will use up at least \$15,000.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Bonnie Bird remarked that the hectic year was anything but "sliding into home base." The change of a new computer system, the ongoing installation of which and fine-tuning are due to the continuing assistance of Denis Grey; the flooding from upstairs, and downstairs; the changes in the Executive; the CRA "problems"; are just some of the interesting items capturing her attention. She thanked Jo Taylor, Jay Anderson, James Edgar, and Mayer Tchelebon. She especially thanked Dave Lane and Mary Lou Whitehorne for all their actions and support throughout the past year.

4. STANDING COMMITTEES

AWARDS

Past President Peter Jedicke spoke briefly saying that there were three Service Awards, twelve Chilton Awards, the Chant Medal and the Simon Newcomb Award being presented at the various Awards Ceremonies.

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

Patrice Scattolin said the only changes the Committee were involved in were in the motions presently before the membership.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Kim Hay said that the year has been exciting, especially in light of the activities related to IYA2009.

HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

Barry Matthews reported that the Historical Committee has been keeping busy, mostly with the initiative to combine the committee with the Library Committee.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Dr. Bob Garrison reported that the library was in a state of review as a result of the recent flood. He said that Randall Rosenfeld was helping assess the damage from the recent flood and assessing the value of the library.

MEMBERSHIP AND PROMOTION COMMITTEE

Denis Grey identified some things the Committee has done—the new seal, logo, wordmark, and giving the Web site a new look. He is actively seeking a new chair, as he is stepping down. He gave a small report on the iMIS system improvements. He looks forward to the IYA2009.

Dave Lane went on to report that Denis Grey has initiated the eNews page on the Web, plus started the eBulletin and edited the bulletin for the first few months. He recruited Ian Levstein who has edited the bulletin for the past few months.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Past President Peter Jedicke reported that the Committee had successfully found people for the vacant Executive positions.

OBSERVING COMMITTEE

Leo Enright reported that the work of the committee continues with issuing certificates to hardworking members.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Mayer Tchelebon gave a short report of the misbehaviour of our former tenant; plus the results of the leak caused by a broken pipe in the basement, which led to the discovery of the damaged furnace. The furnace will likely need replacement. No action has been taken with the upstairs apartment until the tenant has left (today he has abandoned the apartment).

Dave Lane went on to thank Bonnie and Jo for helping out with the travails at National Office.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Dave Lane reported that the sales of publication were relatively flat but steady. The Calendar production team will benefit from the addition of Alister Ling who has taken over designing the grids.

5. SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Patrice Scattolin reported that the committee has kept the National Office up to date with the installation of new computers with the help of Colin Haig.

LIGHT-POLLUTION ABATEMENT COMMITTEE

Rob Dick said the initiatives of Dark-Sky Preserves and Urban Star Parks are an opportunity for Centres to approach local park managers to have such a site near them. Rob emphasized that having an astronomical component is essential for a DSP. He said the IYA2009 initiative includes the purchase of Sky Quality Meters for loan to Centres so locations can be measured.

6. MOTIONS

6.1 Corrective Membership Fee Increase

(as outlined in the Essential Annual Report, p. 9)

MOTION AM0802 — Corrective Membership Fee Increase

Moved by Colin Haig, seconded by Barry Matthews, that the annual and Life-Membership fees of the Society be changed as follows:

For members with Canadian postal addresses:

1. Ordinary members—changed to \$67.00 with the Society portion equal to \$44.00 and the Centre portion equal to \$23.00; and
2. Youth members—changed to \$41.00 with the Society portion equal to \$27.30 and the Centre portion equal to \$13.70.

For members with United States postal addresses (in US dollars, unless stated):

1. Ordinary members—changed to \$83.00 with the Society portion equal to \$60.00 and the Centre portion equal to CDN\$23.00; and
2. Youth members—changed to \$57.00 with the Society portion equal to \$43.30 and the Centre portion equal to CDN\$13.70

For members with postal addresses outside Canada and the United States (in US dollars, unless stated):

1. Ordinary members—changed to \$112.00 with the Society portion equal to \$89.00 and the Centre portion equal to CDN\$23.00; and
2. Youth members—changed to \$86.00 with the Society portion equal to \$72.30 and the Centre portion equal to CDN\$13.70, and that the Life Membership fee be increased from \$2100.00 to \$2345.00, and for persons outside of Canada be increased from \$2100.00 to \$4000.00 U.S.

These new fees shall become effective at a date determined by the Executive Committee, except no earlier than 2008 July 1.

There was some discussion about the pros and cons of the fee increase, and what measurements were used to determine the cost of membership.

MOTION AM0802 was CARRIED

Amendments to By-Law #1

6.2. Change Timing of Handbook Mailings for New Members

MOTION AM003 Moved by Doug Montgomery, seconded by Colin Hay, that article 3.06 of

By-Law #1 be amended as follows:

“3.06 (3) Every person who is

(a) a member of the Society as of November 1; or

(b) joins the Society as a new member between November 1 and December 31 in any year is entitled to receive the Observer's Handbook published for the next calendar year.

Every person who joins the Society as a new member between January 1 and January 31 in any year is entitled to receive the Observer's Handbook published for the current calendar year.”

Dave Lane relinquished the Chair to Mary Lou Whitehorne, so that he could address the meeting about the motion and explain why it was instituted.

MOTION AM0803 was CARRIED by SPECIAL RESOLUTION

The Meeting recessed from 10:35 to 10:40

6.2. Changes required for Charities Regulation Compliance

MOTION AM0804

Moved by Don Town, seconded by Frank Tomaras, that By-Law #1 sections 1.01 to 3.09 be replaced with the following:

ARTICLE 1 – DEFINITIONS

1.01 In this By-Law, and in all other By-Laws of the Society, unless the context requires a different meaning,

(c) “Centre affiliation incentive” means an amount by which the applicable annual Society membership fee is to be reduced as an incentive for a member to become an attached member of their Centre of choice (new, June 2008).

ARTICLE 2 – SEAL

2.01 The corporate seal of the Society shall be such as the Council may by an ordinary resolution from time to time approve.

ARTICLE 3 – MEMBERSHIP

3.01 ELIGIBILITY

Membership in the Society shall be open to all persons who are interested in astronomy, as provided by the Letters Patent of the Society.

3.02 CLASSES OF MEMBERS

(1) There shall be four classes of membership: ordinary, youth, life, and honorary. No member, other than an honorary member, may belong to more than one class. (amended, July 1993)

(2) An ordinary member is a member who has paid the ordinary membership fee under Article 3.05(1). (amended, July 1999)

(3) A youth member is a member who has paid the youth membership fee under Article 3.05(1) and who is less than twenty-one years of age at the time of such payment. (amended, July 1999, June 2008)

(4) A life member is a member who has paid the life membership fee under Article 3.05(1), or a member upon whom the Council has conferred life membership in recognition of specified meritorious service to the Society or to a Centre. A life member shall not pay any annual membership fee referred to in Article 3.05(1), however he or she may be required to pay a fee to the Centre, referred to in Article 3.05(2), to which they are attached. (amended, July 1993, July 1999, June 2008)

(5) An honorary member is a person upon whom honorary membership in the Society has been conferred by the Council in recognition of noteworthy contributions to astronomy. A person may simultaneously hold both honorary membership and life membership in the Society.

(6) Only ordinary, youth, and life members are voting members of the Society. (amended, July 1993)

3.03 BECOMING A MEMBER

(1) A person who has submitted an application and the fee under Article 3.05(1) may be elected as an unattached member, within the meaning of Article 3.04(2), by special resolution of the Council. (amended, July 1999)

(2) A person who has submitted an application and the applicable fees under Articles 3.05(1) and 3.05(2) may become a member of a Centre in such manner, if any, as may be prescribed by the By-Laws of the Centre. For such purpose the By-Laws of a Centre may prescribe (i) election by a special or ordinary resolution of the Council of the Centre, (ii) election by a special or ordinary resolution of the Centre, or (iii) any other manner. (amended, July 1999, June 2008)

(3) If the By-Laws of a Centre are silent as to the manner in which a person may become a member, or do not provide to the contrary, then a person shall become a member in accordance with following provisions: A person shall become a member on a provisional basis upon submission of an application and payment of the applicable fees under Articles 3.05(1) and 3.05(2). Such provisional membership may be rejected by the Centre within three months thereafter, in such manner as may be prescribed by the By-Laws of the Centre or, if the By-Laws of the Centre do not so provide, then by ordinary resolution of either the Centre or of the council of the Centre. If the person's membership is not so rejected, then on the expiry of the three-month period the provisional membership shall become full membership. A person who is a member on a provisional basis shall be entitled to all rights of membership, except that Article 3.11(3) (Expulsion from Membership) does not apply to such a person. (new, July 1999)

(4) Any person whose nomination for membership is defeated, and any person who is a member on a provisional basis and whose membership is rejected, shall be entitled to an immediate repayment of the fee submitted with his or her application. (amended, July 1999)

(5) Recommendations of candidates for honorary membership shall be made to the Council by the Nominating Committee under Article 7.13(2)(b). A person may be elected as an honorary member by special resolution of the Council and upon subsequent acceptance of such election by the nominee. No more than two honorary members shall be elected in any year. There shall be no more than fifteen honorary members of the Society at any time. (amended, July 1999)

3.04 RELATIONSHIP OF SOCIETY, CENTRE, UNATTACHED, ASSOCIATE AND TEMPORARY MEMBERS

(1) Every ordinary, youth, or life member of every Centre is a member of the Society, and is attached to the Centre of which he or she is a member. A person who for any reason ceases to be a

member of the Society thereupon ceases to be a member of the Centre to which he or she was attached. (Amended, July 1993)

(2) A person (referred to as an "unattached" member) may be a member of the Society without being a member of and attached to a Centre.

(3) One or more persons who belong to the same family as an ordinary, youth, or life member attached to a Centre may become associate members of the Centre in such manner as may be prescribed by the By-Laws of the Centre, but, except through membership in another Centre as specified by Article 3.04(5), an associate member of a Centre is not a member of the Society. A member of the Society attached to a Centre may also be a member of one or more additional Centres (referred to as an "affiliate" member) in such manner as may be prescribed by the By-Laws of the additional Centre. (amended, July 1993, July 1999, June 2008)

(4) Any person may become a temporary member of the Centre, for one non-renewable period not exceeding six months, in such manner and with entitlement to such Centre rights and services as may be prescribed by the By-Laws of the Centre. A temporary member of a Centre is not a member of the Society. The purpose of temporary membership is to facilitate membership promotion, by permitting prospective members of the Society to become familiar with the operation of and the rights and services offered by Centres without being required immediately to become members of the Society. (new, July 1995) (amended, July 1999, June 2008)

(5) Each member shall have only one membership in the Society. However, a member of one Centre may become an associate or affiliate member of one or more additional Centres in accordance with the By-Laws of the additional Centre(s). (amended, July 1993, May 2005, June 2008)

(6) A Centre shall only permit the classes of members referred to in Articles 3.04(1), 3.04(3), 3.04(4), and 3.04(5). (new June 2008)

3.05 MEMBERSHIP FEES

(1) The annual Society membership fees and the life membership fee shall be determined from time to time by ordinary resolution of the Council and of the Society. The Centre affiliation incentive shall be determined from time to time by ordinary resolution of the Council. No fee shall be payable for honorary membership in the Society. (amended, July 1993, February 2006, June 2008)

(2) Centre membership fees shall be determined by each Centre in accordance with such procedure as is established by the Centre By-Laws. (new, June 2008)

(3) Any meeting of the Council at which it is proposed to move any resolution to change the membership fees of the Society, including the Centre affiliation incentive, shall be preceded by at least thirty days notice of the specifics of the resolution. The agenda for any meeting of the Society at which it is proposed to move any resolution to change the membership fees of the Society shall include the specifics of the resolution. At any meeting at which such resolution is considered, the resolution may be amended without further notice to the members of the Society or the Council as appropriate. (new, July 1993) (amended, July 1999, May 2005, February 2006, June 2008)

(4) A member who becomes a life member is not entitled to a refund of any fees paid previously for the current year or for the previous years. (amended, July 1999)

(5) Each Centre is entitled to receive for its own use from the Society on or before 1 March in every year an amount, in respect of every life member attached to it as of the previous 31 December, equivalent to the Centre affiliation incentive for an ordinary member. (amended, July 1999, June 2008)

3.06 ENTITLEMENT OF MEMBERS TO SOCIETY RIGHTS AND SERVICES

(1) Every voting member has the right (a) to receive notice of, to attend, and to vote at all meetings of the Society,

(b) to attend all meetings of the Council, unless, in exceptional circumstances, the Council declares, by special resolution of the Council, a meeting or a part of a meeting to be closed to the membership;

(c) to receive the Observer's Handbook and such other publications of the Society as may be determined by the Council, as provided in Article 3.06(3), (amended, July 1999, February 2006)

(d) subject to Article 7, to stand for appointment to every committee of the Council, and

(e) to stand for election or appointment to any office of the Society or as a member of the Council provided the member is not less than twenty-one years of age.

(2) Every honorary member has the right to attend all meetings of the Society and to receive the publications of the Society as provided in Article 3.06(1)(c), but is not entitled to vote or to hold office in the Society. (amended, July 1999)

3.07 ENTITLEMENT OF MEMBERS TO CENTRE RIGHTS AND SERVICES

(1) Every member is entitled to exercise the following rights, in respect of the Centre to which he or she is attached:

(a) to attend and to vote at all Centre meetings;

(b) to attend all meetings of the Council of the Centre, unless, in exceptional circumstances, the Council of the Centre declares, by special resolution of the Council of the Centre, a meeting or a part of a meeting to be closed to the membership;

(c) where permitted by applicable legislation, to stand for election as an officer of the Centre and to the Council of the Centre; and

(d) where he or she is twenty-one years of age or more, to stand for election as a National Council Representative under Article 4.08.

(2) An unattached member is not entitled to exercise any rights in respect of, nor to receive any services from, any Centre.

3.08 DURATION OF MEMBERSHIP

(1) A life member or honorary member shall be a member for life. Any other person shall be a member for twelve months after becoming a member, and thereafter for successive twelve-month periods as long as that person renews his or her membership in accordance with this Article 3.08. A person may not pay the youth membership fee for any period that extends more than twelve months beyond the time when the member becomes twenty-one years of age. (new, July 1999)

(2) Renewal fees, referred to in Article 3.05(1), for existing members are due and payable before expiry of the person's membership, in default of which (subject to Article 3.08(3)) the person ceases to be a member of the Society. (new, July 1999, amended June 2008)

(3) If a Centre notifies the Society that a member has not paid the membership renewal fees referred to in Article 3.05(2), and as such is no longer considered to be a member in good standing of the Centre, the member shall become an unattached member subject to Article 3.10(2). (new, June 2008)

(4) Notwithstanding Article 3.08(2), a person who submits a membership fee within four months after the expiry of his or her membership shall be considered to have renewed his or her membership for a 12-month period (or multiple thereof, if applicable) as of the previous expiry of membership, with no

interruption in membership. If a person submits a membership fee later than four months after expiry of a previous membership, then such person shall be considered a new member, with a break in continuity of membership. The Society shall keep a record of expired memberships for at least one year following expiry. (new, July 1999)

3.09 DURATION OF ENTITLEMENT TO RIGHTS AND SERVICES

(1) A member who is entitled to Society rights and services under Article 3.06 is so entitled during the period provided under Article 3.08(1). A life member is entitled to rights and services under Article 3.06 for the duration of his or her life. (amended, July 1999)

(2) This provision applies where a person fails to renew his or her membership by paying the required renewal fee before expiry of the person's membership, with the result that the person ceases to be a member as provided by Article 3.08(2). In such case, the person's entitlement to all rights and services of both the Society and the Centre, if any, to which the person was attached, including those specified in Articles 3.06(1) and 3.07(1), is suspended. Further, if such a person is a member of the National Council, the holder of any office or position with the Society, a member of the Council of a Centre, or the holder of any office or position with a Centre, then that person is suspended from each such position. If the person subsequently renews his or her membership within the four-month period referred to in Article 3.08(4), then

(i) the suspension of the person's entitlement to rights and services shall be removed,

(ii) that person's suspension from all Society and Centre positions shall be removed, and

(iii) the person shall be entitled to receive all back issues of all Society publications, specified in Article 3.06(1)(c), that the person did not receive during the period of suspension.

If the person does not renew his or her membership within the four-month period referred to in Article 3.08(4), then

(i) the person's entitlement to all rights and services of both the Society and the Centre, if any, to which the person was attached, including those specified in Articles 3.06(1) and 3.07(1), terminates,

(ii) if such a person is a member of the National Council, the holder of any office or position with the Society, a member of the Council of a Centre, or the holder of any office or position with a Centre, then that person is thereupon removed from each such position, and

(iii) Article 6.19 (Vacancy of an Office) thereupon applies to such person. (New, July 1999, amended 2008)

MOTION AM0804 was CARRIED by SPECIAL RESOLUTION

6.3 Motion to Confirm Current National Fees

MOTION AM0805 Moved by Jay Anderson, seconded by Doug Montgomery that any membership fees established and existing prior to the adoption of Motion #2a are continued and that the Centre affiliation incentive becomes equal to the then current Centre portion of the fee.

MOTION AM0805 was CARRIED

6.4. Combine Historical & Library Committees

MOTION AM0806 moved by Kim Hay, seconded by Lindsay Price, that By-Law #1 be amended as follows with the purpose removing the Librarian as an appointed officer and replacing the Historical

and Library Committees with a single History Committee:

- Article 6.02 (2) shall have the “the Librarian,” removed
- Articles 6.02 (3-19) shall be renumbered as appropriate
- Article 6.14 shall be rescinded
- Article 7.01 (1) (g) shall be rescinded
- Article 7.01 (1) (f) shall be changed to “History Committee”
- Articles 7.01 (1) (h-l) shall be renumbered as appropriate
- Article 7.11 shall be rescinded
- Article 7.12 shall be replaced with:

“7.11 HISTORY COMMITTEE

(1) The History Committee shall consist of at least three members of the Society.

(2) The History Committee shall

(a) maintain the historical records of the Society and make them available to the membership, as well as anyone with a demonstrable interest in using the Society’s collections (subject to rules to be established by the committee),

(b) administer the Society’s collection of books, manuscripts, instruments, periodicals, letters, and photographs, and ensure that they are adequately stored, catalogued, and cared for,

(c) maintain an up-to-date electronic copy of newsletters and archival items on whatever medium is current to ensure that future inquiries can be answered in a timely manner,

(d) promote and encourage the study and awareness of the history of astronomy in Canada, and

(e) have such other duties as may be prescribed by the Council.”

- Articles 7.12 - 7.19 shall be renumbered as appropriate.

MOTION AM0806 was CARRIED by SPECIAL RESOLUTION

6.4. Change to the composition of the Nominating Committee

MOTION AM0807 Moved by Patrice Scattolin, seconded by Peter Jedicke, that section 7.14(1) of By-Law #1 be amended as follows:

“The Nominating Committee shall consist of a Past President and two other Society members, who will be appointed by National Council.”

MOTION AM0807 was CARRIED by SPECIAL RESOLUTION

6.5. Change the Scheduling of the Annual Meeting

MOTION AM0808 Moved by Gary Boyle, seconded by Geoff Gilmour-Taylor, that section 8.01(1) of By-Law #1 be amended as follows:

“The annual meeting of the members of the Society shall be held once each calendar year, at such time and place within Canada as shall be designated by the Council. The annual meeting shall take place not more than fifteen months after the previous annual meeting and in no case be held later than September 30.”

MOTION AM0808 was CARRIED by SPECIAL RESOLUTION

6.6. Authorization to Seek and Appoint a New Auditor

MOTION AM0809 Moved by Barry Matthews, seconded by David Orenstein, that National Council be authorized to seek and appoint an Auditor; however, until such time as a new auditor is chosen, Tinkham and Associates will remain the Auditor of the RASC.

MOTION AM0810 Moved by Rob Dick, seconded by Barry Matthews, that the motion be worded “that National Council be authorized to seek and appoint an Auditor whose term ends

at the next Annual Meeting; however, until such time as a new auditor is chosen, Tinkham and Associates will remain the Auditor of the RASC.”

MOTION AM0810 was CARRIED

MOTION AM0809 was CARRIED as amended

7. Nominations for election of officers result in the following being named by acclamation:

President - Dave Lane

1st Vice-President—Mary Lou Whitehorne

2nd Vice President—Glenn Hawley

Secretary—James Edgar

8. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION AM0810

It was moved by Don Kelly, seconded by Ian Levstein to adjourn.

MOTION AM0810 was CARRIED.

The meeting adjourned at 11:51 EDT.

