



BUFFALO ASTRONOMICAL ASSOCIATION INC.
BUFFALO MUSEUM OF SCIENCE
HUMBOLDT PARKWAY
BUFFALO NEW YORK 14211

THE SPECTRUM

OCTOBER 1968

OCTOBER MEETING: For our second meeting of the new season (October 11, 8 PM) we welcome back an old friend from Rochester, N.Y., Mr. Ralph Dakin, who will describe "Tools of the Astronomer." We are happy to welcome Mr. Ralph Dakin!

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IN MEMORIAM: EDWARD A. STOKLOSA, 1918 - 1968.

It is with deepest regret that we record the passing of one of our most active members - Ed Stoklosa, who died suddenly, September 15, 1968. Ed served on our Board of Directors from 1965-1967, and he was chairman of the Nominating Committee in 1966. But his main contribution to our Association was the completion of the 12-inch Newstead reflector, particularly its massive mounting. Largely due to his untiring efforts our Association was able to install the finished telescope in the Newstead Observatory in 1965. And it was through Ed's effort that the Association donated the late Rev. George Walker's telescope to the mission of the Rev. Joseph Wacławski high in the Andes near La Paz, Bolivia.

We shall long remember Ed Stoklosa as an enthusiastic supporter of our B.A.A. and we will miss him as a friend who always helped out cheerfully, whenever help was needed. Our sincerest expression of sympathy goes to Mrs. Stoklosa and to their son, our fellow member, Leslie Stoklosa.

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* WILLIAM R. BROOKS - COMET SEEKER * By Marie T. Cain, Geneva, N.Y.

William Brooks was born in Maidstone, England, on June 11, 1844. As a child he travelled with his family to Australia and thence to this country in 1857. His interest in astronomy may have been aroused by meeting the famous Sir John Herschel while still in England, or during the voyage to Australia, watching the ship's captain making celestial observations for navigation. At any rate, the Brooks family settled in Darien, N.Y., where young William began to pursue the study of astronomy through reading books and through observations of the night sky. He also became interested in photography fairly early in his life. As a young man he worked at the Shepard Iron Works here in Buffalo, later on also at the Corliss Steam Engine Company

in Syracuse and Boston, helping in the construction of steam engines and other heavy machinery, an experience which later on proved to be quite useful in his work with telescopes and the building of other astronomical instruments.

In 1868 William Brooks married Mary E. Smith at Edwardsburgh, Michigan and two years later they moved to Phelps, N.Y., where he set up a photography shop. Two children were born, a son who died at an early age, and a daughter, Anna Caroline, who later was to help her father with his observations and in the calculations of comet orbits and who also accompanied him on some of his lecture tours. For many years Miss Brooks was a teacher of mathematics at Geneva High School.

Just south of Phelps Village, Brooks built Red House Observatory (on the present Harold Harlan Farm) and there from about 1881 until 1888 he discovered ten comets - discoveries which achieved world-wide fame for William Brooks. Sometime later, a wealthy nurseryman of Geneva, William Smith, invited Brooks to Geneva to build, or rather supervise the building of an observatory. Brooks served as the director of this "Geneva Observatory" until his death in 1921. In this capacity he discovered an additional 17 comets, and from 1900 until 1921 he also was professor of astronomy at Hobart College.

In recognition of his cometary discoveries, William Brooks received many awards, among them several gold medals and thousands of dollars in prize money. He was also awarded two honorary degrees of Doctor of Sciences. He was a keen observer with an inquiring mind, and his pleasing personality easily appealed to his audiences and his students. Overcoming many obstacles, he did much to "popularize" astronomy and his many comet discoveries should be an inspiration to all of us.

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Buffalo Astronomical Assoc., Inc.
c/o Buffalo Museum of Science
Humboldt Park
Buffalo, N.Y. 14211

Miss Marjorie Moyer
12 Manhardt St.
Buffalo, New York
14215

