

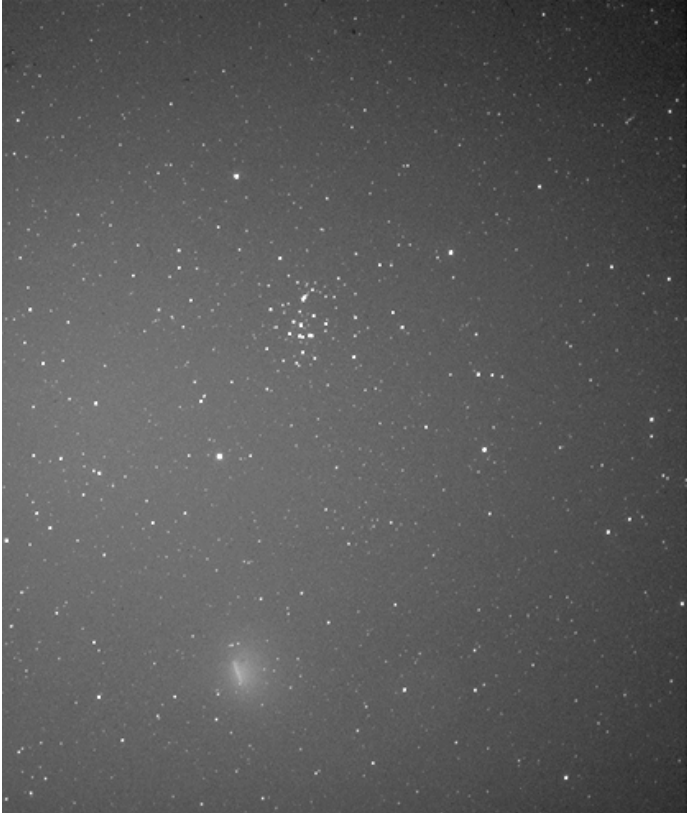
THE CELESTIAL OBSERVER

newsletter of the

Oshawa Astronomical Society

Vol. 1 No. 2

October 1984



Comet IRAS-Araki-Alcock passed very close to the Beehive star cluster in Cancer on May 11, 1983. Photo by Walter MacDonald using a 135mm f2.8 lens, Ektachrome 400, and a fifteen minute exposure.

Editor's Notes

The OAS has just gone through a period of dormancy which is only now just ending. The last issue of TCO was published in December 1982 and the last OAS meeting took place in August, 1984, fully a year after the previous meeting.

Astronomical organizations in Durham Region have traditionally been a boom and bust phenomenon. I believe, however, that the OAS will be a lasting phenomenon because no other organization has been able to survive its dormancy -- and we have! In an upcoming TCO I will discuss the history of Astronomy in Durham Region.

Right now, I would like to stress that the life -- or death -- of the OAS rests with the membership. Only an active and contributing membership will keep the OAS alive. Especially in demand, for example, are people willing to speak at our meetings. If you would like to speak at a meeting, call Kim Kanstein at 000-0000.

Let's see the OAS really grow in strength in the coming years. As always,

Laete Observes!



Walter MacDonald, Editor.

Increasing Your Astro-Efficiency (& Comfort)

One of the biggest problems facing many observational amateur astronomers today is finding time to observe the sky. One way of finding this time is to more efficiently use your already available observing time. Unfortunately, many of us still use up valuable time hauling our equipment out to our site, setting it up, taking it down, and hauling it back again. As well, observing is not always very comfortable, for one reason or another. It all adds up to wasted time. Here are a few suggestions on how you to can increase your efficiency:

1. Keep your observing site and equipment as close together as possible. If you usually observe on the grounds around the house, and have a secure garage, try leaving your equipment set up (or

packed) in the garage. Not only does this save on set up time, but also it saves on thermal equalization time in the winter.

2. Install a permanent pier at your site. A pier is just a steel pipe or equivalent sunk at least two feet into the ground and set in concrete. It serves as a super-stable tripod of whatever height you make it. Building a raised floor around the pier will increase your comfort dramatically, and take you a step closer to a full observatory.

3. Build a roll-off building. This is a structure, on tracks, just big enough to contain your assembled equipment. To observe, just open one wall (built to act as a door) and push the building away from your equipment.

4. Build a roll-off roof observatory. This is a building big enough for you and your equipment to fit comfortably inside. As the name implies, the roof is on a track assembly. To observe, just unlatch the roof and push it away. Being within four walls protects you from stray light and wind a real plus during the winter. If you want to build one in a single day, just modify an aluminum garden shed.

5. Build a domed observatory. Although more expensive and difficult to construct, it can be the ultimate in comfort, providing almost total protection from the elements.

At present, five OAS members have used at least one of these ideas, and five OAS members can't be wrong!! Mike Cook has a domed observatory and pier; Ghislain Chabot has a domed observatory; Steve Chomniak has a pier with surrounding floor; Kim Kanstein has a pier in his back yard and is working on one for the cottage; and Walter MacDonald has two piers, one in his back yard and the other at his domed observatory currently under construction at his farm.

The OAS Executive

Responsibilities

PRESIDENT:	Kim Kanstein	000-0000	meeting enquiries
V.P.	Don Jamieson	000-0000	public relations

SECRETARY- Mirko Mocnik
TREASURER

000-0000

OAS documents,
finances, books
meetings

The Celestial Observer

EDITOR : Walter MacDonald 000-0000
000 XXXXXXXXXXX XX., Oshawa, Ont. XXX XXX

SKYWATCH: October - December 1984

(All data from the Observer's Handbook 1984)

THE MOON

October	1	First Quarter
	9	Full Moon -- Hunters' Moon
	17	Last Quarter
	24	NEW MOON
	31	First Quarter
November Moon	8	Full Moon -- Frosty Moon, or Beaver
	15	Last Quarter
	22	NEW MOON
	30	First Quarter
December	8	Full Moon -- Long Night Moon
	15	Last Quarter
	22	NEW MOON
	30	First Quarter

METEOR SHOWERS			Moon	Rate	Speed
October	21	ORIONIDS	New	25/hr	66 km/s
November	3	SOUTH TAURIDS	FQ	15/hr	28 km/s
	17	LEONIDS	LQ	15/hr	71 km/s
December	14	GEMINIDS	LQ	50/hr	35 km/s

OAS STAR PARTIES

OAS star parties are held at Long Sault Conservation Area, usually as close as possible to new moon. For dates of star parties, come to one of our meetings, or contact one of the OAS Executive (phone numbers elsewhere in this issue).