Respectfully submitted,

James Edgar

Recorder

APPENDIX “A”

Deceased Members 2007-06-25 to 2008-06-25

George R. Ball (Victoria)

Haro Degroot (Belleville)

Milton Doyle (Hamilton)

Walter Essar (Saskatoon)

Arlyne Gillespie (Kingston)

Dr. Clement McCulloch (Unattached)

Morley Nash (Victoria)

Stan Mott (Ottawa)

Randy Pakan (Edmonton)

Rev. Dunstan Pasterfield (Regina)

Brooke Patton (Toronto)

G. Perron (Montréal)

Jacques Richard (New Brunswick)

Dr. Alexis E. Troc (Unattached)

James F. Wright (Vancouver)

ANNUAL REPORTS FROM THE CENTRES

BELLEVILLE CENTRE

Centre Activities for 2008

- January Speaker: Greg Lisk—"Mars by Webcam"
Speaker: Dave Cotterell—"Digitized Sky Survey, Deep-Sky Database and NCG/IC Project"
Comet Holmes in Perseus
Observing Night—January 11/12
- February Meeting cancelled due to weather conditions
- March Speaker: Antonina Vasilieva: "Mammoths and Meteorites"
Observing Night—March 28/29
- April 19 members present
Observing night—April 11/12
Speaker: Greg Lisk: "Photos taken during world-wide Earth Hour March 29 and Astrophotography—T-rings, eyepiece projection"
Don Town—National Council Report
Science Fair Winner—meteor-impact craters—Belleville Centre donated prize to winner
- May International Astronomy Day, May 10—display at local mall
Star-BQ—May 31
Speakers: Greg Lisk showed "Powers of 10," barndoor-tracker photos.
Antonina Vasilieva spoke at library on 100th anniversary of Tunguska Event
- June Observing Night June 27/28
Speaker: Greg Lisk—GoTo Nexstar tripod and 90-mm Orion Maksutov; "Webcams"; "Newton's Telescope"
- July Annual Bon Echo Provincial Park astronomy camping weekend
Observing Night—July 25/26
Car Pool trip to Toronto—July 19
Greg Lisk's column appears in July's "SkyNews" magazine
Greg has designed four pins for the following: Lunar 100, Messier List, Finest NGC List, and Solar System
Speaker: Antonina Vasilieva's trip to St. Petersburg, Russia, for 100th anniversary of Tunguska Event
- August Two of our members observe total solar eclipse—one in China, other from Mongolia
Speaker: Greg Lisk: "Trip to Science Centre, Facing Mars Exhibit, IMAC Theatre and Bancroft Gemboree"
Several members attend Starfest
- September 9th Annual Fall'n'Stars Star Party held
Public Observing at Camp QuinMoLac
Photos from Starfest and Sci-Fi Convention in Toronto
Speaker: Larry Hum—"Solar Eclipse"
- October Observing Night—October 10/11
Speaker: Dave Cotterell—"Eclipse Mongolia"
- November Elections for 2009 Executive held
Speaker: Greg Lisk—"Construction of SkyPod Pier"
Observing Night—November 28/29
- December Annual club Christmas Dinner held
1st edition of our new newsletter
Film on the history of the telescope featuring the Hale Telescope

CALGARY CENTRE

In 2008, the Calgary Centre celebrated its 50th Anniversary as a Centre of the RASC and also the 25th Anniversary of their dark-sky site, the Wilson Coulee Observatory. To commemorate these events a special pin was produced and given to all members.

Members were invited to submit ideas for a special anniversary project to improve the Wilson Coulee site, and a project to build a roll-off roof observatory with drop-down walls to the south was selected. The building was constructed and wired, but the roof was not completed and siding not installed by yearend due to initial delays in getting the concrete poured and poor weather in the fall. A new open concrete observing pad was also poured and all the sidewalks were replaced with new concrete. The old metal and wooden clubhouse chairs were replaced with upholstered folding chairs; a new microwave oven and a new water cooler with hot water capability were also purchased.

Membership

At the end of December, the Centre had 326 members, up from 313 at the same time last year. In the last few years, at our public events, volunteers highlight Centre activities and the benefits of RASC membership, resulting in many attendees joining the RASC afterwards.

General Meetings

General meetings were held on the third Thursday of the month at the TELUS World of Science Calgary and featured the following speakers and topics:

- January Dr. Phil Langill of the University of Calgary, and Directory of the Rothney Astrophysical Observatory, gave the main presentation, "What's New at the RAO?" The 0.4-m Clark-Milone telescope has been robotized and can now be controlled over the Internet. Dr. Langill showed a few short movies of asteroids to demonstrate how the Baker-Nunn telescope detects moving objects in its search for Near-Earth Objects.
- February Dr. Rebecca Bradley of the University of Calgary gave the main presentation, "Spacemen in Ruins," an examination of paleovisitation, the ancient astronaut hypothesis. She looked at some specific claims like the Table of Baalbek, the Easter Island statues, and the Nazca lines, and deconstructed them by showing a critical look at the evidence, which shows that knowledge and techniques were available at the time to construct them.
- March Annual Peter Sim lecture: Jonathan Sick, a former Calgary Centre youth-group member who won a number of large Science Fairs and is finishing up his B.Sc. in astrophysics at Rice University, gave a talk entitled "From the Assembly of Galaxies to the Death of a Star: Experiences of an Undergraduate Astronomer." He reviewed a Hubble Edge-On Galaxy project he had worked on at the Space Telescope Science Institute, using a number of photographs that showed the techniques used to identify stellar streams left over from galaxy mergers.
- April Richard Leveille, of the Canadian Space Agency,

Joanne Burns
Secretary

gave a talk entitled "Search for life on Mars from the Canadian High Arctic." Richard described the search for biosignatures on Earth using terrestrial analogues for space environments. He had many interesting pictures from the Mars Project Research Station at Houghton Crater on Devon Island and the McGill Arctic Research Station on Axel Heiberg Island.

May Brian Fenerty and Robyn Foret reviewed the Canadian IYA2009 initiatives and updated the planning being done for local IYA events in association with the TELUS World of Science and the University of Calgary's Rothney Astrophysical Observatory. Glenn Hawley used Google Earth to show the various places he has been to observe solar eclipses over the years with interesting stories along the way. He started in 1979 with a trip to Hecla Island in Manitoba, and then went to Mexico, India, Curacao, Turkey, Zambia, South Africa, and Turkey again. He then previewed the upcoming trip to China in August.

September Alan Dyer showed a video he titled "Totality Over the Tundra" that included some great solar-eclipse footage taken from an airplane his group had to charter in Cambridge Bay at the last minute to get above the clouds. Don Hladiuk and Glenn Hawley showed pictures and a video taken on the solar-eclipse tour they led in China.

October Dr. Carlos Lange of the University of Alberta gave a talk on the Phoenix mission to Mars. He was part of the team that designed the CSA meteorological package on the lander. He described the various instruments and then showed how they used CFD (Computational Fluid Dynamics) to model the winds on Mars. Rob Cardinal spoke briefly about the comet, C/2008 T2 (Cardinal), he had recently discovered using the Baker-Nunn telescope at the Rothney Astrophysical Observatory.

November The annual election for Calgary Centre Council was conducted. Don Hladiuk showed a movie taken just a few hours before the meeting with his all-sky camera that showed a very bright meteor to the NE of Calgary. A significant number of meteorites have since been recovered from this fall and it has been named the Buzzard Coulee meteorite. A number of short presentations were given by members showing pictures from recent events such as New Members' Night and the Alberta Star Party.

Public Education

Calgary Centre continued to provide volunteers to run the telescopes on the observing deck at the TELUS World of Science on Friday nights.

Calgary Centre also supplied volunteers with telescopes for the University of Calgary Rothney Astrophysical Observatory Open Houses held monthly from April through October, which were well attended by the public. A very successful lunar-eclipse event was held on February 20 at the RAO with over 500 people in attendance. Another special event was held at the RAO on December 1 for the conjunction of the Moon, Venus, and Jupiter.

Centre member Don Hladiuk appears on the CBC radio Eye-Opener show the first Tuesday of every month presenting Sky Highlights for the month.

Normally two annual public star parties are held at Fish Creek Park within the city, one in March and the other in October. However the site is being renovated and was not available in the fall. Although attempts were made to find an alternate location, the fall event was

unfortunately eventually cancelled. A large crowd showed up for the spring event even though skies were cloudy, and they enjoyed the slide shows, light-pollution-abatement display, crater-making demonstrations, and discussing various astronomy-related topics inside the Environmental Learning Centre building.

Several groups came out for tours of our Wilson Coulee Observatory and most nights had skies clear enough to show them a few objects in the C-14 telescope in the dome. The original slide presentation has been converted to digital format and the new PowerPoint presentation synchronized with the digitized soundtrack.

We once again participated in the Mayor's Environmental Expo, setting up our Light-Pollution Abatement display, and discussing responsible lighting and general astronomy topics with the many school children who attend the event.

Other Activities

Special events included the Annual Awards Banquet in January, a Bar-B-Que at the Wilson Coulee Observatory (WCO) in June, and New Members' Night at the WCO in November.

The Observing Group held monthly meetings at the WCO. Once again the Messier Marathon event was clouded out this year, but the OctoberQuest observing event had excellent skies.

The NOVA group for new observers held monthly sessions at the WCO, and continues to be well attended. Presentation topics included eyepiece designs, aligning finder scopes, planning and logging an observing session, observing Solar System objects, observing deep-sky objects, and tips on hopping around several of the main constellations. Interested non-members are encouraged to attend a meeting or two to see what observational astronomy is all about, and about a dozen people who attended as guests subsequently joined the RASC.

Two new telescopes were purchased for the popular Telescopes-for-Rent program available to Centre members, and a third one was donated to the program. Five older telescopes that were not being rented very often were removed from the program. A CCD camera and filters were also donated to the program.

Centre members teach Youth Group classes held twice a month at the TELUS World of Science from September to May.

The annual Star-B-Q event was held at the Eccles Ranch Observatory site in central Alberta in July. The Alberta Star Party was held in September and moved to a campground by the Red Deer River in Starland County near Drumheller this year. David Eberth, a Senior Research Scientist from the Royal Tyrell Museum, gave an interesting talk on the history and geology of the Alberta Badlands. There were over 70 registered attendees including people from the Yukon, Michigan, and Washington State. Feedback on the new site was excellent, and suggestions for improvements have been discussed with Starland County.

The Centre newsletter, *The StarSeeker*, was published nine times and sent to all members.

In 2009, the Calgary Centre is looking forward to the International Year of Astronomy. Preparations are well underway to enhance the many public events we conduct every year, and many new events and activities will be added. To make the best use of volunteers, the Calgary Centre, the TELUS World of Science, and the Rothney Astrophysical Observatory have been working on a coordinated calendar of events for several months. A new Web site, www.astronomycalgary.com, will be set up to provide a single listing of all astronomy-related events in the Calgary area.

Jack Milliken
Secretary

CHARLOTTETOWN CENTRE

The Year In Review

- January "Them Times," a pictorial scrapbook of history from the clubs formation, originally called the Charlottetown Astronomy Club to the RASC Charlottetown Centre of today, ran each month till May. Earth Hour under Ann Greyborn launched.
- February Celestial Navigation by Jim Thompson
- March Mike Critchley presented an illustrated program on Mayan Civilization and Astronomy.
- April Astronomy Day a great success at Charlottetown Mall. Many interested people dropped by. T-shirts and sweats worn by members.
- May Guest speaker Cheryl Wartman spoke on her participation at the Mars Desert Research Station in Utah.
- June Highly successful pot-luck at the President's house—well attended and nobody went home hungry. Group photo taken as well.
- July Bar-B-Que at Stanhope again—well attended for the time of year.
- August Greenwich—heavily rained on but 6-7 people showed up—not a success like other years.
- September Regular Presentation—well attended
- October Regular Presentation—well attended

Many, many thanks to all our presenters at our regular meetings, especially Brian Gorveatt and Roger Vail without whom we could not have as complete a program each month.

I thank you for the opportunity to have been your President for this 20th year and I look forward to many more years of enjoying this great hobby and continued friendship.

Clair Perry
Past President

EDMONTON CENTRE

Early in 2008, the Centre established the International Year of Astronomy (IYA2009) Committee to promote and coordinate activities for IYA in the Edmonton area. The committee worked diligently to plan astronomy-related events for 2009, including star parties, sidewalk astronomy, Galileo Moments, and an IYA speaker series. For details see <http://edmontonrasc.com/iya.html>

In September, the Edmonton Centre announced the creation of an endowment at the University of Alberta for the new scholarship in astrophysics entitled the "RASC Edmonton Centre Douglas P. Hube Award."

After the 2008 November 20 fireball, which was widely observed across the prairies, members of the Centre participated in a hunt for meteorites; several were successful in recovering fragments. For more details, see the February 2009 *Journal*.

Throughout the year, the Edmonton Centre led astronomy activities at many events including: Edmonton Regional Science Fair, International Sidewalk Astronomy Day, Young Scientists

Conference, Astronomy Day, Sunday in the City, Beaver Hills Dark Sky Preserve, U of A Space Exploration Symposium, and the Northern Prairie Starfest. As always, the observing deck at Telus World of Science is open every weekend evening, and Saturday and Sunday afternoons, through the great efforts of RASC volunteers.

Over the last few years, a small group of Edmonton Centre members have entered the field of precision asteroid occultation timing using low-light security video cameras and a black box (KIWI On-Screen Display) that inserts millisecond timestamps onto each video frame. By far, 2008 was the best year yet, with the group netting three positive measurements: 583 Klotilde, 111 Ate, and 657 Gunlod. Remarkable from our Centre perspective was the highly successful 111 Ate event. Dr. Paul Maley, the Vice-President of the International Occultation Timing Association, flew to Edmonton to record it, since it was one of the best of the year in North America. Best in this context means that the predicted error was small, the path wide, and the magnitude drop very noticeable. A total of 13 members were actively involved in capturing data and another group of similar size at the TELUS World of Science raised a cheer as they watched the target star on the video monitor disappear. Our result for 111 Ate is detailed in the April 2009 *Journal*. We are looking forward to more positive events this year and increased levels of participation.

With casino proceeds courtesy of the Alberta Liquor and Gaming Commission, the Edmonton Centre was able to finance several deserving astronomically related initiatives:

- KIWI On-Screen Display and video recording equipment for the Observing Deck.
- Dedicated planetary camera, IR filter, and RBG filter set.
- Feasibility and execution fund for a dark-skies and light-pollution exhibit.
- Support the 2008 University of Alberta Space Exploration Symposium.
- Funding for the 2009 George Moore's Astronomy Workshop.

Speakers at Edmonton Centre meetings were as follows:

- February Barton Satchwill, Show and Telescope, Meade LX90 8-inch.
- March Tangle Caron, Alberta Parks, world premiere of DSI: Dark-Sky Investigator.
- April Monty Python's Astronomy Circus, featuring for something completely different, Eyepiece Shop, Dead Telescope, Nudge Nudge AstroPHOTOgraphs, and The Four Observers.
- May Garry Solonynko, Show and Telescope, home-made Poncet equatorial mount.
- June Murray Paulson, eclipse-chasing gear: Takahashi Sky 90 telescope and Teegul Sky Patrol mount.
- September Dr. Robert Smith, History and Classics Department at the University of Alberta, "Remaking the Heavens: The Invention and Early Use of the Telescope"
- October Murray Paulson, "Nunavut Totality Off the Tundra 2008 August 1"
- November Murray Paulson, antique Bardou & Son 70-mm f/14 achromatic refractor.
- December Bruce McCurdy & Frank Florian, Meteor Hunting near Lone Rock, Saskatchewan.

Luca Vanzella
Secretary

2008 was a very busy and successful year at the Halifax Centre. The following paragraphs are a summary of the year's activities and highlights.

Our Responsible Lighting Committee, formerly the Light-Pollution Abatement Committee, was very active with many members involved. An excellent submission, "Responsible Outdoor Lighting—Energy Consumption and Environmental Impact," was presented in support of the Nova Scotia renewed "Energy Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan" hearings. The intent was to increase public and political awareness of light pollution.

With 2009 being designated as International Year of Astronomy (IYA2009), it was promoted early, and throughout the year, with excellent results. The membership stepped forward with lots of volunteers. An enthusiastic committee was struck, and many events were planned, including the launching of our own IYA event Web site, www.astronomynovascotia.ca. IYA legacy projects were also put forward. First was to assist Dalhousie University in recommissioning the Planetarium and having it run on a regular basis. Also suggested was to have Kejimikujik National Park designated a Dark-Sky Preserve, and to have Point Pleasant Park designated as an Urban Star Park.

A very successful survey of our membership brought changes to meeting formats and addressed concerns of beginners/new members. The Centre's newsletter, Nova Notes, was published with five issues: February, April, June, October, and December. The NOVA program, New Observers to Visual Astronomy, was reintroduced and is still in the development stages, hopefully to start up sometime in 2009.

The Centre hosted its annual star party, Nova East 2008, at a soggy Smileys Campground. We were honoured to have the renowned Terence Dickinson as our keynote speaker for the event. His talk, entitled "What was the best Decade in the last Half Century to be an Amateur Astronomer?", was presented to a full house (tent) and was very well received. It proved to be a very successful three-day event. With lots of programming, observing, and a new item "The Awesome Astronomy Auction," there was something for everyone.

The Centre celebrated Astronomy week, May 4-10, with mall displays, library talks, sidewalk astronomy, and public observing sessions. Once again, weather conditions did not permit any observing to take place but the other aspects were very successful. The regular May meeting was geared specifically towards beginners. As well, an Open House and Bar-B-Que was held at our St. Croix Observatory (SCO) in June, with over 20 people in attendance. On a darker note, there was an attempted break-in at SCO, resulting in damages in excess of \$500. Due to the diligence of our local watchman, Jamie Carmichael, the intruder was apprehended.

A total lunar eclipse on 2008 February 20 was observed and photographed by many Centre members. As well, a challenge to view a less-than-a-day-old Moon was taken up by the membership. This resulted in many members reporting observations of the approximately 20-hour-old crescent Moon on April 6. For many members it was their youngest Moon ever observed. The observation was another item logged towards completing the I.K. Williamson Lunar Certificate.

Two of our members gave presentations at White Point Lodge. The planned observing session was unfortunately clouded out.

Centre member Mike Boschat was recognized by the American

Association of Variable Star Observers for submitting over 1500 solar observations since 1999. This represents a significant and time-consuming accomplishment.

Special thanks to St. Mary's University for continuing to sponsor our monthly meetings. It is very much appreciated. Our 2008 meetings included:

- January Members' Night: Dave Chapman presented "Lunar Libration for Beginners." Dave Lane spoke about his Star Spectroscope, Paul Evans talked about the Mercury Messenger spacecraft, and Roy Bishop delivered a flashlight/laser demo.
- February Paul Gray delivered a talk on the RASC Observing Programs, followed by John Jarvo, who discussed in detail the I.K. Williamson Lunar Certificate program.
- March Mary Lou Whitehorne presented her talk titled "The Lives of Stars."
- April Pat D'Entremont presented "Deep-Sky Tourism from my Backyard."
- May Beginners' Night. Quinn Smith: "Telescopes for Beginners," Gilles Arsenault: "Preparing to Observe," and Andrea Misner: "How to Observe."
- June Dr. Roy Bishop's talk titled "Water and Sky in the Deep South."
- September IYA committee delivered updates on preparations for IYA2009.
- October Dr. Rob Thacker's talk titled "Computing the Cosmos."
- November Dr. Luigi Gallo's talk titled "Supermassive Black Holes."
- December The Annual General Meeting was held and Tim Donovan presented a talk titled "Adventures in Aperture Fever."

Respectfully submitted by

Alex LeCreux

Secretary

HAMILTON

CENTRE

January—Steve Barnes talked about his recent trip to Chile, where he and Rob Bodner were working on a project to hunt for extra-solar planets. During that trip, he took time out to take a lot of pictures, some of which were shown. Others, he said, haven't been processed enough to do them justice. This merely whetted people's appetites for more.

February—Our main speaker was well-known area amateur and friend to astronomers around the world, Jim Kendrick. Jim, who developed the first commercial anti-dew systems (and has a newer, cheaper one coming out), observing tents, focusing and collimation aids now has a most intriguing addition to the line-up. It is an immensely portable device that allows owners of digital SLRs, or small telescopes, to accurately track the stars. Jim claimed that the device has a periodic error measured in arcseconds, is easy to set up, and a joy to use. He also said that, when he took the device to NEAF (North East Astronomy Fest), a number of manufacturers, including Meade, were taking all sorts of photographs of it. Like so many of the things that Jim has been involved in, this looks like a winner!

March—Members' night. An attempt was made to have a Webcam presentation with Roger Hill in Chile and Les Nagy in Hamilton,

but a connection could not be established at the main venue.

April—April was when the latest crew who went to Chile got to show off their images and tales. As one of the participants, I was quite taken with the “spin” that others put on the trip, what they found memorable, and worthwhile. There were a number of highlights, and not all of them had to do with the Chile trip. First of all, John Williamson was unable to attend, and Andy Blanchard stepped up to run the meeting. Bert Rhebergen told us of some of the latest happenings on the Sun, Colin Haig (obviously suffering from Milton’s bright lights), told us about a video time inserter he’d been playing with recently.

