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Monthly Newsletter
EDMONTON CENTRE, RASC

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SHelter FROM THE COLD: No, winter isn't upon us yet; but already he has sent us a few warnings of things to come in the not too distant future. This year, however, our Edmonton observers are not going to spend their hours shivering in a cold, and we do mean cold, observatory building while waiting their turn for the use of one of the three telescopes. The reason why? Simple. We now have a meeting room on the observatory grounds. All summer a crew of "workmen" from the centre's big bag of observers spent a few "idle hours" here-and-there, mostly there, renovating and decorating the inside of an old hut which the University officials allocated for the use of the centre until the observatory is moved some time in the future. At the present time the main part of the building, the room that isn't the vestibule, has been completely painted and with the addition of a set of curtains on its two windows will be completed. It is hoped that before the first lecture in October that the building will be completely decorated and that the excess paint cans, brushes, and other equipment usually associated with the trade of decorating will have been removed from the site.

WELCOME BACK: Well now that the summer holiday season is over and all things are back to normal, we hope that we will be seeing more of the old familiar faces around the astronomical campfires of the autumn season. Most of the faithful are back as the call of the school bell and the irate employers win out over the peace of the holiday just passed, but there are exceptions as both Dr. Grayson-Smith and Arthur Dalton are yet to be heard from. A hearty "Welcome Back" to all of you from all of us.

METEORS AND METEORITES: On August 12-13 a crew of nine observers gathered at the observatory to observe the Persid Meteor Shower, and observe they did! In the interval between 10 PM and 3 AM they plotted a grand total of 326 meteors, only 27 of them not belonging to the Persid Shower. Time-outs were taken at various intervals during the evening during which time warm coffee was served, and welcomed by all present. Of the group of nine present only one did not stay right through until dawn, and even he was tempted to do so. Present were Marcel Dalton, William Hruddy, Pat Kehoe, Franklin Loehde, Ian McLennan, Earl Milton, John Mandrusiak, Myrna Mowet, and Laurie Sterling.

A third attempt to recover the meteorite at Seba Beach will be made in about one weeks time using a mine detector, loaned to the centre by the army, and two "skin divers" using aqualung gear. More information in the next issue of STAR-DUST.

AURORA: With the passage of August into the past, leaving a record of 19 auroral displays--the high for the year, our aurora observers are digging in for the always good month of September. Over the summer holidays our aurora observers did not relax--We hope; and although the returns are incomplete as yet, the totals look promising to say the least. A total of 60 reports have been received covering the 19 displays in August and the 9 in July. Five monthly summaries have also been returned for these months, two from Franklin Loehde and Earl Milton and one from Arthur Dalton observing from Waterways. Separate reports of the displays were contributed by:-- Arthur Dalton (3,18); William Hrudehy (1,2); Pat Kehoe (2,7); Franklin Loehde (2,3); Dick Loehde (0,1); Ian McLennan (1,1); John Mandrusiak (3,6); Earl Milton (4, 18); Don Morrison (1,0); and Bill Taylor (0,3). We are glad to welcome to our corps of aurora observers Messrs Hrudehy, Morrison, and Taylor; may your stay with us be long and yield us many reports.

LUNAR DIVISION: At a recent meeting of the observation committee it was decided to abolish the Photographic Division as a self-sustaining observational division on the grounds that it was actually not separate but merely a part of the other divisions. In lieu of this Ian McLennan, former chairman of the now defunct Photographic Division, was without a position. It was decided that having both the Solar and Lunar Divisions under one chairman, Franklin Loehde, was too much for one man so Ian McLennan was made chairman of the new Lunar Division. Without any hesitation Ian went right to work in an effort to revitalize his new division, and in the early days of this month attempts were made to observe two lunar occultations and the "Lunar Bridge". Needless to say all three attempts were hindered by the continuous cloud cover which blankets the "Sunny Alberta" night skies.

SUN SPOTS AND FACULAE: The solar activity continues to gain momentum as the year passes and so does the ardour and enthusiasm of our observers. In the month of June a total of 103 observations of the sun were made by John Brown, Noel Boisvert, Franklin Loehde, John Mandrusiak, and Don Morrison. They reported a total of 470 spots and 43 groups for the month, with an average of 15.7 spots per day. July afforded them another good month as they plotted a total of 309 spots and 54 groups during the month, with a daily average of 11 spots. Our five sun spot observers also filed faculae reports for the two months, reporting 36 groups in June and 25 groups in July. Earl Milton continues to report naked-eye sun spots and managed to make two observations of one spot, June 16 and June 18. The remainder of his June and July observations were negative. Worthy of special mention is that Johnny Mandrusiak saw his 1000th sun spot on June 11.

MESSIER CLUB: This summer has seen a sharp rise in interest among the centre's observers in locating the 109 objects in Messier's Catalogue of Clusters and Nebulae. Our "Messier Club" now has a membership of nine. Between them a total of 456 objects have been located to date. Three members have found over 80 of the objects, three have between 40 and 80 of them, and the remaining three have found between 1 and 40 objects. A complete list of scores will appear soon in STARDUST.