May—Ray Khan was the guest speaker in May. As well, Astronomy Day was celebrated at the Observatory, where festivities ran from two in the afternoon to near midnight. Unfortunately some haze and passing clouds put an end to serious observing, but this did not prevent us from observing Mars at 4:30 p.m., and seeing the Moon with binoviewers that night. With a lot of excellent food and good company, an enjoyable Astronomy Day was had by all.

June—Our guest speaker for the evening was Eric Briggs. Eric was one of the co-recipients of this year’s Chilton Prize, and he spoke about his experiences with the Puckett Observatory Supernova Search, and other astronomical network computing projects. The Hamilton Centre was also one of the co-hosts of the GA in 2008, and our Centenary Banquet was held at the Mongolian Grill in Toronto. The talk was by Devon Hamilton from the Ontario Science Centre about their Facing Mars exhibit.

July—There was a Tech Night, that turned into a grand observing evening on July 3. It was extremely well attended, and despite the lack of a formal presentation, it was a very worthwhile evening. It is hoped that it will be repeated next year in July.

September—We had a combined Members’ night and picnic at the Observatory that was well attended and thoroughly enjoyed. It was a different and delightful way to end a good summer of astronomy.

October—Our normal year-end Annual Meeting saw reports from members of the outgoing Board, and the election of a new one. Once the dust had settled, Roger Hill (to his great surprise) found himself to be the new President.

November—Vic Cooper of the Mississauga Centre was our guest speaker for November. At the end of his talk on The Astronomical Theory of Ice Ages, Vic offered to answer a few questions, and almost half an hour later we had to put an end to what turned into a pretty good discussion! There were comments after the meeting from one veteran member that Vic was the best speaker we had had in years.

December—Steve Barnes was our featured speaker in December. He presented an updated version of the talk he gave at Starfest in August 2008: “Searching for planets in the Atacama Desert.” One of the highlights was the carbon-fibre tube, and a number of fittings, that will be used in a number of telescopes in the next enlargement of the observatory the Hamilton Centre has built in Chile (with the help of a number of other RASC Members).

Paul G. Brandon
Secretary

KINGSTON CENTRE

We currently have a total of 105 Society members: 95 Ordinary members, 2 Youth members, and 8 Life members.

Except for July and August, Regular Meetings were held on the second Friday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in Theatre A or D, Stirling Hall, Queen’s University.

January 11	Doug Angle “Relativity, Black Holes, and the Nature of Dark Matter”
February 8	Member’s Night featuring short presentations by Susan Gagnon, Doug Angle, Kevin Kell.
March 14	Dr. Joseph Buckley “RadarSat 2”
April 11	Member’s Night featuring short presentations by Susan Gagnon, Walter MacDonald.
May 9	Dr. Kristine Spekkens “Shedding Light on Dark Matter in Nearby Galaxies”
June 13	Leo Enright “Two ‘Topical’ Time Topics; sidereal time in 2008 and the date/time of this month’s solstice”
September 12	Member’s Night featuring short presentations by Kim Hay, Doug Angle, Leo Enright, Hank Bartlett, Leslie Roberts.
October 10	Paul Mortfield “California Dreaming—Remote Controlled Astrophotography”
November 14	Dan Falk “In Search of Time”
December 12	Member’s Night featuring short presentations by Hank Bartlett, Kevin Kell, Leslie Roberts.

The Kingston Centre offered public observing for Astronomy Day. Displays and public observing were offered at two charity events; “The Sky is the Limit Festival” and the “Relay for Life.” Members also gave presentations at several area schools and libraries, and offered public observing at the Charleston Lake Star Party. As well, an award and a prize were contributed to the area Science Fair.

Our monthly public observing sessions were held at the Queen’s University Observatory, in partnership with the Queen’s University Physics Department.

About halfway through the year, our ATM group went into hiatus. Work continues on a Remote Operated Telescope.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Hart
Secretary

KITCHENER-WATERLOO CENTRE

The Kitchener-Waterloo Centre held monthly meetings, with the exception of July & August (when we take our Summer vacations). Each meeting consisted of general business items, as well as informative presentations by our members, and always included a guest speaker who informed us on a specialized topic.

We were involved in many Community Outreach events: several Grade 6 in-school sessions per month, supplemented by evening star parties for the children and their teachers and families; Scout/Cub/Brownie/Girl Guide Astronomy workshops were held at various meeting locations in K-W, as well as at weekend camps.

We held an Astrophotography/Astrosketching contest for Centre members; all submissions were viewed and voted on by members present at a regular monthly meeting, and the winners were announced at the Annual Dinner & Awards evening.

We came to an agreement with Conestoga Lake Conservation Area, which is located Northwest of Waterloo, whereby they will allow K-W Centre members to access a specific area within the Park, after dusk daily during the Park's operating season (April 30 to October 15); we will be allowed to go in and set up telescopes for observing and doing Astrophotography. We will also conduct Astronomy workshops during the operating season, if they want us to do so.

We also entered into an agreement with the University of Waterloo Astronomy Department, for mutual assistance during special IYA events during 2009.

We have also maintained a web site for our Centre (<http://kw.rasc.ca/>) and we have maintained our quarterly newsletter (*Pulsar*) electronically within this web site.

Phil Lacasse
Secretary

LONDON CENTRE

London Centre was extremely busy during 2008. Our meetings were all well attended and, thanks to the work of Honorary President Peter Jedicke, we were usually assured of an interesting guest speaker. Public outreach has always been a priority for London Centre, and many events were attended by Centre members. Find below a breakdown of the club activities through the year, latest first.

Centre Meetings

December 19: At our Christmas meeting, we were addressed by Dr. Wayne Edwards, Western, whose talk titled "The Great Siberian Meteor: Tunguska 100 Years Later" was followed by a slide presentation about the November 20 Blizzard Coulee bolide and recovery efforts.

November 21: Our monthly meeting was back at Fanshawe College, where our guest was former astronaut and Western Engineering Professor Dr. Bjarni Tryggvason, who presented a wonderful slide show and moderated a spirited Q&A session with the fascinated Centre members. Quite a few members of the Space

Society of London were in attendance as well as a few "civilians," who remarked upon their luck at being present for this engaging presentation.

Also at this meeting we held the annual Centre Council elections. The current executive all agreed to stand and there were no further nominations. Therefore, the members present voted to return the current executive for 2009.

President - Dave McCarter
Vice-president - Patrick Whelan
Treasurer - Bill Gardner
Secretary - Rick Saunders
National Representative - Craig Levine

October 17: We held our monthly meeting at the Physics and Astronomy building of the University of Western Ontario, where Dr. Peter Brown gave a quick update on Earth-impacting asteroid 2008 TC₃, and then Dr. Robert Jedicke of the Institute for Astronomy at University of Hawaii gave a rousing talk on "Killer Asteroids." After the talk the University held a "meet and greet," while we finished conducting club business.

September 19: Our first fall monthly meeting at Fanshawe College featured Dr. Els Peeters from the Physics and Astronomy Dept. at Western. She delivered a well-received talk on the spectroscopy of Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons.

July 18: For our July monthly meeting, Ed Hitchcock of the Toronto Centre gave a lively and well-received talk on how to do astronomy on a tight budget.

June 20: Our monthly meeting received a well-reasoned light-pollution discussion from Dan Taylor, Windsor Centre member.

May 16: Our monthly meeting featured Dr. Geoff Gaherty, winner of the RASC's Chant Medal in 2008, who provided a talk on Chant Medal winners past and present.

April 18: At our regular monthly meeting, Western Associate Professor, Dr. Randy Kissack, thrilled the group with an animated and passionate presentation on the heady days of NASA's X-15 experimental aircraft program.

March 21: Member Richard Gibbons began our monthly meeting with a short illustrated biography of Arthur C. Clarke. Our guest of honour, Dr. J.R. Percy of the University of Toronto, gave a presentation on the International Year of Astronomy (IYA2009), science/astronomy education, and outreach.

February 15: At our monthly meeting, President Dave McCarter made a brief presentation on the upcoming lunar eclipse. Peter Raine told us about his trip to Florida for the Orange Blossom Special star party. Amanda Papadimos, an under-graduate from Western, introduced the Space Society of London science club that she is helping to start at the university, she asked if we could help out in some way. Rick Saunders presented a simple image timer. Jon Gunning advised us that he was taking the St. Thomas Photography Club out to Fingal for the lunar eclipse, and asked for members to share their telescopes. Note: we were blessed with clear skies for the eclipse, the event was well attended by members, photographers, and their children.

January 18: For our monthly meeting, we had member presentations on Comets Holmes and Tuttle, and George Leatherdale discussed the usefulness of his new Meade MySky.

Outreach

Listed below are the star parties and other events that London Centre members attended through the year. Not separately listed, but richly deserving recognition, is the Centre's participation in Exploring The Stars, an astronomy outreach program run each Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evening from September to

May by graduate students at the Hume Cronyn Observatory on the campus of the University of Western Ontario. Centre members volunteer their time, set up their telescopes on the observatory's roof patio, and operate the Cronyn's 25.4-cm f/17 refractor to give members of the public an opportunity to observe and ask questions. Centre members are also instrumental in their support of the Saturday night Cronyn open houses from June 7 to August 30, setting up their telescopes on the observatory front lawn and roof patio, and operating the observatory's refractor.

October 8: Despite clouds and rain, 16 visitors, including youth and adults, showed up for a star night at Landon Public Library, 167 Wortley Road, London. London Centre members Dave McCarter, Richard Gibbens, and Bob Duff attended. Dave made a digital-slide presentation on telescopes and astronomy. Bob set up his 20.3-cm Dobsonian telescope at the front of the room. The presentation was well received with good questions from the group.

October 6: Some 70 children and adults enjoyed an evening of stargazing at Byron Northview Public School. London Centre members, Bob Duff and Dave McCarter, brought their telescopes and Dave made an outdoor digital-slide presentation, pointing out celestial objects in the sky with his green laser pointer. There was a high pass of the International Space Station, and people enjoyed viewing the Moon, Jupiter, M57, and M31. One additional telescope was set up by a teacher, and two other telescopes were brought by parents.

October 4: We met the Sparta Beavers for a Star Night at Fingal. About twenty adults, Beavers, Cubs, and siblings were on hand to view the Moon, Jupiter, Venus, a bright pass of the International Space Station, various bright stars, and deep-sky objects. Many thanks to London Centre members Dave McCarter, Dan Tremblay, Craig Levine, Marcus Stevens, Mike Hanes, Greg Andres, and Bob Duff.

August 30: Grundy Provincial Park Star Party. Dave McCarter gave an illustrated talk to about 350 campers and answered questions before providing views through his 25.4-cm Dobsonian telescope.

August 23: Twelfth Annual Pinery Star Party. Under threat of rain and thunderstorms, several London Centre members set up scopes at the Pinery amphitheatre. Peter Jedicke began his astronomy talk, only to have the event cancelled due to the danger of nearby lightning. London Centre members arrived at the local Tim Horton's a lot earlier than planned.

August 2: Killarney Star Party. Bill Gardner provided a well-attended illustrated talk and observing session to campers.

August 2 and 3: The Eighth Annual Quai du Vin star party was held. On both nights, fantastic skies greeted the many public attendees, who enjoyed a spirited slide show and viewing through many club telescopes.

June 10: Centre members provided a well-attended star night for students at North Middlesex District High School in Parkhill, which also included children from four neighbouring elementary schools.

May 31: Centre members provided a star night at Camp Orenda for Girl Guides and Brownies (120th and 49th Brownies, the 85th Pathfinders, and 13th Sparks), which, together with their leaders, totalled 75 people.

May 23: Centre members provided an observing session for about 450 Boy Scouts at Camp Timken, southwest of St. Thomas.

May 17: The London Centre turned out in force to attend to an Astronomy Day display at the Cherryhill Mall.

May 10: Six London Centre members provided a star night with hazy skies for the campers at the Springwater Conservation Area, south of Aylmer.

April 14: Centre members Peter Raine and Bob Duff provided

a star night under clear skies to St. John's Ambulance Cadets in the parking lot of St. John's Ambulance. This was preceded by an informal indoor talk by Bob Duff.

March 27: London Centre member Bob Duff provided commentary for digital images presented by a Cub Leader to the 31st B Pack Cubs at Calvary United Church and answered questions about astronomy and space exploration.

March 4: London Centre member Bob Duff spoke to the 80th Westmount Cubs in the Jean Vanier School gymnasium and answered questions about astronomy.

February 25: Centre President Dave McCarter gave a slide presentation before 22 students and their teacher at John Paul II High School.

January 21: Diamond Aircraft gave London Centre members a tour of their composite-aircraft manufacturing facilities in London.

Other

August 16: The only London Centre member to directly observe the Partial Lunar Eclipse was Dave McCarter, and he was in Pompeii to do it. The eclipse was particularly dark.

August 7 to 10: Starfest. About 20 London Centre members took part in this year's astronomical gathering.

March 29 was the night of our Annual Banquet at Tony's Restaurant on Springbank Dr., and Calgary Centre member Glenn Hawley, an experienced umbraphile, spoke about some recent eclipse experiences.

The planning is ongoing for the Centre's observatory at the Fingal dark-sky site. The warm-up room is almost complete and already being used by members to make deep-winter observing a bit more comfortable.

Rick Saunders

Secretary

MISSISSAUGA CENTRE

The Mississauga Centre of The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada originated as the Mississauga Astronomical Society (MAS) in April 2003, and joined the RASC on 2006 May 19. Thanks to the generous sponsorship of Dr. John Percy and Dr. Ulrich Krull, meetings take place at no cost to the Centre approximately every two weeks on Fridays at the University of Toronto at Mississauga (UTM). In 2008, there were a total of 23 meetings. Summaries of the meeting are posted in the archives of the Centre Web site.

The ten speaker nights featured outstanding presenters and were as follows:

January 11	David Foot—Eclipse Philately
February 8	Prof. Amanda Peet—A Gentle Introduction to Modern String Theory
March 7	Dr. John Percy—Connecting Students, Teachers, and the Public with the Universe
April 11	Dr. Doug Welch—Searching for Light Echoes from Historical Supernovas
May 9	Dr. Roy Swanson—Familiar Patterns in the Sky
June 6	Dr. Roger Beck—Ancient Astrology in the Culture of the Ancient Greeks and Romans
September 26	Dr. Roy Bishop—Impressions of Sky, Land, Wildlife of the Southern Hemisphere

- October 24 Vic Cooper—The Astronomical Theory of Ice Ages
 November 21 Ralf Gellert—How to Explore with Robots the Planet Mars
 December 3 Dr. Jaymie Matthews—special joint meeting with UTM–MOST spacecraft

The 13 members' nights enabled Centre members to give talks on a variety of topics. These featured presentations on the lunar eclipse of February 20, a kids' perspective of astronomy, astrotrack and dew controller, Apollo Lunar Surface Package, the leap year, a visit to the Johnson Space Center, the Drake equation, orbital mechanics, NASA video, astrophotography and imaging (esp. Bob Anderson), using the Centre's new Orion telescopes, telescopes, eyepieces, 2008 GA, meteor showers, solar eclipse August 1, Starfest, Huronia Star Party, the Anderson remote Australia Observatory, using a sky map, Harrison clocks and longitude, Einstein's Dark and Bright Universe Paradox, Terraforming of Venus. In addition, a new series features The Constellation of the Month (Cassiopeia in November, Orion in December). Dr. Roy Swanson (and Randy Attwood, and William Callahan), presented monthly sky events. The Centre Web site has an archive with summaries of meetings.

On February 22, the MAS-Mississauga Centre celebrated its 100th meeting. To mark the occasion, talks about the history of the club, as well as a summary of the previous 99 meetings, were given by the president and secretary. Following this, a special certificate and a crystal bowl engraved with the logos of the Society and Centre were presented to Randy Attwood, the founder and driving force behind the club. Everyone enjoyed a slice of the celebratory cake.

Public outreach is an important mandate for the Mississauga Centre. During the cold but beautifully clear night of February 20, a public lunar-eclipse observing party was held by the Centre, which received a fair bit of publicity in the Mississauga News. On May 10, Astronomy Day, the Centre participated in the Science Rendezvous at the University of Toronto at Mississauga by providing a solar scope for daytime viewing as well as an information table for the public. On October 2, the Centre took part in the Royal Canadian Institute meeting held at the Central Library, and, on December 3, a special joint lecture on the MOST spacecraft was hosted with the university.

The major event for the Centre was co-hosting the 2008 General Assembly "Astronomy Night in Canada" at York University, in conjunction with the Toronto and Hamilton Centres. Each Centre had its specific day. Mississauga Day was Saturday, June 28, with President Randy Attwood hosting. Many papers were presented, including topics like the Tunguska impact, 50 years of Canada in space, Ottawa light-pollution abatement. An all-star ball-hockey game was held on Saturday, with Mississauga member Jack Jackson, a Scottish piper, leading the Eastern team to victory. The Saturday evening members' night carried on to 12:15 a.m. and two telescopes were available for observing at the York University observatory. On Hamilton Day, Saul Windman from the Mississauga Centre spoke about gravitational lensing. On the final day of the GA, Bonnie Bird, Executive Secretary of the National Office, formally retired and was honoured for her years of hard work. The GA was a major success and paves the way to the 2009 International Year of Astronomy.

William Callahan, the chair of the observing committee, organized a number of club observing sessions at the relatively dark site of Forks of the Credit Provincial Park. New Moon determined dates, subject to the vagaries of the weather. The Yahoo chat group of the Mississauga Centre, moderated by membership secretary, John Marchese, is instrumental in sharing information rapidly among the members especially with "go or no-go" for observing. On seven occasions, numerous members

and non-members showed up. On another seven occasions, the no-go was given. Formal observing sessions at the official city site of Saddington Park were discontinued due to lack of interest. To help with planning for clear nights, the Centre again financially supported the Mississauga Clear Sky Chart on the Web.

On June 8, The Mississauga Centre purchased two 8-inch Orion IntelliScopes for loan to members and for public star parties. A couple of members' nights were devoted to demonstrating these instruments to the members, and they were put to good use at The Forks observing sessions.

The Mississauga Centre actively lobbied the city for light-pollution abatement. On March 3, our President Randy Attwood, accompanied by Leslie Strike, gave a presentation about responsible lighting to the Mississauga Environmental Advisory Committee. We also supported the city's decision to observe the "dark hour" in March.

The Centre has a DVD library with numerous space and astronomy programs for loan, and this collection grew substantially through the year. Because the Mississauga Centre is not a charitable organization, donations were substantially limited; a new fundraising drive consisting of a raffle of books and astronomical items began in November. Thanks to the efforts of Terry Hardman, further revenue came from the sale of logo merchandise. This year a new attractive pin was added to the inventory.

At the end of 2008, the Mississauga Centre had 120 regular members, 5 affiliate members, and 7 associate members.

I am sorry to report that James Fawns, a member of the Mississauga Centre, passed away in 2008. On behalf of the Mississauga Centre, I express condolences to his family.

Chris Malicki
Secretary

CENTRE FRANCOPHONE
 DE
MONTRÉAL

Trente-trois conférences ont été présentées en 2008, au local du Centre des Loisirs St-Mathieu, dont sept par du personnel du Département de physique de l'Université de Montréal et huit présentations du ciel du mois par Hugues Lacombe. De février à octobre, la Société a également organisé sept soirées d'observation pour le public montréalais, la plupart au Parc-nature de l'île-de-la-Visitation et l'autre eu lieu au Parc nature de la Pointe-aux-Prairies. Au cours de l'été (25-26 juillet) s'est tenue la 28^e édition du Concours annuel de fabricants de télescope d'amateurs (CAFTA) au Parc des Îles de St-Timothée.

Tout au long de l'année quelques membres se sont rendus au terrain de la Société à St-Valérien pour y faire de l'observation du ciel profond.

Le Conseil d'administration a tenu quatre réunions au cours de l'année.

Patrice Scattolin
Vice-Président

Things have gone smoothly for this third year (2008) that the Montréal Centre has been at John Abbott College. The monthly meetings were well attended and we had numerous interesting talks plus lectures. The Montréal Centre's equipment storage area has now been sorted out and we are re-activating the Centre's Telescope Rental Program.

The Montréal Centre also participated in the 2008 May 10 International Astronomy Day activities at Chapters Book Store. We had over 2000 visitors, and everyone was well rewarded with hourly astronomical presentations, childrens' activities, and meteorite displays. We had solar observing during the day, and observations of the Moon and planets during the evening.

On Saturday, 2008 November 08, the Montréal Centre's Townsend Lecture was held at the Montréal Planetarium.

Terence Dickinson presented his lecture: What was the best decade in the last half century to be an amateur astronomer? It was an interesting and informative experience for all the Montréal Centre members in attendance.

The Montréal Centre is currently working with McGill University and the Morgan Arboretum to build a Community Centre Observatory, which, when completed, will hold the Montréal Centre's Meade 14-inch RC Telescope.

Here is a summary of the Montréal Centre's activities for 2008:

Unless otherwise noted our meetings and lectures are on the first Thursday of each month at 8:00 p.m. in the Penfield Building, Room P204, John Abbott College, 275 Lakeshore Rd, Ste. Anne de Bellevue, QC.

- February 7 Public Lecture, Member's Meeting: Normand Fullum—Artistic Science
- February 20 Total Lunar Eclipse: The Montréal Centre made telescopes available to the general public. This would be the last total lunar eclipse until 2010!
- March 6 Public Lecture, Members' Meeting: D. Orenstein—Quebec City Astronomy: 1608 - 1867
- April 3 Public Lecture, Members' Meeting: Montréal Centre Members—"Everything About Astronomy! Now You Get To Ask!" In this question and answer session, Montréal Centre members answered any question members of the public may have had regarding amateur astronomy.
- April 4, 5 Cooper Aviation Observing Session (members only)
- May 1 Public Lecture, Members' Meeting: Telescope Workshop: "Does Your Telescope Need a Tune-up?" RASC Montréal Centre members helped members of the public get the most out of their instruments.
- May 9 Cooper Aviation Observing Session (members only)
- May 10 International Astronomy Day: hourly presentations, kids' activities, solar observation, stargazing, telescope displays.
- May 31 Public Stargazing: Andrew Fazekas—"The Sky Tonight An Astronomy Presentation," followed by telescope stargazing.
- June 7 Members' Only Dark-Site Observing Star Party at Cathy Palmer-Lister's Cottage in Lachute Quebec.
- June 28 Public Stargazing: An astronomy presentation was followed by telescope stargazing.
- July 11 Members' Only Observing Outing and Telescope Workshop. Arriving before sunset, members

- July 6 brought their telescopes for collimation and tuneup. Public Stargazing: An astronomy presentation was followed by telescope stargazing.
- August 23 Public Stargazing: An astronomy presentation was followed by telescope stargazing.
- September 4 Public Lecture, Members' Meeting: Robert Harrison—"How astronomy kick-started Newton's creation of modern science."
- September 20 Public Stargazing: An astronomy presentation was followed by telescope stargazing.
- October 2 Public Lecture, Members' Meeting: Dr. Anthony Moffat—"Lives of Massive Stars"
- November 8 Townsend Lecture: Terence Dickinson—"What was the best decade in the last half century to be an amateur astronomer?"
- December 4 Public Lecture, Members' Meeting: RASC Members, Gaetan Cormier from LMDA: Equipment Seminar—What's new and cool, just in time for an astronomer's gift list!
- December 6 RASC Montréal Centre Christmas Party: Every year Montréal Centre members get together to eat too much food, loudly sing every song in the Beatles repertoire (and the occasional Christmas carol), and participate in Bettina's Astro Quiz.

Frank Tomaras

*Director of Observational Activities
National Council Representative*

NEW BRUNSWICK

CENTRE

The New Brunswick Centre has had another busy year.

We hold our meetings on the third Saturday of every month, (except for the two summer months) with a business meeting every second month or as necessary. We rotate the location of the meetings between Moncton, Saint John, Fredericton, and Miramichi. Our membership remains stable at 78. The monthly meetings consist usually of a "What's Up" by one of the group, relating significant occurrences in the sky during that month, plus various topics by our members and guest speakers.

Our Centre newsletter, the "Horizon," has a new Editor, Paul Gray, as of November 2008; it has continued to grow to meet members' needs. Every issue has an astrophotograph taken by one of our members featured on the front page. Many of our members contribute by sharing their knowledge, expertise, and observing experiences, as well as sketches and photographs.

Miramichi has set up an "All-Sky Camera" in their area, the third such set up in the province, the other two being in Fredericton and Saint John.

Five of our members were able to attend the GA in Toronto and had a great time. We are deep in planning for our GA in Fredericton in 2010.

Ted Dunphy, one of our most creative and imaginative members, has developed a game based on constellations, and also has devised "Astronomy Bingo." These are great ways of having fun at meetings or star parties and also of educating the public.

Our club, led by Paul Gray, has also been actively pursuing a Dark-Sky Preserve designation for three of the parks in the province—the

first in the Atlantic region. Progress is strongly positive and we are looking forward to a big announcement very soon.

Several of our members continue to pursue various observing certificates—e.g. Explore the Universe, Finest NGC, and Isabel Williamson Lunar Observing Program.

For International Astronomy Day 2008, each club held its own public outreach activities. We had our scopes out for viewing morning and night, put up displays, set up telescopes, handed out brochures, showed astronomy DVDs, displayed books, astronomy “toys” and gadgets, telescopes and binoculars, poster displays on comets and light pollution, etc. We had observing throughout the week, weather permitting. The Fredericton group held a display at the Fredericton Market—an extremely busy place on Saturdays. Some of the members had completed a training course on the Science East Science Centre’s Digital Planetarium, so were able to do public shows during Astronomy Week. There were lectures given to service organizations and university students as well. Moncton set up at the Dieppe Market with their display, but unfortunately the weather did not allow observing on the day itself. Saint John did a mall display with solar observing. They also had nightly public observing sessions. The Miramichi unit held their Astronomy Day display at their Farmer’s Market—markets are popular places in N.B.! We estimate we had a combined number of approximately 1300 people stop by our displays.

Each club has planned IYA events for their areas of the province and the clubs also collaborate for certain events. One of our members, Don Kelly, had the children’s book “Mary Lou’s New Telescope” published and distributed for IYA. A great success! Don has been busy doing book readings and signings. Each of the clubs have given out copies of the book to schools, libraries, and museums. Chris Weadick contributed to the development of the “Star Finder,” which was also distributed to the membership for public education and observing. Curt Nason is our designated IYA representative and is doing a dandy job of keeping a tally of our activities. We have held an IYA kick off in conjunction with Science East Science Centre in Fredericton, given talks at the N.B. Museum in Saint John, done public observing on any patch of ground you can set a telescope, done “star-busking,” given talks at schools, various organizations, assisted with the mobile planetarium run by Science East, and a few members have been interviewed on radio and have written newspaper articles. Each unit plans to set up a public display and do plenty of observing for Astronomy Week/Day, as well as trying to fit in as many hours of observing as humanly possible for the “100 Hours of Astronomy” in April. Saint John and Moncton members are working in conjunction with the museums and libraries in their areas to put on special events—readings, children’s activities, astronomy displays, astrophoto displays, talks and presentations. The N.B. Museum has designated April as Astronomy month in Saint John, and the Moncton Museum plans a month-long celebration in September or October. RASC-N.B., as of March 19, has had 2305 Galileo Moments, which at 2.53 percent of the Canadian total, is just above our goal of 2.5 percent. We’re aiming for our stretch goal of 3.5 percent.

Our year by the month:

January: January 15, some of the group went to Mt. Allison University in Sackville to hear and meet Dr. David Levy, who had been invited to speak about his life experience in astronomy. It was unfortunate that one of the worst storms of the winter hit that day. Even so, the turnout was fantastic. Some of our group were fortunate enough to actually have dinner and chat with Dr. David Levy beforehand. What a great time.

At the January RASC-N.B. meeting in Fredericton, Paul Gray reported about the Dr. David Levy talk and showed some pictures of the event. Paul also gave a “What’s Up” for the month and also

significant events for 2008. There was a discussion about IYA. Curt Nason gave a talk based on images he showed from the “Bad Astronomy” Web site. We also had a post-Christmas “show and tell,” when members got to show off their Christmas astronomy goodies.

February: The meeting was held in Moncton. Paul Gray did a “What’s Up”; he also reviewed the initial plans for the Mt. Carleton star party in August; Curt Nason gave a Handbook talk on “Interplanetary Dust.” Richard Bourque gave a talk and showed photos about his “Candome Observatories”—his own design and build; Ted Dunphy gave a talk on filters.

March: This meeting was held in Saint John. Emma MacPhee gave a talk about space travel, Chris Weadick talked about LPA issues, city By-laws, building codes, public outreach, and the “city and the environment”; June MacDonald gave a talk about Vera Rubin, part of our “Famous Astronomers” talks; Paul Gray gave a talk about Messier Marathon prospects; Curt Nason gave us all an astronomy quiz, with varying levels of success! Don Kelly spoke about the “Old Man Buffalo” meteorite that Methodist missionary Rev. George McDougall removed from Iron Creek Hill and which eventually ended up in the Royal Ontario Museum. He spoke of the significance the meteorite had to the First Nations People and the impact of its removal.

April—Held in Fredericton, the meeting started out with Paul Gray explaining the changes in observing rules and reported about the progress on the N.B. dark-sky preserve plans. Curt Nason gave a talk on “Halos, Sundogs, and Arcs”; other talks included a recap on “Earth Hour”; a report from National Council; and a recap of “Young-Moon Observations.”

May: Held in the Miramichi. Eldon presented about the Miramichi connection for the “All-Sky Camera,” it would be the third such set up in N.B. “What’s Up” by Curt Nason; Chris Weadick gave an update on new Microsoft astro software; we discussed the “mosquito zappers” after someone had read an article on them in one of the astronomy magazines, and Peter Jensen brought his Celestron telescope.

June: Meeting cancelled

July: Summer off, no meeting

August: No meeting, but we held our annual “DAM COW” observing weekend August 8-10. It stands for Cosmic Observing Weekend and it is held in Mactaquac Park, next to the Mactaquac Dam. A so-so weekend weather-wise, not too bad for observing. It was still a great time! We held our first annual Mt. Carleton Star Party August 1-4

Some of our members attended Nova East in N.S., August 29-September 1—great time as usual.

We held our 2nd annual Mt. Carleton star party weekend August 1-4. The weather did not cooperate. This park usually has absolutely great dark skies.

September: Held in the Miramichi. Yvon Hachey related to the group about the three summer observing weekends he has attended, showing that it is great fun to go to a star party; Eldon Rodgers gave an update on the “All-Sky Camera” installation in the Miramichi; Emma MacPhee gave a report on the Toronto GA and told some new astronomy jokes; Paul Gray gave a talk on the “Rage at the Gage” rocket launches—high-power rocket launches by a local rocket club; Kayoe Stewart from Science East in Fredericton gave a planetarium presentation and show.

October: Held in Saint John. No notes available.

November: This month we held our AGM, which took place in Moncton. We held our business meeting first, followed by a round of speakers. Bob Hawkes talked about his Gemini Observatories

that were constructed this year at Mt. Allison in Sackville, discussed plans for the facility and showed photos of the progression of the build. Dave Lane presented on IYA and RASC projects/resources. Curt Nason presented on "What's Up for 2009" and IYA for our region. Paul Gray lead a group discussion about what are we doing in N.B. for IYA.

December: Held in Fredericton. Paul Gray gave a "What's Up"; Chris Weadick presented some fun conversions of a few constellations to Christmas related asterisms as well as a light-hearted presentation of "What I Wanted for Christmas (vs. What I Got!)"; Paul Gray reviewed the 2009 GA plans and set up for the group to help people plan/decide regarding travel; Curt reviewed the "IYA Pre-Kickoff" for December 31, with a couple of conjunctions as well as IYA plans and many ideas of what we can do locally in our respective cities to help promote astronomy and IYA events.

June MacDonald

Secretary

NIAGARA CENTRE

The Niagara Centre turned 50 in 2008. Our club was founded in 1958 by eight local astronomy enthusiasts. In 1961, they joined the RASC as the Niagara Centre. We celebrated our anniversary in October with a banquet. The featured guest speaker was astronomer Dr. Marten van Kerkwijk, of the University of Toronto, who talked about binary stars and direct imaging of extrasolar planets.

We held as many public star nights as we could, sometimes more than one a month. The events were held at city parks, museums, shopping malls, conservation areas, and provincial parks. Many of our star nights feature audiovisual presentations indoors, or outdoors in pavilions, which allows us to offer something to the public, even if there are clouds. Our best nights have over 200 guests.

We hold educational sessions at A.N. Myer secondary school in Niagara Falls, which has a working planetarium. There, we offer ongoing classes to our members and special talks to students bussed to the school, generally in grades 4 to 9.

Many Centre members enjoy traveling to star parties during the warm months of the year. Twenty-seven attended Starfest, making us one of the biggest groups there. Others are now regulars at Cherry Springs State Park in Pennsylvania, the second International Dark-Sky Park in the world.

At our local dark-sky site, work continues on a second observatory.

We continue to hold our monthly meetings at the Niagara Falls Public Library, with a wide variety of professional and amateur guest speakers.

The club's membership is holding steady at approximately 100 members.

A new executive was elected in October, who will serve until 2010.

Speakers

March Philip Downey. Astronomy in Arizona.
April Peter Jedicke. The Future of Space Exploration.
September Jim Thibert. Astrophotography.
October Ray Khan. Innovations in Telescope Technology.
October 50th anniversary banquet: Dr. Marten van

Kerkwijk, University of Toronto. Binary Stars and Extrasolar Planets.

November Carmen Marra. University of Toronto. Mars.

December Theo Pribulla. University of Toronto. Binary stars.

Philip Downey

Secretary

OKANAGAN CENTRE

2008 was a fantastic year for the Okanagan Centre and our Okanagan Observatory project. Our plan of building a public observatory moved into the program phase when we launched our Public Observing Nights on site. This program gives an opportunity for the public to view the night sky with the aid of our ever so helpful volunteers. It is open to the public free of charge. Our general Outreach Program continues to reach out to our community providing opportunities for school children and the public with observing opportunities in town along with classroom visits. During the past year the Outreach Program volunteers have donated over 380 hours to bring 84 events to well over 7500 guests. Director Colleen O`Hare has once again been instrumental in organizing this program.

It has been a very busy year for our Okanagan Centre both here and in Vernon; we look forward to 2009 when we will introduce the NOVA (New Observers to Visual Astronomy) program with the help of Okanagan College.

Some events our members participated in: 2008: 84 events (25 Sidewalk Astronomy, 22 school presentations, 9 school observing sessions, 7 club presentations, 3 Night Sky Guides, 13 other, 5 open houses at Okanagan Observatory). We were also very pleased to be able to raise \$1212.26 at some of our public-outreach events.

Observatory Goals Reached:

Our organization, with the help of B.C. Gaming revenue, completed work on site preparation, including surface levelling, road building, signage, installing a gate, and building up berms to prevent light pollution from the road.

Our members donated hundreds of skilled and unskilled volunteer hours to the plans and design of a 24-inch telescope and Observatory buildings, as well as preparing the observing field and parking areas. Held several Public Observing nights on site in the fall. Recommencing in the spring.

Reached the final phase of building our 25-inch telescope, which will be permanently housed on site. Held one very successful fundraising raffle.

The public and media response has been fantastic. We are reaching local print and online news sources as well as radio and television. Congratulations to our Media and Communications team.

More information is available at www.okanaganobservatory.ca and at our main web site www.ocrasc.ca.

Telescope Rentals: We continue to make personal visits to member and non-member persons to help them overcome technical and operational hurdles of learning to use a telescope. This year we added a 6-inch telescope to our selection thanks to a donation by Barry Jeffrey.

Our regular monthly meetings were held at Okanagan College* in Kelowna and Vernon.

Below is a list of speakers:

January	Main speaker: Member Colleen O'Hare—Star Formation
February	Constellation Of The Month (COTM): Member David Player—Focus Editor Main speaker: Member Richard Christie—Numismatics and Astronomy
March	COTM: Member Jim Tisdale—Goodbye to the Winter Sky presentation. Main speaker: Member Dave Gamble and seven other member presenters—Imaging Workshop 2 (Equipment)
April	(combined meeting Vernon)—Main speaker: Guest Yuichi Takasaka, a noted local photographer gave a talk on photography using a camera and tripod.
May	Main speaker: Astronomy Appreciation—eight members shared their experiences with visual observing and imaging.
June	Main speaker: Noted member Alan Whitman—Observing with the Unaided Eye.
September	Main speaker: Guest Dr. Sean Dougherty, Ph.D. in astrophysics, Director of DRAO (EVLA Project).
October	Main speaker: Member Dr. Richard Christie—Man-made Objects Approaching the Edge of Our Solar System and Beyond.
November	Main speaker: Member Guy Mackie—Ursa Major Moving Group: One of our closest star clusters and its future past.
December	COTM: Member Guy Mackie—Star Atlases. Main speaker: Member Greg Dean: Mars—The Evidence of Water

*Special thanks also to Richard Christie, our liaison with Okanagan College in helping with national and international speakers, our meeting rooms, and all of the A/V equipment needed to run our meetings.

Grant Rice
Secretary

OTTAWA CENTRE

The Ottawa Centre membership stands at 400, which includes 3 youth members and 38 Life Members. Of 29 Centres in Canada, this is the second-highest membership.

The Ottawa Centre council had four meetings during the year, and discussed and/or voted on over 40 items. Congratulations to the council for their patience and leadership on some difficult issues.

Our Centre meetings are held on the first Friday of each month at the Canada Science and Technology Museum. The attendance at our monthly meetings frequently approaches or exceeds 150. This was the second year for our Meeting Chair, Brian McCullough. He continued his meeting format that included more involvement of Observers Group type of activities. The meeting's astro-photo presentations are accompanied by descriptions of the image particulars by the member submitting the image. These images are also available to see on our Centre Web site. Brian has succeeded in emphasizing the accomplishments of our "Amateur Astronomers" (who are very close to being "Professional Astronomers"!)

A monthly "Observers Challenge" is part of the meeting format. Various astronomical presentations by members and guests are also included in Brian's meeting format.

A special thank you goes to Art and Anne Fraser who have given

their time and effort for quite some years in setting up the "coffee and cookie" after monthly-meeting "get-togethers." We had to cancel our February meeting with two days' notice due to a major snow storm.

Our Centre Annual Dinner was held on November 14. Our speaker this year was Dr. Philip Stooke, and his presentation was on exploring the Moon, past and present. He documented his research on the lunar-surface images collected by all the robotic and manned Moon missions. The door prize donations were from Focus Scientific, the Ottawa Centre, and various members. Our Vice-President, Paul Harrison, organized the event, and Brian McCullough coordinated the invitation, transportation, and accommodations for our guest speaker. A special "Thank you" to all the members who sponsored ten Carleton University astronomy students for the dinner.

Brian McCullough and our Centre coordinated a very successful lunar-eclipse star party on a -20 °C evening in February at the Canada Science and Technology Museum. Over 200 people attended the event. The museum stated that the event would not have been the success it was without the dedicated volunteers from the Ottawa Centre.

On May 10, to celebrate Astronomy Day, our Centre coordinated a program at the Canada Science and Technology Museum. The indoor program included telescope demonstrations, meteorite displays, a "show and tell" on terrestrial-impact structures and a forum on manned exploration of space. The outdoor program had solar and planet observing and concluded with an evening star party. We were surprised and impressed by the very detailed questions coming from children aged under 10; they are our most precious resource. The museum reported 844 daytime visitors and 180 people attending the night-time star party. We received a very sincere "Thank You" from the museum for our efforts.

Mike Moghadam has volunteered to fill our public-outreach position. In his new role, he organized major star parties at Saunders Farm in October corresponding with Halloween events. Unfortunately, both of the dates he planned for were cancelled due to weather. Mike's enthusiasm has been a catalyst for promoting future star parties and astronomical events.

A final star party is planned for the Winter Solstice, December 21. We're hoping the weather will cooperate this time.

Our annual picnic was again hosted by Linda and Rolf Meier.

The Centre's Fred Lossing Observatory (FLO), managed by Al Seaman, continues to be well used by members. A total of 24 "keyholders" are registered who have full access to observatory equipment. In addition, numerous other members use FLO as a dark site to set up their own equipment. There were no noteworthy equipment problems this year, and maintenance work was largely limited to the usual routine things: grass and tree trimming in the summer; snow clearing in the winter. The site is accessible throughout the winter. The Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority (our landlord) has cut down many of the encroaching trees that have been restricting our horizon, and this has greatly improved conditions.

Work on our SMARTScope is progressing. Most of the hardware that really matters is working properly. There are a few short-term issues that need to be dealt with in order to get the facility operating. The worst problem we have at the moment is the AP7p camera. The camera currently has three different faults, one of which severely cripples the camera. Given the repair history of the camera, we have decided not to have it fixed. Doug George will be donating an Orion StarShoot Deep Space Imager II Monochrome camera. This is an inexpensive camera but will do the job as an interim measure. Clear nights will be required to get the software

configured before it will be online. There are some longer-term things that need to be done to improve reliability, particularly with the dome shutter. We are considering a complete replacement of the TI ProDome shutter mechanism with something much simpler. It won't be expensive to do, but it will take a fair bit of work. Ultimately we should replace the CCD camera with something better. But for now the main goal is to get the observatory online.

Richard Kicksee and Estelle Rother have had a successful year highlighting our library to members during and after our monthly meetings. Our library is named in the memory of Mr. Stan Mott, who had managed the library for many years. This year it was revealed that Mr. Mott had bequeathed a substantial grant to the Ottawa Centre from his estate. The Ottawa Centre council decided to allot this money to our library in Mr. Mott's memory.

Richard McDonald is now the sole manager of our Web site. He managed a critical ISP transfer of our Web data as our old ISP finally ran out of disk space. The data transfer was successfully completed and, as a bonus, this new Web service is saving our Centre substantial funds.

Our new treasurer Hans Brouwer has had a very busy year with our Centre finances. Over the last year he has managed a successful "turnover" from our previous treasurer and in addition, we now have a complete audit of our organization. The audit has revealed that we have some challenges ahead of us. Thank you, Hans, for accepting the position.

This year the "Paul Comision Observer of the Year Award" was awarded to Gary Boyle.

The *Astronotes* article of the year was awarded to Mike Earl for his article "Hickson 50 and the Question of Magnitude" in the July/August 2008 edition.

The Council approved a special Centre appreciation award to our Past President Debra Ceravolo for her most appreciated Centre achievements.

The council is also applying to national to grant a Service Award to Al Seaman for his management over the years of our Fred Lossing Observatory.

Finally, The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada is "dedicated to the advancement of astronomy and allied sciences." The Ottawa Centre has posted a position statement, approved by the council in April of this year, to affirm the central importance of scientific theories in science education. Our statement reads in part "The RASC Ottawa Centre and its publications will not promote any non-scientific explanations of the nature of the universe." The complete position statement may be seen on the Centre's Web site at: www.ottawa.rasc.ca/index.php.

Charles O'Dale
Past President

PRINCE GEORGE CENTRE

The PG Centre's fourth NOVA course commenced in January with 18 students enrolled.

On February 20, while viewing the lunar eclipse at the observatory, about 30 people witnessed fragments of the USA 193 satellite burning up in the atmosphere. The US Navy had shot down the satellite over the Pacific Ocean 20 minutes earlier.

As one of the ways to advertise our existence, the PG Centre manned a booth at the Recreation Market hosted by a local mall in March and September.

Astronomy Day in May was rained out, so a booth was set up in the mall. Quite a bit of public interest was generated.

The observatory is closed to the public during the summer and we used the time to upgrade the 24-inch telescope, wiring, and computers. The telescope is now controlled by any number of planetary programs and is GoTo capable. Efforts are being made to motorize dome movement and viewing slot opening/closing.

Major repairs were made to the observatory roof in June.

About 60 visitors to the observatory viewed the August Perseids.

The all-sky camera has been installed at the observatory, and its acquired information will augment data from the existing Radio-SkyPipe program. Several meteors from the Taurid meteor shower in early November were detected during the camera testing phase, and minor adjustments were made to synchronize the timing of the two applications. This brings to three the number of sites operating an all-sky camera in the Prince George area. Using special software, observatory data co-related with a station at Reid Lake and another in the Prince George bowl area can triangulate the approximate impact location of a detected meteor that manages to survive its plunge through the atmosphere.

Approximately 1080 members of the public visited the observatory this year, and over 2100 man-hours were logged, of which only 75 were spent on personal viewing.

Twenty-nine members attended our December potluck windup dinner.

Glen Harris
Secretary

CENTRE DE QUÉBEC

Le Centre de Québec a organisé dix conférences, soit les premiers mercredis des mois de septembre à juin. Les sujets étaient tous variés et très intéressants. Plusieurs de ces conférences ont été présentées par des membres ainsi que des professeurs du département de physique de l'Université Laval.

L'observatoire Alphonse Tardif de St-Nérée, n'aura pas été beaucoup occupé en 2008. Des chutes de neige abondante auront empêché l'accès tout l'hiver et tard au printemps. Par la suite la mauvaise température aura eu raison des belles nuits étoilées de fin de semaine. Quelques sorties ont quand même eu lieu, dont une pour les voisins de l'observatoire.

Quelques soirées publiques d'observation dans le stationnement du Domaine de Maizerets ont été organisées par le Centre. Toujours, très populaires, ces soirées ont accueilli environ 20 personnes à chaque occasion. Nous avons été invités à quelques soirées privées pour faire de l'animation et des observations de la Lune. Notre Président a aussi donné plusieurs conférences dans des écoles.

À l'occasion de la journée internationale de l'astronomie de 2008, une activité pour le public a été organisée à l'Arboretum du Domaine de Maizerets.

Pierre Desrosiers
Représentant national

2008 was another an active and successful year for the Regina Centre. As in years past, our mandate to educate and expose the public to the art and science of astronomy set the stage for many of our events throughout 2008. Our ambitious schedule provided more than a dozen public observing sessions. And while the weather was not always cooperative, our presence and knowledge was nonetheless welcome. In 2008 we fulfilled our goals through the following events

Astronomy Fair—February 19
 Friends of Wascana—May 9
 Astronomy Day—May 10
 Canada Day (Wascana Park)—July 1
 Buffalo Pound—July 12
 Echo Valley Provincial Park—July 26
 Good Spirit Provincial Park—August 1
 Duck Mountain Provincial Park—August 3
 Kenosee Provincial Park—August 9
 Saskatchewan Summer Star Party (Cypress Hills)—August 29–31
 Regina Symphony Orchestra (Holst's "The Planets")—September 20
 "Transit of Venus" Play, Opening Night observing—October 29

We started providing Astronomy fairs to elementary and high schools in 2006 and continued this through 2008 by providing one which involved students and parents from four elementary schools. We had five presentations that are around ten minutes long, including interactive displays, which were shown throughout the evening. We also had three telescopes setup outside for visual observing.

In March the club made the decision to purchase a Lunt 200-mm hydrogen-alpha solar scope, and while we haven't received delivery of it yet, look forward to bringing it out to gaze at a (hopefully) more active Sun.

The 2008 SSSP saw record attendance with over 300 people! The Regina Centre showed the Sun and night sky to hundreds of people who were staying in the park, leaving many campers "star struck" after a look through our telescopes. Friday night, the legendary Cypress Hill skies opened up, and, with near-perfect observing conditions, many of us wished the Sun would never rise. Objects like M33 showed detail many of us had never seen before. Unfortunately, Saturday and Sunday's weather was not cooperative, leaving us dreaming of SSSP 2009. As always, the guest speakers and friendship amongst fellow astronomers was top notch...once again making this one of the best star parties in the country.

One of the highlights for public observing in 2008 was the concert with the Regina Symphony Orchestra. At the after-show reception many of the RSO's patrons took in the opportunity to view Jupiter and other skyward objects. While the weather and light conditions were not perfect, the venue was a huge success and did a lot to raise the profile of the Regina Centre, including an article in the Regina Leader Post the following morning.

To wrap up the year, the Regina club officially launched its new club Web site "<http://astronomyregina.ca>" on December 2. The new site is more modern, has an ever-growing education section, and a forum for members and the public to discuss all things astronomy.

2008 was another spectacular year for our club. Between all the public events, many members were able observe the dark skies from our observatory at Davin. A few were even lucky enough to see the odd meteorite and even a fireball streak across the night sky.

Shawn Drew
Regina Secretary

The St. John's Centre has continued our activities in astronomy and public outreach and education. Our regular meetings have attracted an average audience of 23. The Centre membership has varied between 43 and 49 members over the year. We have 3 Life Members, and one Associate member (a new category for our Centre this year).

Garry Dymond continued his shows in the planetarium at the Marine Institute, although it was shut down for much of the year for renovations. He runs four shows a week from September to June for many different kinds of groups, although mainly the Scouting movement takes part. In addition, Centre members helped out at school science fairs.

Work continues on setting up a Centre observatory. We have formed an Observatory Committee to explore possible situations. In addition, we have started plans for IYA2009 and hope to have many activities and extra education outreach for the public.

Here is a summary of our meeting year:

January	What I Got for Christmas Speaker: members
February	Terrestrial Impact Craters: Recent Discoveries and Some Surprises Speaker: Dr. Phil McCausland
March	UHE Cosmic-Ray Astronomy: AGN Astrophysics that High Schools Can Do Speaker: Chris Stevenson
April	Mallincam CCD Observational System Speaker: Greg Baggs
May	Documentary
June	Public Sidewalk Astronomy Speaker: Greg Baggs
September	Searching for Killer Asteroids at the Rothney Astrophysical Observatory of the University of Calgary Speaker: Garry Dymond
October	Astronomical Seasonal Gifts Speaker: members AGM
November	For Want of a Big Enough Bell Jar: Successfully Silvering an 18-inch Mirror through Chemistry Speaker: Chris Stevenson
December	Bolides of October and November 2008 Speaker: Dr. Phil McCausland Annual Social.

Summaries of all these talks can be found on our Web site at www.sji.ca/rasc/.

There were several public star parties during the summer of 2008. At the official Butterpot Star Party, one night was clear, whereas the second night was rained out. Several more visits were made to the campsite during the summer by members. In addition, we renewed our association with "Admiralty House," a local museum, after a one year hiatus by taking part in a summer public observing event. We spent one night with a local youth service organization, the "Church Lads Brigade," with 30 or so kids. This carries on similar work that Garry Dymond has done for many years with such groups as the Scouts.

For International Astronomy Day, the Centre worked with the provincial museum and cultural centre, known as "The Rooms." The night was cloudy as usual, so we proceeded indoors. A Rooms employee was present making astro-buttons for those who wanted them. Members brought their telescopes inside the theatre. Doug

Grouchy gave an introduction, and Gary Case gave a planetarium software tour in lieu of real stars. Members were invited to talk briefly about their scopes. Afterwards, everyone mingled and asked questions among the scopes. We had 54 visitors, which is not bad considering the event was clouded out. This year we decided to repeat with a Fall Astronomy Day. After several failed attempts over a couple months due to the weather, we managed to hold it on the weekend of November 15, with a moderate turn out from the public of a couple dozen.

Good luck and clear skies!

David Bourgeois
Secretary

SARNIA CENTRE

Sarnia Centre meets monthly to discuss RASC business and Astronomy. Our club is small, with roughly 25 members. Randi Mathieu has been publishing a monthly club newsletter, and during meetings we have Sky Tour presentations so members are aware of night sights.

For International Astronomy Day, Sarnia RASC manned a mall display during the day and planned a public Star Party that evening, which was clouded out. We had a "make-up" event in the fall which, with an enthusiastic turnout of 75-100 people.

Sarnia RASC was well represented at a local daytime event called "Hobbyfest," where local groups set up displays to share their hobbies. We displayed small scopes, and answered general questions. One member, Charlie Barbera, also displayed his impressive meteorite collection.

Club members continue to promote astronomy in our community. Ralph De Jong started writing *Night Lights*, which is published monthly in the local newspaper. In it he discusses astronomy for visual or binocular viewing. Chris Charbonneau gave a well received presentation to Corrunna Cubs.

We look forward to another year of fellowship with our common interest in Astronomy.

Clearer Skies!

Marty Cogswell
Secretary

SASKATOON CENTRE

This has been another very active and busy year for our Centre. We continue to have a membership of between 75 and 80 members. A dedicated group of observers continues to meet, weather permitting, at the Sleaford Observatory. There was a good turnout for the Astronomy Day display this year at the new Farmer's Market in Saskatoon.

The weather for the public star night at the Lakewood Civic Center on the Friday night before the display did not cooperate, and the sky was again poor for the public star night at Beaver Creek on

Saturday. A very successful summer star party at the Cypress Hills in late August occurred with 315 registered. The open house in October sponsored by the U of S physics department and supported by our Centre members was also plagued by cloudy skies.

Momentum is now beginning to switch toward IYA2009 and to developing plans and making arrangements for a successful GA/SSSP 2009. Hope to see everyone there at the Cypress Hills in late August 2009.

Al Hartridge
Secretary

SUNSHINE COAST CENTRE

January: The year started quietly with limited viewing nights due to weather. At our General meeting held in January we had an in-house class on how to clean a telescope mirror, reassemble and collimate.

February: Elder College the local subsidiary of Capilano University announced that they would host a four-week Astronomy Lecture Series starting on the first Saturday in March. Dr. Marcello Pavan from TRIUMPH presented a lecture to Club members on Friday, February 29 entitled "The Big Bang." Many non-club members showed up for the presentation, and it was decided that a hall would have to be rented for future big-name presenters. Due to excessive cold, no viewing nights were planned for Club members.

March: Members attended the Elder College Lecture Series that included prominent lecturers, Dr. Jaymie Matthews, Dr. Bill McCutcheon, and Dr. Garth Jones. A viewing night was held at Davis Bay and a Public Outreach Program at Winegarden Park in Gibsons.

April: Club member Dr. Erwin Diener led a club round-table discussion on astrophotography. A viewing night was held at Kinniknick Park and a public outreach night at Davis Bay.

May: International Astronomy Day was held at Trail Bay Mall in Sechelt. A raffle was held to give away a 4.5-inch refractor telescope, and telescopes were set up on the mall sidewalk for solar viewing. Later in the month, Debra MacWilliam took a group of Girl Guides from Vancouver through the different stages of gaining their Guiding Astronomy Badges.

June: John Nemy from the Whistler Mountain Observatory presented his Exploration of the Universe to a packed crowd at the Sechelt Legion. This was a presentation filled with booming music and amazing images from outer space. Viewing nights were held at Shirley Macey Park.

July: There are no General Meetings held at the Club during July and August. Vice President Neil Sandy held a Club Pot Luck picnic at his home. The Picnic was well attended and although telescopes were set up for late-night viewing I don't know how many members actually reached a telescope.

August: The 4th Annual Astronomy in the Park Festival was held in Porpoise Bay Park; unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate. The Festival runs from 3 p.m. until midnight, but by early evening we had dismantled most of the viewing equipment due to threatening rain. James MacWilliam presented an astrophotography show in the park amphitheatre, which was well attended.

September: Members of the Executive met with the Mayor and a local developer to discuss the possible venue for an Observatory on

the Sunshine Coast. A public-outreach night was held at Davis Bay.

October: The Sunshine Coast Botanical Society is currently purchasing 40 acres of property north of the village of Sechelt. Members of the Astronomy Club held meetings with the Botanical Society to discuss a possible venue for an observatory.

November: An anonymous five-figure donation has been made to the Sunshine Coast Astronomy Club to be used in building a Sunshine Coast Observatory. The Annual General Meeting was held on November 28 and a new Executive was sworn in.

December: Plans were finalized for the IYA2009 Kick-off Party on January 10. This will be held at the Sechelt Public Library and will run from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Marty Henry
Secretary

THUNDER BAY CENTRE

The last year has gone by very quickly as one cloudy night seemed to follow another. We held ten meetings including our Annual meeting in October. As usual, we took July and August off and started up again in September. Meetings were held on the second Tuesday of the month at Confederation College. Attendance at meetings averaged 21 members, over half of our 32 in-town members (40 total). The Coffee Committee provided coffee, tea, and goodies for each meeting and continues to be a highlight of the meeting as the members get to talk with each other on a wide variety of topics.

We held five public-outreach sessions (detailed later in this report). All went well, as we had great participation from the public, and from Centre members. This year saw our first entry into the Outdoor Show with corporate and member support to finance it. The Yard and Garden show was particularly well received and well put together by the members.

The meeting format stayed much the same over the year with the following highlights.

Regular Features:

This month's sky line up
Deep-sky objects

Presentation Topics

Slate Island Meteor Impact Site
Imaging with Hydrogen-Alpha Filters
Aurora
Geminids
Occultations
Variable Stars
Kennedy Space Centre Tour
Tidal Phenomena
Solar telescopes
Sun Spots
Colour of Stars
Odessa Meteor Crater
Binocular Observing

Presenters

Bob McLean
Ted Bronson
Dave Gallant

Randy McAllister
John Bakkelund
Dr. Lionel Catalan
Doug Stuart
Robert Kushneriuk

Public Outreach

Public Observing Session—Mars

Mars was at opposition on 2007 December 24. We held a public session to allow everyone a chance to observe the Red Planet. On the evening of 2008 January 18, despite the cold weather (temperature was -23 °C, with a wind chill of -36 °C!), three members set up telescopes and binoculars. We were surprised that around 100 interested observers braved the wind and cold weather to come out to look at Mars and the Moon.

February Lunar Eclipse

The Thunder Bay Centre hosted an observing session to view the total eclipse of the Moon, along with the planets Saturn and Mars, at Hillcrest Park in Thunder Bay on the night of February 20. Binoculars and telescopes were available for all interested observers to see the Moon as it passed through the Earth's shadow. The rings of Saturn amazed people, as many had never seen them before in a telescope. Even with temperatures of -18 °C, and a wind chill of -25 °C, over 500 people attended this event over the 3 hours we were at the site. As we set up our equipment, to prepare for the eclipse, we paused a few moments to watch the spy satellite USA 193 as it made its final pass overhead before being intercepted by a missile fired from a warship.

The Moon was well up when it began to enter the Earth's inner shadow. By this time people had started to come to the site. Over the next hour or so, we had a large gathering of people waiting to observe the Moon and planets through our instruments. Everyone seemed amazed at the Moon's transformation from a once-brilliant white object to a rusty brown orb in the sky during totality. The reduced brightness of the eclipsed Moon allowed everyone to easily locate Saturn to the left of the totally eclipsed Moon and identify the stars of Leo—especially Regulus just above the eclipsed Moon. During totality, everyone admired the Moon's colours naked eye and through binoculars and telescopes made available by members and volunteers. Once totality ended and the Moon began to reappear and brighten, many people departed as the winter chill got the best of them. This event made the front page of the newspaper the next day.

The Outdoor Show

From February 22-24, members of the Centre hosted a booth at the Chamber of Commerce Central Canada Outdoors Show. We had a very successful few days, which hopefully raised the awareness of the Centre in the community. Ted Bronson gave two talks and had good attendance at both. We had numerous one-on-one encounters at our booth that led to a few more interested people attending our meetings. We also had three successful prize draws, which raised funds for the Centre. Our final presence there was at the scopes right at the entrance to the Sports Dome. Friday evening saw Lionel braving the cold for a few hours showing off Mars and the Orion Nebula, Saturday saw Bruce on the solar telescope, and Sunday (the nicest of all three days) I was on the solar scope. There were at least 300 people that looked through the scopes.

Yard & Garden Show

We attended the Canadian Lakehead Exhibition (CLE) grounds for the 2008 Yard and Garden Show from March 30 to April 1. For three days several hundred people stopped by our booth with many showing an interest in joining the Society. The weekend was, on the whole, a huge success. Several people claimed to have

telescopes gathering dust or laundry and were looking for help to set them up.

Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park—July 26

This was the fifth presentation at this park. About 40 campers and interested observers attended the talk at the outdoor amphitheatre. Unfortunately mostly cloudy conditions meant cancelling the sky tour after the presentation. The large clouds of mosquitoes convinced many to head back to their campsites.

Kid's World (CLE)—August 6-10

The Canadian Lakehead Exhibition hosted "Kid's World" in which Thunder Bay Centre members participated this year. Ted Bronson, Randy McAllister, Edward Essex, Maureen Nadin, Dave Gallant, Rob Kushneriuk, Bob MacMaster, and Bruce Miron all showed up to help set up and run the display. We were in the Heritage Building, along with many other childrens' activities. Our display went over well as we were visited by a large number of kids and adults. Particular favourites were Ted Bronson's daily draws for Sticker Books and looking through the telescope at the scale pictures of Mars, Saturn, and Jupiter. A fair number of adults stopped by to say that they had a telescope and wanted help in one form or another. Some indicated an interest in attending our meetings.

Quetico Park—August 15-16

This was the 22nd Annual Star Weekend held at the French Lake Dawson Trail campground. Again this year Dave Gallant and Ted Bronson did presentations.

Ted's presentation was hosted at the Pavilion with about 20 people present. The talk was titled "A Tour of Our Solar System and Beyond." After the presentation, we conducted a sky tour. The sky had a slight haze, but the rising near-full Moon kept our observing to the brighter nighttime objects such as the Moon, Jupiter, major constellations, and brighter stars. The slight breeze kept the bugs from being an annoyance during the session. Telescopes and binoculars were set up for viewing as well.

Dave presented his talk "Astronomy Myths and Misconceptions Explained" at the Teaching Place the next evening, with around 20 campers in attendance. After the presentation everyone was invited to attend the guided sky tour. The observing session was cut short due to calm wind conditions allowing the hordes of mosquitoes to be a major nuisance.

Sleeping Giant Provincial Park—August 29-30

Our final program for the summer was the 15th Star Weekend at this park. After a break of seven years, Dave Gallant and Ted Bronson gave their talks at Sleeping Giant Park.

Ted did his talk on Friday, August 29 at the Visitor's Centre with about 60 people in attendance. Fortunately, the severe thunderstorm and heavy rain that afternoon ended, and the sky cleared completely. We held a tour of the stars for all interested observers at the Lake Marie Louise beach under a dark and Moonless sky that evening. Dave Gallant, Bob and Elaine McLean, and Ted Bronson had telescopes and binoculars available for stargazing.

The next evening, Dave Gallant did his presentation at the indoor amphitheatre before an audience of around 60 people. Following the presentation everyone was invited to attend a sky tour at the beach. Under another dark and Moonless sky, interested observers had a chance to view many celestial objects.

Local Guest Speakers

Bill Addison—Slate Island Meteor Impact

Out-of-Town Guest Speakers

None

New Initiatives

Club Observatory

This Year the Thunder Bay Centre has begun work on an observatory. An agreement has been reached for land use and we have started fundraising and design work for the project. We submitted a request for funding to the Thunder Bay Foundation, but were not successful. Our Gift Card fundraiser is going well. It is hoped that the observatory will be up and running by the fall of 2009.

Edward Essex

Secretary

TORONTO CENTRE

This past year might go down in history as one of the busiest year for the Centre ever. In addition to our full slate of activities, the Centre co-hosted the General Assembly, and also became involved in efforts to support the David Dunlap Observatory, plus completed a major renovation project at the CAO. It is my pleasure to report on the accomplishments of the Centre for the year just past.

The Public Education Committee held presentations for 3 schools and 13 special-interest groups with a beginners observing theme. In total, the Public Education Committee delivered 45 presentations for 1584 children and adults.

The Toronto Centre co-hosted a lecture with the Royal Canadian Institute on 2007 October 21. This year the topic was "Beyond the Visible Universe: Dark Clouds, Galaxy Collisions, and the Origin of Stars," with Dr. Christine Wilson of McMaster University.

The Centre also participated in the 27th Ad Astra Convention held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel at the end of March with about 300 people in attendance.

The Public Education Committee hosted an introductory astronomy course for the first time called "New Observers to Visual Astronomy" or NOVA Programme in co-operation with the Ontario Science Centre. This series of eight lectures was held on Wednesday evenings, and many Centre members volunteered as instructors for the various lessons. This free programme was open to the public and actively promoted by the OSC. There were two offerings during the year, one in the fall (52 attendees) and the other in the spring (59 students). Both groups were invited to tour the CAO as part of the programme.

This year the City of Toronto participated in "Earth Hour," an international environmental awareness event that took place on March 29. Its goal was to educate the public on energy conservation, good lighting, and light pollution, and, of course, the Toronto Centre was there. The city turned its lights out for one hour at 8:00. There were 39 volunteers, and, since it was the same weekend as a RASC National Council meeting, seven of them were from other parts of the country, including National President Scott Young. There were 2000 people at the event

The Toronto Centre sponsored the annual Toronto Science and Technology Fair held at the U. of T. Scarborough Campus. This science fair represents students of all ages from elementary to high school. This year David Parfett awarded May Wang of University of Toronto Schools the astronomy prize for their project entitled "Meteor Shape Affecting Crater Volume."

Toronto Centre participated for the third consecutive year in

Toronto's CONTACT photography festival. There were about 30 entries from 16 RASC members. The judges this year were Dietmar Kupke, Paul Mortfeild, and Sara Poirier, with a number of winners in a variety of categories. The exhibit was so compelling that the Science Centre opted to extend the exhibition well beyond the initial one-month exhibit.

Overall, the Education Committee held 45 presentations and assisted with 7 other events to about 8000 people, plus the people at Earth Hour.

Thanks go to Eric Briggs, Dr. Ralph Chou, Dr. Geoff Gaherty, Denis Grey, Costas Harvey, Tony Horvatin, Shawn Lee, Scott Masterton, Mickey Milankov, Blake Nancarrow, Guy Nason, David Parfett, Brenda Shaw, Diane Shukla, Francois van Heerden, Ian Wheelband, and to all the volunteers who helped out at all the various star parties including Earth Hour, making this a very successful year.

In late 2007, the University of Toronto declared the David Dunlap Observatory (DDO) surplus and announced its intention to sell the property. The Toronto Centre Council formed the Observatory Park Working Group to investigate possible future use of the observatory. The Centre commissioned a study by Lord Cultural Resources, which was completed in May 2008. This study clearly outlined the potential for the DDO as an "Earth and Sky Centre," which could continue astronomical activities and encourage and support science education. This study was presented to Richmond Hill Town Council as well as the RASC General Assembly. It is the hope that the report will help to spur a sustainable future for this historic buildings, which have been such an important part of the Centre's history. The Centre thanks the many members who contributed financially to make this work possible.

In 2008, the Centre co-hosted the 2008 General Assembly with the Hamilton and Mississauga Centres on the campus of York University from June 27 - July 1. Astronomy Night in Canada attracted over 200 participants, and featured an engaging programme that helped to prepare the National Society for the International Year of Astronomy in 2009. Five members of the Centre were honoured with National Awards including Dr. Geoff Gaherty (Chant Medal), Eric Briggs (Ken Chilton Prize), and Leslie Harvey, Tony Horvatin, and Denis Grey (Service Awards). Many members of the Centre turned out for the GA and participated as volunteers or members of the planning committee. They are to be commended for their efforts, which were appreciated and acknowledged by many members of the Society.

Kirsten Vanstone organized a wide-ranging series of lecture meetings for our speakers' night programme. They were:

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| October 3 | Dr. James Alcock, (York University) "UFOs: Belief in Search of Data" |
| November 28 | Dr. Tom Bolton (Department of Astronomy University of Toronto) "Fighting Light Pollution" |
| January 29 | Randy Attwood (RASC Mississauga Centre) "Chasing the Moon's Shadow" |
| March 5 | Dr. Norbert Bartel (Professor of Astrophysics and Space Sciences, York University) "Testing Einstein's Universe—An Update on the Gravity B Probe" |
| April 2 | Dr. John Percy (University of Toronto) "Connecting Students, Teachers and the Public with the Universe" |
| April 30 | Dr. Robin Kingsburgh "Visualization in Astronomy" |
| September 3 | Catherine McWatters (Solar Wind Planetarium) "The Anaglyph Universe" |

The Centre members were also invited to the Sackler Public lecture on March 13 at the University of Toronto, where Dr. Kip Thorne from the California Institute of Technology discussed the topic of "The Warped Side of the Universe: from the Big Bang to Black Holes and Gravitational Waves."

Paul Markov provided a rich programme for our members' night meetings including The Sky this Month (delivered by Eric Briggs and Brenda Shaw) as well as a variety of topics, including a remote-controlled observatory, astronomical images, horseback astronomy in Alberta, astronomical travels, demonstrations of new equipment, modifying old equipment; this is just a small sample of the range of topics our members presented to us. On February 20, a special Members' Night was combined with an Ontario Science Centre star party to observe a lunar eclipse, the weather cooperated and we were treated to a great lunar eclipse.

The Observational Activities Committee, headed by Guy Nason, coordinated the Centre's observing programmes, including Dark-Sky Observing Sessions at Forks of the Credit Provincial Park and Long Sault Conservation Area; City-Observing Session at Bayview Village Park and Humber Bay Park West; and Solar-Observing Sessions at the Ontario Science Centre in Toronto. Generally poor weather in 2008 dampened attendance at these programmes.

Together with the Education Committee and the Ontario Science Centre, the OAC co-produced the following public events at the OSC:

- Halloween Star Party on 2007 October 28
- Lunar Eclipse Star Party on 2008 February 20
- Earth Hour Lights Out Star Party on March 29
- International Astronomy Week Star Parties, May 05-10
- Summer Star Parties on July 4 and August 1

Most of these events enjoyed acceptable or even spectacular weather conditions, and attendance varied from a few hundred to more than 1000 for Earth Hour.

The 11th Annual Algonquin Adventure was held from September 26 to 28, which had 95 attendees at Mew Lake campground. Thanks are due Bob and Lillian Chapman organizing this annual event.

During the year Phil Chow stepped down from his rôle as editor of *SCOPE*, and we thank him for his dedication and time for maintaining the high quality of our Centre's newsletter for its 48th and 49th years of publication. Adam Clayson is to be congratulated on stepping into his new rôle as editor.

The Centre's Webmaster, Blake Nancarrow, has been busy updating our Web site and providing improvements to it and our Yahoo groups. Blake has also maintained the club's computer equipment, and vastly improved the computer and network infrastructure at the CAO.

Tom Luton stepped into the role of Centre Librarian in 2008, and spent many hours at our library at the CAO organizing and cataloguing our book and magazine collection. An index is now available, and Toronto Centre members are now able to sign out books from the library.

The Toronto Centre eclipse flag was carried by Ralph Chou and Fred Giles to China, where they successfully observed the total solar eclipse of 2008 August 1 from Weixi Gorge, Yiwu County of Xinjiang Province. Many other members of the Centre travelled to various locations in China and Mongolia to observe the same event.

A 10-day trip is being arranged to observe the total solar eclipse of 2009 July 22 from Wuhan, China, with stops in Beijing, Xian, and Shanghai. Visits to the national observatories near Beijing and Shanghai are being arranged. At time of writing, seven people have reserved places, and other members have made inquiries.

As of 2008 July 1, the membership of the Toronto Centre was 494 regular, 80 Life, 15 Youth, 8 Affiliate, and 106 Associate members, for a total of 703. There were 52 CAO pass holders. *eSCOPE* was being sent to 335 members, and 354 were members of our Yahoo group. The online credit-card payment system has made renewals more convenient for many members, and the

Finance Committee is looking into ways of making it even more advantageous to members.

We are saddened to announce the passing of two of our members this past year, Robert James Kilgour and Otto Skalicky.

The Centre held its 11th annual Open House and Awards Picnic at the CAO in late May 2008. Over 75 members and guests turned out for the event. This year's Centre awards went to: Dietmar Kupke (Bert Winearls), Sean Lee (Andrew Elvins), Tom Luton (Bertram J. Topham), and Stefano Cancelli (Ray Thompson).

A highlight of the Open House was the official opening of the new accessibility deck. Member Ken Sprague obliged by leading the assembled visitors up the new ramp with his walker after a ribbon-cutting ceremony presided over by Centre President Denis Grey.

Work on the Interactive and Accessible CAO project, funded by the Centre and the Ontario Trillium Foundation, was largely completed this year, as the accessibility ramp and deck were finished in early May 2008, and work on the Great Hall was completed late in the year. Among other improvements were the completion of the observing pad, installation of a weather station, and other regular maintenance work.

There are many members who have contributed their time and talents to the continued operation and development of the CAO in 2008. We especially thank the hard work of Geoff Brown, Cliff Carr, Ralph Chou, Elaine and Charles Darrow, Pat Gallo, Gilles and Nicole Gaudet, Tony, Grace, Trevor, and Brianna Horvatin, Terry Leeder, Tom Luton, Katrina Ince-Lum, Fred Lum, Blake Nancarrow, Guy Nason, Gordon Michener, David Parfett, as well as students Cameron Ceh and Victoria Hoszka, John and Chris Bohdanowicz, Ian Donaldson, Pat Gallo, Lora and Phil Chow, Denis Grey, Dietmar Kupke, Tom Luton, Mickey Milankov, Joel Parkes, and Ed Treijs for making the CAO one of the best private observatories in North America.

The telescope loan programme administered by John Bohdanowicz has continued to provide a good assortment of telescopes and related equipment for our members to borrow.

In 2008, member Peter Hiscocks stepped forward to fill in the very important role of Light-Pollution Abatement in the Toronto Centre. Working with the City of Toronto's Planning department, Peter has worked consistently to try to influence the City towards full-cut-off light fixtures that would significantly reduce the light-pollution footprint of Toronto. He was officially appointed as Chair of a new LPA Committee in May 2008. Our goals are to reduce light pollution in two respects. One: by allowing city dwellers a better view the sky from city parks; and two: rural areas surrounding the GTA will have less Toronto sky glow.

Thanks are also due to CS&P 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. We thank the Ontario Science Centre, and Sara Poirier in particular, for their continued hospitality in providing the facilities and audiovisual 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.

The Toronto Centre of the RASC remains a strong astronomical organization due to the commitment of many members who put in countless hours maintaining the smooth operation of the Centre, some of these members are John Bohdanowicz, Geoff Brown, Dr. Ralph Chou, Geoff Gilmour-Taylor, Dr. Geoff Gaherty, Leslie Harvey, Peter Hiscocks, Tony Horvatin, Katrina Ince-Lum, Dietmar Kupke, Denis Grey, Paul Markov, Guy Nason, David Parfett, Sara Poirier, Brenda Shaw, Rajesh and Diane Shukla, and Kirsten Vanstone, along with the help of many others.

Sir Isaac Newton is quoted as saying "I see farther because I stand on the shoulders of giants," and because of the giants of the past and present—our volunteers—the membership can pursue their passion for astronomy and education, which helps them and others

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Darrow
Secretary

VANCOUVER CENTRE

2008 was been a very productive year for RASC Vancouver Centre. Our Centre attained charitable status under the CRA, provided a strong program of public-outreach activities and we continue to maintain and build strong relationships with other like-minded organizations within our region, including UBC, SFU, BCIT, and Vancouver Telescope. Special thanks to the Space Centre for their continued support in hosting our operations.

During 2008 council passed a variety of business motions most notably in support of our observatory and our IYA activities. These motions do not begin to reflect the huge amount of work that occurs within the various functional areas of council and the operating committees.

For 2008 we enjoyed the following guest speakers:

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| January 10 | Dr. Jaymie Matthews. Topic: "Our Universe and other oddities" |
| February 14 | Dr. Catherine Heymans. Topic: "In dark matter's embrace...the violent lives of galaxies caught in the cosmic dark-matter web" |
| March 13 | Dr. Ed Krupp. Topic: "Inhabiting the Meridian" |
| April 10 | Chris Gainor. Topic: "To a Distant Day: The Rocket Pioneers" |
| May 8 | Prof. Mark Halpren of UBC. Topic: "WMAP update or a first report on the Atacama Cosmological Telescope results" |
| June 12 | David Orenstein. Topic: "Pre-Confederation Astronomy in Quebec City" |
| July 10 | Aaron Clevenson. Topic: "Come along for a trip down memory lane as we review the Great Moments in Planetary Exploration." |
| July 26 | Vancouver Urban Star Quest—at Fort campground in Langley |
| August 14 | Eric Dunn |
| September 11 | Member's Night—Bob Parry & Bill Burnyeat. Topic: Club Telescopes and Visible Milky Way objects |
| September 13 | Paul Sykes Memorial Lecture—Dr. Rosaly Lopes-Gautier. Topic: "Mapping the Lakes and Rivers on Saturn's Moon Titan" |
| October 9 | Craig Breckenridge. Topic: "Observations of a Telescope Designer at the LBT—Building the Thirty Metre Telescope" |
| November 13 | Larry Reeves of MacDonald-Dettwiler. Topic: "Launching Germany's RapidEye Earth Observation, A launch manager's story" |
| December 11 | Vancouver Centre AGM, and Vic Baker. Topic: "Light-Pollution Abatement (LPA): What You Can Do" |

In terms of events outside our regularly monthly meetings, there was simply too much going on to summarize in this report but the list includes the activities of our observatory projects—AOMO and CGRT, Sidewalk Astronomy, Messier Marathons, IYA2009, Nova Program, LPA, and our regular observing sessions. With our new Web site and link to Meetup.com we expect to keep members better informed and hope to increase participation in our numerous club events.

Jason Rickerby
Secretary

VICTORIA CENTRE

This year was a busy year with many annual and special events, outreach programs and the work that is accomplished by our committees. Above all this, 2008 will be remembered for the excitement generated by the construction of our very own Victoria Centre Observatory.

The Victoria Centre Observatory (VCO) was officially opened 2008 August 18, with RASC members, corporate partners, and the National Research Council (NRC) staff helping to celebrate this milestone in the Victoria Centre's history. The project was completed on time and under budget with the generous assistance from our corporate partners, generous donations of funds and labour from Victoria Centre members, and the goodwill and support from the NRC. Victoria Centre members put their hearts into this project and we are all very proud of this achievement.

Special Events This Year

The CASCA conference was held in Victoria in late May and RASC members were invited to attend conference lectures and a tour of the HIA. Members don't usually get to participate in the public tours since they are usually volunteering at the events. Our National Representative Chris Gainor attended the 2008 General Assembly of the RASC with a few Victoria Centre members. The event was held at York University, Toronto from June 27 - 30 and was sponsored by three centres—Toronto, Hamilton, and Mississauga. Among other things, the GA will be remembered both for decisions that moved the national society through a troubled period and for a program that featured a first-rate set of astronomical speakers.

Members attended the Cowichan Valley Starfinders party on July 4 and 5, as well as our own RASCALS Star Party on August 29 and 30, which enjoyed clear weather on the first night and a choice of sucker holes on the second night. We were privileged to have Dr. Frank Younger and Dr. Laura Ferrarese both of the NRC-HIA as speakers this year and it appears everyone had lots of fun! The main door prizes included a spotting scope, donated by Sky-Watcher and a Celestron SkyScout.

Regularly Scheduled Events

Regular Meetings were held every second Wednesday of the month, except July, August, and November, at the University of Victoria; the exceptional speakers this year generated a number of great discussions. Geoff Jones and John McDonald hosted Astronomy Cafe, an informal get-together every Monday evening at the Fairfield Community Association. A few scopes were often on hand, and we observed when conditions warranted. The New

Observers Observing Group, hosted by Sid Sidhu, continued this year under the dark skies of the Highlands just outside Victoria. Sid set aside every fourth Friday night to introduce new members to the wonders of the night sky. This year about 20 new and not-so-new members took advantage of this program.

Now that we have our own observatory, our active observers are able to use the facility on Wednesday evenings. Focused observing nights were also scheduled for events like occultations or double stars. Our active observers have kept us informed on what they observed by posting emails and photos and sketches on Zenfolio which is accessed through the RASC Victoria Web site.

Outreach Programs

The School Telescope Program is offered free of charge to the local schools, scouts and girl guides clubs. It involves the introduction of space and astronomy in a classroom setting, as well as an evening of night-sky viewing for the children and their parents. In the past year this program was offered to over 3500 school-aged children. In the spring of 2008, the Victoria Centre partnered with Shoreline Community School to offer an adult education astronomy course. Due to its success the course will be offered again next year.

Members set up scopes for a number of public observing events this year including the February 20 lunar eclipse at Cattle Point and the May 30 solar viewing at the annual Beaverie at Camp Bernard. Then, on June 21, the RASC Victoria and the Capital Regional District Parks ran Summer Solstice Solar Observing at Elk and Beaver Lake, and on September 7 members participated in solar viewing at Metchosin Days, where 400 people were able to look through telescopes.

Astronomy Cafe with about 20 volunteers hosted two Night Sky Viewing events along with the Fairfield Community Association. The first event on March 17 drew about 100 members of the public, and they must have spread the word because the second event held on September 15 brought about 200 members of the public to the event. At Lester B. Pearson College of the Pacific, Bill Weir maintains the long-established link between the Victoria Centre and the school's astronomy program. The program focuses on viewing skills, the uses of astronomical telescopes, imaging, and learning about the night sky. All RASC members are welcome at any time to use the school's observatory facilities.

Our ongoing support of the Centre of the Universe (CU) involved members assisting with programs, including the Scouting/Guiding Badge program, summer star parties, and the Perseid Meteor Event.

2008 May 6 was the 90th anniversary of the first observation made with the Plaskett Telescope, and Centre members joined in the festivities. This was also of interest to the public, and was conveniently close in date for Astronomy Day, celebrated in Victoria on Saturday, May 10. Although the weather did not cooperate this year to allow us to offer viewing of the night sky, the daytime activities and presentations were well received by the approximately 500 members of the public who attended this year.

Thanks go to all our volunteers and corporate partners who made it all possible: Centre of the Universe, NRC Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics; University of Victoria—Astronomy; CRD Parks, and Lester B. Pearson United World College of the Pacific.

Farewell to Friends

It is with great sadness that we say a final goodbye to a few members this year. Many of our members remember John L. Climenhaga and his association with our club. His name first appears in our records in 1951 as Librarian, and he continued to serve in many positions in the Centre's Council during the 1950s and 1960s. His last Council appointment was as President

from 1962 - 64, following which he was appointed as Honorary President for two terms: 1974 - 76 and 1992 - 98. We appreciate all he accomplished for the Centre, and his name and achievements will be recorded in the Centre's 100th Anniversary History to be published in 2014.

Blair Pellatt passed away on 2008 August 6. He was a keen observer, and took great delight in sharing his enthusiasm for astronomy with kids of all ages. We appreciate his involvement with the Victoria Centre and his active participation in various Centre public outreach and observing events.

Committees

Light-Pollution Abatement Committee—We are very pleased to report that finally our efforts to make Cattle Point a night-sky-friendly site have been successful. Our many thanks go to the Municipality of Oak Bay for retrofitting the lights. Now Cattle Point is an oasis in the desert of urban light pollution. This is only a small victory, in the long struggle to claim the night sky as our own.

Library—The library has received several donations in the form of DVDs, books, and magazines this year, and is open at each regular meeting for members to use.

Equipment—The RASC Victoria Centre purchased or received by donation items mostly in relation to the observatory. A steel pier, powder coating for the pier, an Oregon Scientific WMR968 weather station, two portable easels, a Meade 14-inch SCT (used), a camera bag for the centres Nikon D80, an APC 900VA UPS, a saddle mount for LX200, a TV Pan 35mm, Nagler 20mm, and Lumicon O3 filter, a cradle for the 14-inch Meade, a Webcam, a step ladder, a Losmandy plate, a focuser, diagonal, rings, and other used telescope equipment, plus a Kendrick ZapCap and DigiFire 10 controller, as well as a donated computer and donated 20-inch flat-screen monitor for the observatory.

Awards

Throughout the year our Members have been recognized for their achievements:

- A Messier Observing Certificate was awarded to Elizabeth van Akker.
- Simon Newcomb Award was awarded to Gary Seronik at the GA.
- The Ken Chilton Award was presented to Jennifer Tigner.

Our own centre recognizes its members each year with awards and certificates:

- Newton-Ball Award named for Jack Newton and George Ball for their outstanding service to the Centre and recognizes a member for his or her personal dedication to activities that have benefited all members of the Victoria Centre. David Lee presented this award to Joe Carr.
- The Award for Astrophotography was awarded to Guy Walton
- The Volunteer Award for RASCALS Star Party was presented to Nelson Walker

Meeting Schedule for 2008

January 9	How to Become a Professional Astronomer in Four Easy(?) Steps—Helen Kirk
February 13	Astronomical Activities at the HIA— Dr. Patrick Côté
March 12	Observing With The World's Best Telescope— Dr. Jim Nemeec
March 17	Night-Sky Viewing in Fairfield
April 9	Dwarf Galaxies—Dr. Alan McConnachie
May 14	Dark and Luminous Matter in Clusters of Galaxies—Dr. Andisheh Mahdavi
June 11	Pre-Confederation Astronomy in Quebec City— David Orenstein

October 8	The Large Hadron Collider and the ATLAS experiment—Dr. Michel Lefebvre
November 15	LIFE AT THE TOP, or Tales from Telescope Mountains—Dr. Jasper Wall
December	Dr. Kim Venn

Li-Ann Skibo
Secretary



The past year was one of many interesting activities and events. Led by Dr. Pierre Boulos, Windsor Centre held both regular and special events. We met nine times at The K of C Hall in Maidstone, Ontario, where speakers presented topics related in various ways to amateur astronomers' interests.

January	David Panton displayed his amateur-built transmission spectrometer and photos of spectra taken with it at our observatory. Juliana Grigorescu explained the related theory of light and distributed small spectroscopes to members and guests.
February	The DVD "Seeing in the Dark" by Prof. Timothy Ferris was the feature of the meeting.
March	Honorary President Dr. William Bayliss from the U of W Physics department gave his traditional annual talk, in this instance, "Understanding the Weirdness of Quantum Theory."
April	From his personal experience, member Walter Jin spoke about amateur astronomy in China.
May	Member Rev. Harry Brydon spoke of "Nightfall," referring to humans' ancient fear of the dark, and the importance of darkness to astronomy and energy saving.
June	Past President Steve Mastellotto related his ventures into "Virtual Astronomy" encouraging others to log on to remote telescopes and observe via the Internet.
September	Review of summer activities, photographs, and NASA video clips shot from the <i>Cassini</i> space craft passing by Saturn's moon Iapetus.
October	"Mars Landers" by Steve Pellarin, a detailed report of their operation, remarkable longevity, quirks, and many scientific discoveries.
November	A presentation "In The Grip of Gravity" by Juliana Grigorescu explained some of the many effects and still outstanding mysteries of gravity.

Meetings included a shorter presentation. Monthly observing reports were rotated between three people. The usual business matters, treasurer's report, etc. were part of each meeting. Annual June picnic was held at our observatory in Comber. Annual elections were held in November and a Christmas Social was enjoyed in December.

Public open houses at our "Hallam Observatory" were held every month of the year, usually after new Moon. Comet Holmes' burst of dust was the spectacular event of the year. Presentations were given by members to groups such as Brownies, Cubs, Scouts, students, and seniors. Special visits by groups such as these were hosted at our observatory.

Three fund-raising events were held, two by Windsor Centre and a third by a member hosting a huge garage sale at his home, selling items donated by members and friends. Weather favoured a well-

attended public observing event on a Point Pelee National Park beach, which park authorities co-sponsored. Another major event at Pelee Island Winery in Kingsville was a sellout. Funds raised were primarily used to support observatory operational costs.

At our local "Earth Day" event in April, members set up a display booth featuring astrophotos, light-pollution reduction information, and members' telescopes.

Light-pollution abatement promotion and local LP problems were handled by Dan Taylor.

Windsor Centre Achievement Awards 2008 were presented to Steve Pellarin, Bert Huneault, and Joady Ulrich.

Membership hovered just below 100 through most of 2008

David J. Panton
Secretary

WINNIPEG CENTRE

The Winnipeg Centre enjoyed another year of robust growth, sustained member enthusiasm, and expanding public outreach. New members are announced at virtually all of the monthly meetings, and longer-standing members are branching out into more challenging astronomy. The list of observers seeking Messier, NGC, Herschel, Lunar, and Explore the Universe certificates is increasing steadily, along with the count in their individual quests.

In 2008, the Centre conducted meetings on the second Friday of each month throughout the year. June's meeting was the annual Bar-B-Que, held at the Centre's observatory grounds at the Glenlea Research Station south of Winnipeg. The observatory site saw a small but steady use through the year, with monthly "Members' Nites" on the second Saturday of the month. The observatory survived another melt season without flooding, as low snow levels kept the Red River well below its banks.

For the lunar eclipse on February 20, the Centre set up a public observing session at the Forks (the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers) downtown. March saw our participation in Earth Hour and an ad hoc Messier Marathon for Centre members at the observatory; several members headed off to Arizona for what is becoming an annual pilgrimage. The June Bar-B-Que was moved into the city because of the threat of rain, but, since June nights are pretty much a waste of time because of the brief darkness, the lack of observing opportunities at the Bar-B-Que were barely noticed. August and September brought member participation in the Saskatchewan Summer Star Party and the Spruce Woods Star Party, and the best observing conditions of the year. In August, one public observing event was held at Bird's Hill Provincial Park, north of the city, and a second at Caddy Lake in the Whiteshell. Ralph Croning made a quick trip to Saskatchewan late in the year to look for pieces of the Buzzard Coulee meteorite, but came back empty-handed; another expedition will start in spring when the snow is gone.

After nearly 100 years of activity, the Centre finally adopted a set of By-Laws at the November meeting. It does not seem to have had an impact on the number of clear nights. Thanks to Ron Berard and Paul Trudel, the Centre's Web page underwent a redesign and renewal, and now looks ready for the next 100 years. The Centre's library was disposed of gradually, to be replaced by videos and DVDs for loan to the membership. The collection of "loaner" telescopes continued to grow, outstripping demand from our members, and so may have to be culled in the coming year. There is no charge for the use of loaner scopes for Centre members.

The informal astrophotography group had an active year, dividing clear skies between "the Pit," the "Dukes of Hazard Road," and Glenlea observatory. You'll have to come to Winnipeg to hear the story of how the sites got their names. Mike Karakas had his image of Saturn accepted as a part of the IYA poster display that is making its rounds across Canada. IYA planning took up a large part of the final months of the year, and the Centre is planning to introduce Winnipeggers and southern Manitobans to the night sky in a big way for 2009.

Jay Anderson,
Secretary

CENTRE TREASURERS' REPORTS FOR FISCAL YEAR—2008

		Belleville	Calgary	Charlottetown	Edmonton	Halifax	Hamilton	Kingston	Kitchener- Waterloo	London
REVENUE										
Membership	Membership Fees (Regular)		5,976	458	5,836	2,788	2,758	1,676	2,642	2,161
	Membership Fees (Youth)		663					27		
	Membership Fees (Basic surcharge)	938	3,558					367	1,170	
	Membership Fees (Special surcharge / Associates /Affiliates)		30	20				15		
	Life Membership Grants		30					22	110	
Donations / Fundraising	Donations				203	83	959	426	600	100
	Fundraising / Sponsorships / Grants		3,880	524	74,856		30	236	502	
Educational Activities / Materials										
Interest and Dividends		2	12	2	224	126		292	52	
Publication Sales	Sale of Observer's Handbooks		13	95		320		56		50
	Sale of Observer's Calendars		1,784		1,230	730	35	525	795	306
	Sale of Beginner's Observing Guides		105			79				
	Other Publication Sales									
Subscriptions	Astronomy / Sky & Telescope		16					43		
	Other									
Product Sales	RASC promo items		1,385			549		80	611	
	Other items		1,558					30		
Advertising			269					120		
General Assembly										
Events	Star Parties	1,206	882			7,680			140	
	Annual Dinner		1,925		1,020			-544		800
	Observatory site or equipment rentals / loans		995		180					
Miscellaneous			19	13				190		
TOTAL REVENUE		2,146	23,100	1,112	83,549	12,355	3,761	3,561	6,512	3,417
EXPENDITURES										
Library			456		430	11				
Publications	Newsletter		3,348		3,218	1,827		913		307
	Observer's Handbook					253				220
	Observer's Calendar		1,940		2,215	521			771	
	Beginner's Observing Guide					68		85		
	Other Publications				74			-8		
Events	Meetings		120		588	336	299			
	Star Parties	954	1,252			4,306				
	Annual Dinner	180	1,302	102	1,068				596	694
	Astronomy Day				107		991		393	
	Other Events	175	198	156	536					
Product Expenses	RASC promo items	42	3,274	221		702	389		106	
	Other items		108	67					206	
Advertising					1,799					
Travel	General Assembly and Council Meetings		714		1,070					150
	Speaker Travel Assistance		1,355						154	
Equipment and Supplies				158	330	26		64	1,306	34
Office Administration		80			234	137	136	192	186	126
General Expenses and Audit		11	208			27		590		
Educational Activities			155		786	884		492	1,213	
Insurance			1,987			1,064	1,538			
Awards and Donations				200	25,073	50		215	363	100
Observatory and Site Expenses			2,989		13,543	1,702	1,991	208		1,118
Depreciation										
Miscellaneous		70	1,112	50	1477	462	30	64		30
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		1,512	20,518	954	52,548	12,376	5,374	2,815	5,294	2,629
SURPLUS OR DEFICIT ON OPERATIONS		634	2,582	158	31,001	-21	-1,614	746	1,218	788
ASSETS	Liquid assets	3,311	34356	1,859	141,162	13,853	7,133	22,093	11,074	
	Capital assets	210	22,731			48,744	107,576	20,950	30,000	
LIABILITIES					3,907					

CENTRE TREASURERS' REPORTS FOR FISCAL YEAR—2008

		Mississauga	C. F. de Montréal	Montréal	New Brunswick	Niagara	Okanagan	Ottawa	Prince George	Québec	Regina
REVENUE											
Membership	Membership Fees (Regular)	2141	2180	1799	1426	1879	1705	7853	1246	1173	926
	Membership Fees (Youth)	69		14		110	55			32	19
	Membership Fees (Basic surcharge)			740		333	373		100		168
	Membership Fees (Special surcharge / Associates / Affiliates)	81				150				704	66
	Life Membership Grants										
Donations / Fundraising	Donations	50	615	-110		106	29,657	1,693	925	407	317
	Fundraising / Sponsorships / Grants			17,000		250	32,908		8,000		4,357
Educational Activities / Materials		2,000							1,741		
Interest and Dividends			36	1,369		188		544			1
Publication Sales	Sale of Observer's Handbooks					12					60
	Sale of Observer's Calendars	678		235		242	810	1,622	701	300	395
	Sale of Beginner's Observing Guides					30					
	Other Publication Sales					10					
Subscriptions	Astronomy / Sky & Telescope					458					
	Other										
Product Sales	RASC promo items				1,295	175	293			217	
	Other items	530	582	406		192			143		130
Advertising			240								
General Assembly											
Events	Star Parties				224				385		2,382
	Annual Dinner					1,520		2,828			
Observatory site or equipment rentals / loans							120	451			
Miscellaneous		324	214			74		20	182		194
TOTAL REVENUE		5,873	3,867	21,453	2,945	5,728	65,921	15,011	13,423	2,833	9,015
EXPENDITURES											
Library			37		264	50	53			12	
Publications	Newsletter		414	965	245	204	74	3,456	229		
	Observer's Handbook										
	Observer's Calendar	400			746	180	494	2,014		263	224
	Beginner's Observing Guide										
	Other Publications								282		
Events	Meetings					420	82	431		85	52
	Star Parties				132	25				142	1,212
	Annual Dinner				194	1,782		2,830			
	Astronomy Day										
	Other Events	388			649			792			
Product Expenses	RASC promo items					50	333			128	3,638
	Other items			824							367
Advertising					72			420	756		
Travel	General Assembly and Council Meetings			598	400		358	688	642		688
	Speaker Travel Assistance	1,000								165	
Equipment and Supplies		464				465	4,724	687	2,477		5,457
Office Administration			1,857	333		2	651	1,191	844	804	1,496
General Expenses and Audit		1,054		314		48			111		
Educational Activities					765				215	244	
Insurance			492				1,000	3,333	1,510		446
Awards and Donations			107					150			
Observatory and Site Expenses			173			2,114	35,028	497	7,486	952	403
Depreciation		168						9,534			
Miscellaneous			127	338		1,225		181	532	75	50
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		3,474	3,207	3,372	3,467	6,565	42,797	26,204	15,085	2,870	14,033
SURPLUS OR DEFICIT ON OPERATIONS		2,399	660	18,081	-522	-837	23,124	-11,193	-1,662	-37	-5,018
ASSETS	Liquid assets	6,170	4,637	93,494	4,031		38,332	35,176	11,040		4,282
	Capital assets	672	11,214	26,052			8,023	43,552	78,581		77,523
LIABILITIES		400	62					2,418			

CENTRE TREASURERS' REPORTS FOR FISCAL YEAR—2008

		St. John's	Sarnia	Saskatoon	Sunshine Coast	Thunder Bay	Toronto	Vancouver	Victoria	Windsor	Winnipeg
REVENUE											
Membership	Membership Fees (Regular)	904	440	2,015	3,872	907	13,041	5,387	3,488	3,130	3,181
	Membership Fees (Youth)							123			
	Membership Fees (Basic surcharge)	164						348			
	Membership Fees (Special surcharge / Associates / Affiliates)	10									
	Life Membership Grants						1,760	374			
Donations / Fundraising	Donations	45			12,506	757	17,811	139,521	2,750	1,253	365
	Fundraising / Sponsorships / Grants			781		255	16,667	281		349	3,781
Educational Activities / Materials							167				94
Interest and Dividends		3	0	483	95	131	3,015	9,115		2	
Publication Sales	Sale of Observer's Handbooks						145	664			
	Sale of Observer's Calendars	600	120		150	660	2,311	1,226		405	1,600
	Sale of Beginner's Observing Guides							551			
	Other Publication Sales							95	720	24	
Subscriptions	Astronomy / Sky & Telescope						-191				
	Other	25									
Product Sales	RASC promo items						937				
	Other items									304	
Advertising				115							
General Assembly							-292				
Events	Star Parties			15,204							1,200
	Annual Dinner										
Observatory site or equipment rentals / loans							4,710	146		500	
Miscellaneous							1,425			468	446
TOTAL REVENUE		1,751	560	20,359	16,800	3,460	61,339	157,998	8,497	4,956	10,790
EXPENDITURES											
Library											
Publications	Newsletter						2,947	836			176
	Observer's Handbook						702	610			
	Observer's Calendar	475			139		2,227	1,031		123	1,028
	Beginner's Observing Guide							509			
	Other Publications							95			
Events	Meetings	106			195		896	36		1,127	384
	Star Parties	171		9,017				861			
	Annual Dinner				44					100	
	Astronomy Day		42							50	245
	Other Events				350	628	86			102	
Product Expenses	RASC promo items						-164				
	Other items							751			1456
Advertising					144						
Travel	General Assembly and Council Meetings	125	581			300			201		
	Speaker Travel Assistance				150		904	2,773			
Equipment and Supplies								97	6859		143
Office Administration				827	217	334	4,736	630	335	95	125
General Expenses and Audit			5		256	30	2,775	121	407		
Educational Activities				268			2,343	454			
Insurance				1,100							955
Awards and Donations		150	30				196	438	722		1,025
Observatory and Site Expenses				32			17,910	18,228		3,076	900
Depreciation							17,862	2,305			
Miscellaneous		125		1,603		570	2378	2	103	527	182
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		1,152	658	13,839	1,495	2,015	55,798	29,777	13,486	5,200	6,619
SURPLUS OR DEFICIT ON OPERATIONS		599	-98	6520	15,305	1,446	5,541	128,221	-4,989	-244	4,171
ASSETS	Liquid assets	23,658	3,268	32,265			11,259	362,253	-240	3,377	11,448
	Capital assets			18,372			396,631	13,915	20,852	80,000	1
LIABILITIES				267			208,868				

OFFICERS AND COUNCILS OF THE CENTRES—2008

BELLEVILLE CENTRE

c/o Greg Lisk
11 Robert Dr
Trenton ON K8V 6P2
www.rascbelleville.ca
webmaster@rascbelleville.ca

President: Greg Lisk
Vice-President: David Cotterell
Treasurer: Garth Penn
Secretary: Joanne Burns
National Representative: Don Town
Webmaster: Les Dempsey
Newsletter Editor: Les Dempsey
Observing Chair: Greg Lisk
Events Co-ordinator: Andrew Mason
Librarian: Antonina Vasilieva

CALGARY CENTRE

c/o TELUS World of Science Calgary
PO Box 2100 Station M Location 73
Calgary AB T2P 2M5
http://calgary.rasc.ca

Honorary President: Dr. David Fry
President: Roland Dechesne
First Vice President: Steve Donaldson
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Secretary: Patrick Matsalla
Treasurer: Dick Lowndes
National Representatives: Ross Laurie
Ryan May

Past President: Larry McNish
Webmaster: Larry McNish
Librarian: Susan Yeo
Councillors: Greg Bridger
Brian Fenerty-
Glenn Hawley
Keith Johnstone
Brian Lucas
Ryan May
Jack Milliken
Susan Yeo

CHARLOTTETOWN CENTRE

c/o Brian Gorveatt
316 North Queen Elizabeth Dr
Charlottetown PE C1A 3B5
(902) 394-4057
www.rasc.ca/charlottetown
rasc_charlottetown@xfer.s5.com

President: Mike Critchely
Vice-President: Mark Walker
Secretary: Ann Greyborn
Treasurer: Brian Gorveatt
National Representative: Garth Arsenault
Past President: Clair Perry
Webmaster: Brian Gorveatt

EDMONTON CENTRE

c/o TELUS World of Science
11211-142 St
Edmonton AB T5M 4A1
www.edmontonrasc.com
contact@edmontonrasc.com

Council Executive
Honorary President: Dr. Douglas Hube
President: Sherry Campbell
Past President: Krista Stefan
Vice-President: Orla Aaquist
General Secretary: Donna-Lee May
Treasurer: Mark MacDonald
National Representative: Alister Ling
Public Ed. Director: vacant
Fundraising Coordinator: Franklin Loehde
Observing Group Director: vacant
Councillors: Harris Christian
Bruce McCurdy
Sheldon Helbert
Richard
Vanderberg

Internal Comm. Officer: Ross Sinclair
Observing Group Director: vacant
Membership Secretary: Massimo Torri
New Member Advisor: Murray Paulson

HALIFAX CENTRE

PO Box 31011
Halifax NS B3K 5T9
(902) 827-5977
http://halifax.rasc.ca
halifax@rasc.ca

Honorary President: Dr. Roy Bishop
President: Andrea Misner
1st Vice-President: Wes Howie
Secretary: Chris Young
Treasurer: Pat Kelly
National Representative: Pat Kelly
Librarian: Robert Bussieres
Observing Chair: John Liddard
Nova Notes Editor: Quinn Smith
Councillor: Paul Heath
Councillor: Sean Dzafovic

HAMILTON CENTRE

576 - Concession 7E
(corner of 7E and Milborough Town Line)
PO Box 1223
Waterdown ON L0R 2H0
(905) 689-0266 (observatory)
www.hamiltonrasc.ca
secretary@hamiltonrasc.ca

President: John Williamson
Vice-President: Paul G. Brandon
Treasurer: Andy Blanchard
Secretary (Acting): Paul G. Brandon
National Representative: John Williamson

KINGSTON CENTRE

PO Box 1793
Kingston ON K7L 5J6
(613) 377-6029
www.rasc.ca/kingston
kingston@rasc.ca

Honorary President: Dr. David Levy
President: Kevin Kell
Vice-President: Susan Gagnon
Secretary: Steve Hart
Treasurer: Kim Hay
National Representative: vacant
Librarian: David Maguire
Newsletter Editor: Walter MacDonald
Past President: Kim Hay

KITCHENER-WATERLOO CENTRE

133 Weber Street North, Suite #3-127
Waterloo ON N2J 3G9
(519) 623-4865
http://kw.rasc.ca
pclarke0184@rogers.com

President: Wayne Joslin
1st Vice-President: Brian Hollander
2nd Vice President: Marv Warkentin
Treasurer: Peter Clarke
Secretary: Phil Lacasse
National Representative: Chris Beckett
Past President: Paul Schumacher
Webmaster: Brian Hollander
Librarian: Sergio Mammoliti
Astronomy Day/Star Party Co-ordinator/
International Year of Astronomy Co-ordinator
Cari Gerow

LONDON CENTRE

PO Box 842 Station B
London ON N6A 4Z3
www.rasc.ca/London
www.astro.uwo.ca/~rasc
dmccarter@sympatico.ca
pjedicke@fanshawec.on.ca

Honorary President: Peter Jedicke
President: David McCarter
Vice-President: Patrick Whelan
Secretary: Rick Saunders
Treasurer: Bill Gardner
National Representative: Craig Levine
Webmaster: Rick Saunders
Librarian & Outreach Co-ordinator:
Robert Duff
Observers' Chair: Peter Raine
ATM Chair: Mike Hanes
Councillor: David L. Clark

MISSISSAUGA CENTRE

PO Box 98011
2126 Burnhamthorpe Rd W
Mississauga ON L5L 5V4
www.mississauga.rasc.ca
inquiries@mississauga.rasc.ca

President: Randy Attwood
Vice-President: Ian McGregor
Secretary: Chris Malick
Treasurer: Vic Cooper
National Representative: Ian McGregor
Membership Secretary: John Marchese
Councillors: Robert Anderson
William Callaha
Terry Hardman
Jim Jackson
John Marchese
Leslie Strike

CENTRE FRANCOPHONE DE MONTRÉAL

CP 206 Station St-Michel
Montréal QC H2A 3L9
(514) 201-3889
www.lasam.ca
info@lasam.ca

President: Michel Boucher
Vice-President: Patrice Scattolin
Secretary: Serge-Antoine
Melanson
Treasurer: Patrice Scattolin
National Representative: Patrice Scattolin

MONTRÉAL CENTRE

PO Box 1155 Station B
Montréal QC H3B 3K9
www.rascmontreal.org
info@rascmontreal.org

Honorary President: Dr. David Levy
President: Andrew Fazekas
Vice-President: Bettina Forget
Secretary: Kevin Kembal
Recording Secretary: Richard Latulipe
Treasurer: Brian Pritchard
Librarian: Lloyd Coffin
Director of the Observatory: Chris Novak
Director of Observational Activities:
Frank Tomaras
National Representative: Frank Tomaras
Webmaster: Bettina Forget
Directors Without Portfolio:
David Brown
Mario Di Carlo
Ariele Wagner

NEW BRUNSWICK CENTRE

70 Ian Street
Saint John NB E2J 3K7
www.nb.rasc.ca

President: Peter Jensen
1st Vice-President: Curt Nason
2nd Vice-President: Marc Arsenault
Secretary: June MacDonald
Treasurer: Emma MacPhee
Councillors: Gerry Allain
James Ayles
Ted Dunphy
Chris Weadick

Past President: Paul Gray
Web site Chair: Tim Doucette
Newsletter Editor: Paul Gray
Light Pollution Chair: Chris Weadick
Equipment Chair: Eldon Rogers
Library Chair: Ted Dunphy
Education Chair: Don Kelly

NIAGARA CENTRE

PO Box 4040
St Catharines ON L2R 7S3
<http://www.astronomyniagara.com>

President: Brian Pihack
Vice-President: Stan Sammy
Secretary: Philip Downey
Treasurer: Dave Stremlaw
National Representative: Joe Otonicar
Past President: Stan Sammy
Webmaster: Bill Macsween
Librarian: Darlene Sloggett
Board of Directors: Darlene Marano
Glen Pidsadnick
Joyce Sims
Darlene Sloggett
Dark Skies Chairman: Wayne Liebau

Members' Observing Coordinator:
Mark Roberts
Presidents' Council: John Vanderbrugge
Ray Evoy
Denis Maheu
Dan Frigault

Beginner's Workshop Committee:
Stan Sammy
Brian Pihack
Public Relations: Brian Pihack
Observatory Director: Les Marczi
Public Observing Coordinator:
Michael Panucci
Whirlpool Editor: Philip Downey
Hospitality: Pat Sammy

OKANAGAN CENTRE

PO Box 20119 TCM
Kelowna BC V1Y 9H2
www.ocrasc.ca

Elected Officers:
President: Greg Dean
Past President: Jim Tisdale
Vice President Kelowna: Archie Christie
Vice-President Vernon: Wayne Willett
Secretary: Grant Rice
Treasurer: Zoli Boda
National Representative: David Player
Directors Kelowna: Frank Stariha
Dave Gamble
Directors Vernon: Jim Kanester
John Karlsson
Bryan Kelso

Appointed Directors:
Webmaster: Andrew Bennett
Newsletter Editor: David Player
Librarian: Colleen O'Hare
Public Education Directors:
Kelowna: Colleen O'Hare
Vernon: Frank Stariha
Director of Telescopes: Guy Mackie
Focus Newsletter Editor: David Player

OTTAWA CENTRE

PO Box 33012
1363 Woodroffe Ave
Ottawa ON K2C 3Y9
www.ottawa.rasc.ca

President: Paul Harrison
Vice President: Al Scott
Secretary: Chris Teron
Treasurer: Hans Brouwer
Councillors: Yves Demers
Stephen Nourse
Carmen Rush
Meeting Chair: Atilla Danko
Past President: Charles O'Dale
National Representatives: Debra Ceravolo
Barry Matthews
Charles O'Dale

Council Appointed Positions

Stan Mott Librarian: Estelle Rother
WebMaster: Richard McDonald
AstroNotes Editor: Paul WefersBettink
F.L.O. Director: Al Seaman
SMARTScope Leader: Doug George
Light-Pollution Abatement: Gary Boyle
Public Outreach: Mike Moghadam
Hospitality: Art and Anne Fraser
Membership: Art Fraser
Ted Bean Telescope Library: Al Scott

PRINCE GEORGE CENTRE

7365 Tedford Rd
Prince George BC V2N 6S2
(250) 964-3600
www.vts.bc.ca/pgrasc
pgcentre@yahoo.com

President: Gilbert Self
Vice President: Maurice Sluka
Secretary: Glen Harris
Treasurer: Brian Battersby
National Representative: Brian Battersby
Past President: Brian Battersby
Webmaster: Brian Battersby
Members at Large: Patrick Byrne
Hugh Kennedy
Robert (Bob) Nelson
Trevor Padgett
Wayne Sanders
Blair Stunder
Jim D. Toews
Jim Van Doren
Doug Wayland

CENTRE DE QUÉBEC

2000, boul Montmorency
Québec QC G1J 5E7
(418) 660-2815
www.sracquebec.ca
info@sracquebec.ca

Président: Stéphane Dumas
Vice-Président: Guy Campeau
Trésorier: Pierre Desrosiers
Représentant national: Pierre Desrosiers
Secrétaire: Daniel Tardif

REGINA CENTRE

PO Box 20014
Regina SK S4P 4J7
(306) 751-0128
www.astronomyregina.ca
info@astronomyregina.ca

President: Vance Petriew
Vice President: Shane Ludtke
Secretary: Shawn Drew
Treasurer: Paul Meyer
National Representative: Ross Parker
Past President: Alden Foraie
Webmaster: Shawn Drew
Librarian: Ross Parker
Finance: Kevin Gallant
Kalium Observatory and
Millennium Telescope: Ron Haughey
Darryl Dormuth
Davin Deep-Sky Observatory: Dave Barrie
Equipment Director: Alden Foraie

ST. JOHN'S CENTRE

c/o Randy Dodge
206 Frecker Dr
St John's NL A1E 5H9
www.sji.ca/rasc
rasc@sji.ca

President: Doug Grouchy
Vice-President: Randy Dodge
Secretary: David Bourgeois
Treasurer: Joe English
National Representative: Garry Dymond
Past President: Garry Dymond
Webmaster: Craig Peterman
Librarian: Fred Smith
Observing Director: Shawn Martin
Equipment Director: Chris Stevenson
Education Director: Greg Baggs
Membership Director: Robert Babb
Park Observatory Liason: Gary Case

SARNIA CENTRE

c/o Marty Cogswell
6723 Pheasant Lane
RR1 Camlachie ON N0N 1E0
http://web.me.com/richardweatherston/Sarnia_RASC/Welcome.html

President: Ralph De Jong
Secretary: Martin Cogswell
Treasurer: Brendan Flemming
National Representative: Ron Warren

SASKATOON CENTRE

PO Box 317 RPO University
Saskatoon SK S7N 4J8
(306) 857-4707
www.usask.ca/psychology/sarty/rasc
mclancy@sasktel.net

President: Barb Wright
Vice-President: Jeff Swick
Secretary: Al Hartridge
Treasurer: Norma Jensen
Past President: Garry Stone
Newsletter Co-Editors: Christine Kulyk
Tenho Tuomi

National Representative: Les Dickson
Councillors:
Events Co-ordinator: Patricia Gakis
Fundraising Co-ordinator: open
Membership Co-ordinator: Mark de Jong
Observing Co-ordinator: Larry Scott
Sleaford Observatory Site Co-ordinator:
Darrell Chatfield

SSSP Co-ordinator: Barb Wright
Councillors at large: Jim Young
Les Dickson
Darrell Chatfield
Librarian:
Photographer/Archivist: George Charpontier

Meeting Room Co-ordinator:

Graham Hartridge

New and Distant Members: James Gorkof

Webmaster: Gord Sarty

SUNSHINE COAST CENTRE

Box 577
Sechelt BC V0N 3A0
www.coastastronomy.com

President: William Clark
Vice-President: Neil Sandy
Treasurer: Debra MacWilliam
Secretary: Martin Henry
Directors at Large: Bette Chadwick
Gary Little
Serge Planidin
Lyle Secton

THUNDER BAY CENTRE

286 Trinity Cres
Thunder Bay ON P7C 5V6
(807) 475-3406
www.tbrasc.org
astronomer@tbaytel.net

Executive Positions:

President: Bob McLean
Vice-President: Doug Stuart
Secretary: Ian Neely
Treasurer: Bridgitte Schaeffer
National Representative: Dave Gallant
Past President: Randy McAllister

Appointed Positions:

Webmaster: Ed Kucbel
Librarian: John Bakkeland
Membership: Ted Bronson
Programs/Media: Ted Bronson

TORONTO CENTRE

c/o Ontario Science Centre
770 Don Mills Rd
North York ON M3C 1T3
(416) 724-7827 [416-724-STAR]
www.rasc.ca/toronto

Honorary President: Dr. Roberto Abraham
President: Dr. B. Ralph Chou
1st Vice-President: Tony Horvatin
2nd Vice-President: Ivan Semeniuk
Secretary: Charles Darrow
Treasurer: David Parfett
Recorder: Eric Briggs
Past President: Guy Nason
Councillors: Geoff Brown
Sara Poirier
Brenda Shaw
Paul Mortfield
Leslie Harvey
Tim Hunter
Dietmar Kupke
Scott Masterton
Peter Hiscocks

National Representatives: Charles Darrow
Tony Horvatin
David Parfett

National Alternates: Katrina Ince-Lum
Dietmar Kupke

Public Affairs Co-ordinator: Karen Mortfield
Information Technology: Blake Nancarrow

VANCOUVER CENTRE

c/o HR Macmillan Space Centre
1100 Chestnut St
Vancouver BC V6J 3J9
<http://qp.pcis.com/QuickPlace/rascvan/Main.nsf>

President: Jason Rickerby
Vice President: TBD
Past President: Pomponia Martinez
Treasurer: Bruce MacDonald
Secretary: Howard Trottier
National Representative: Cameron Widen
Director of Telescopes: Bob Parry
Merchandise: Doug Montgomery
Librarian: William Fearon
Membership: Suzanna Nagy
Nova Editor: Gordon Farrell
Webmaster: Robert Reppel

VICTORIA CENTRE

2093 Byron Street
Victoria BC V8R 1:8
(250) 508-3192
www.victoria.rasc.ca
treasurer@victoria.rasc.ca

President: John McDonald
1st Vice-President: Lauri Roche
2nd Vice-President: Sherry Buttner
Treasurer: Li-Ann Skibo
Secretary & Recorder: Nelson Walker
Librarian: Charles Banville
Telescopes, LPA, IYA2009: Sid Sidhu
Past President: Joe Carr
National Representative: Chris Gainor
Skynews Editor: Scott Mair
New Members Liaison: Bruno Quenneville
Webmaster: Joe Carr
Members at Large: Bill Almond
(Centre Historian)
Sandy Barta
Dave Bennett
Dr. Jim Hesser
(NRC Liaison)
David Lee
Steve Pacholuk
Dr. Colin Scarfe
(Univ of Victoria
Liaison)
Malcolm Scrimger

WINDSOR CENTRE

c/o Ken Garber
2831 Alexandra Ave
Windsor ON N9E 2J8
www.rascwindsor.com

Honorary President: Dr. William Baylis
President: Dr. Pierre Boulos
1st Vice-President: Paul Pratt
2nd Vice President: Tina Chichkan
Secretary: David Panton
Treasurer: Ken Garber
National Representative: Mike Mastronardi
Past President: Steve Mastellotto
Webmaster: Steve Mastellotto
Librarian: Rick Marion

Councillors: Dan Anzovino
Randy
Groundwater
Sue Iihola
Steve Pellarin
Paul Preney
Ken Roung
Donna Ronconi
Ken Roung
Susan Sawyer-
Beaulieu
Joady Ulrich

Appointed Positions:
Light Pollution Abatement: Dan Taylor
Recording Secretary: David Panton
Past President: Steve Mastellotto

WINNIPEG CENTRE

PO Box 2694
Winnipeg MB R3C 4B3
www.winnipeg.rasc.ca
rasc@winnipeg.rasc.ca

President: Peter Toth
Vice-President: Kris Keller
Secretary: Jay Anderson
Treasurer: Mike Stephens
National Representative: Mike Stephens
Past President: Ron Berard
Webmaster: Paul Trudel
Librarian: Fred Wood
Councillors: Kevin Black
Ralph Croning
Roger Todd
Marlene Wallace
Gail Wise

Winnicentrics Editor: Gail Wise
Observatory Director: Ray Andrejowich
Observatory Bookings: Kevin Black
Gallery Administrator: Ron Berard

2009 AWARD WINNERS

Service Award	Robert Duff (London Centre) Kim Hay (Kingston Centre) Richard Huziak (Saskatoon Centre) Walter MacDonald (Kingston Centre) Al Seaman (Ottawa Centre) Patrice Scattolin (Centre Francophone de Montréal) Alan Whitman (Okanagan Centre) Clint Shannon (Halifax)(deceased)	Chant Medal	(not awarded)
		Ken Chilton Prize	Brian Battersby (Prince George)
		The Plaskett Medal	Catherine Lovekin (St. Mary's University, Halifax)
		Simon Newcomb Award	James Edgar (Regina)

MESSIER CERTIFICATE

Keith Johnstone (Calgary)
Donna-Lee May (Edmonton)
Terry Leeder (Toronto)
Robert Lewis (Niagara)
Doug Wayland (Prince George)
Brent Burlingham (Saskatoon)

NGC CERTIFICATE

Steve Meister (Unattached)
Sean Ceaser (Winnipeg)
Adam Clayson (Toronto)
Edward Hitchcock (Toronto)

DEEP SKY CHALLENGE

Bill Wier (Victoria)

EXPLORE THE UNIVERSE CERTIFICATE

Katherine Peterson (Calgary)	Edward Essex (Thunder Bay)
Scott Hanwell (Calgary)	Ognian Kabranov (Kitchener-Waterloo)
Ray Miller (Thunder Bay)	David Ross (Toronto)

ISABEL WILLIAMSON LUNAR OBSERVING CERTIFICATE

Ted Bronson (Thunder Bay)	Glen Harris (Prince George)
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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 2000, 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.

2001 Richard Huziak (Saskatoon)
2002 Dr. Roy Bishop (Halifax)
2006 Ed Majden (Victoria)
2008 Dr. Geoff Gaherty (Toronto)

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 recognition of a significant piece of astronomical work carried out or published recently.

Peter Ceravolo (Ottawa),
Paul Boltwood (Ottawa),
Jon Buchanan (Ottawa),
Glenn LeDrew (Ottawa)
2005 Attila Danko (Ottawa)
2008 Ed Briggs (Toronto)
Debra Ceravolo (Ottawa)
Peter Ceravolo (Ottawa)
Lou Cox (Ottawa)
Steve Gauthier (London)

2001 Michael Boschat (Halifax)
2002 Vance Petriew (Regina)
2003 Doug George (Ottawa),

Doug George (Ottawa)
Paul Gray (New Brunswick)
Walter MacDonald (Kingston)
Jack Newton (Victoria)
Ajai Sehgal (Ottawa)
Jennifer Tigner (Victoria)
Dave Toth (London)

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.

2000 Alexei Razoumov (British Columbia)
2001 Peter Brown (Western)

2002 Edward W. Thommes (Queen's)
2003 Tracy Webb (Toronto)
2004 Jo-Anne C. Brown (Toronto)
2005 Christian Marois (Montréal)
2006 Lauren A. MacArthur (British Columbia)
2008 Frédéric Grandmont (Université Laval)

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.

- | | | | |
|------|--|------|--|
| 2000 | Phil Johnson (Calgary) | 2005 | J. Randy Attwood (Toronto),
Dr. Robert Garrison (Toronto) |
| 2001 | John Rousom (London),
David G. Turner (Halifax) | 2006 | Ted Bronson (Thunder Bay),
Mark Kaye (Hamilton),
Kevin Kell (Kingston) |
| 2002 | (Not awarded) | 2007 | Rajiv Gupta (Vancouver)
Bruce McCurdy (Edmonton) |
| 2003 | David McCarter (London) | 2008 | Dennis Grey (Toronto)
Leslie Harvey (Toronto)
Tony Horvatin (Toronto) |
| 2004 | David Clark (London),
Jim Failes (Okanagan Centre),
Art Fraser (Ottawa Centre),
Guy Nason (Toronto Centre),
Stan Runge (Winnipeg Centre) | | |

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) | 2003 | Alister Ling (Edmonton) |
| 1999 | Terence Dickinson (Toronto) | 2004 | Mary Lou Whitehorne (Halifax) |
| 2001 | Dan Falk (Toronto) | 2006 | Dr. Warren Finlay (Edmonton) |
| 2002 | Dr. David Levy (Kingston) | 2008 | Alan Dyer (Unattached) |

HONORARY MEMBERS OF THE RASC

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Dr. R.B. Baldwin (United States) | Dr. Stephen W. Hawking (United Kingdom) | Mr. Leif Robinson (United States) |
| Dr. David L. Crawford (United States) | Dr. Jean Meeus (Belgium) | Dr. A.R. Sandage (United States) |
| Dr. A. Dollfus (France) | Dr. Patrick Moore (United Kingdom) | Mr. William Sheehan (United States) |
| Rev. Robert Evans (Australia) | Dr. Jay Pasachoff (United States) | Dr. Carolyn Shoemaker (United States) |
| Dr. Owen Gingerich (United States) | Dr. P.J.E. Peebles (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.

Honorary Presidents

- 1997-2001 Jack Locke
2001-2005 Roy Bishop
2005-2009 Robert Garrison

Presidents

- 1998-2000 Randy Attwood
2000-2002 Robert Garrison
2002-2004 Rajiv Gupta
2004-2006 Peter Jedicke
2006-2008 Scott Young
2008- Dave Lane

Secretaries

- 1999-2005 Kim Hay
2005-2008 Stan Runge
2008- James Edgar

Treasurers

- 1998-2004 Michael Watson
2004-2006 David Clark
2008-2008 Alan Whitman
2008- Mayer Tchelebon

GENERAL ASSEMBLIES—2000 TO 2008

The following Centres hosted the General Assembly from 2000 to 2008:

- | | | | |
|------|------------|------|-----------|
| 2000 | Winnipeg | 2005 | Okanagan |
| 2001 | London | 2006 | Ottawa |
| 2002 | Montréal | 2007 | Calgary |
| 2003 | Vancouver | 2008 | Toronto |
| 2004 | St. John's | 2009 | Saskatoon |

The following Centre will host the General Assembly in the future:

- 2010 New Brunswick