

# the Spectrum

BUFFALO ASTRONOMICAL ASSOCIATION INC.  
BUFFALO MUSEUM OF SCIENCE  
HUMBOLDT PARKWAY  
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Editor:  
Lawrence M. Carlino

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 1978

**SEPTEMBER MEETING:** The September 8, 1978 meeting of the BAA will be held in the New Science Building Auditorium of the State University College at Buffalo (Buffalo State) beginning at 8:00 p.m. Speakers for the meeting will be BAA president Dr. Fred Price and Spectrum editor Larry Carlino who will present their observations of Jupiter during the giant planet's last apparition. Slides of telescopic drawings will be shown and should provide for some interesting contrasts and comparisons. Additionally, Mr. Carlino will show a number of slide-reproduced sketches detailing the appearance of Mars from January to May 1978.

**OCTOBER MEETING:** The October 13, 1978 meeting will also commence at 8 p.m. in the Buffalo State New Science Building Auditorium. The featured speaker for the meeting will be our own Miro Catipovic who will report on the spectacular 20-inch Schmidt-Cassegrainian telescope he is currently constructing.

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## ODDS AND ENDS

Unfortunately, sketches of Jupiter illustrating Dr. Fred Price's article in the last issue of the Spectrum were omitted due to printing difficulties. We hope to reproduce the drawings in a future issue.

## IMPORTANT!! DUES ARE DUE

**FOR SALE:** Celestron 90 astro telescope; 3.55-inch Maksutov-Cassegrainian with fork mount and drive; eyepiece, diagonal, and barlow for 55, 140, 200X; carrying case. Seldom used and in mint condition. List price \$495. Will sell for \$365. Call Larry Carlino (832-0491) for further information/demonstration.

**Impending Crisis?** The massive and very pleasing backlog of articles for the Spectrum has nearly disappeared. We strongly urge submissions on any astronomy-related topics by the membership. Material need not be a literary work of art, as the editor will be happy to transform a rough draft into a finished product. If you are unwilling to have your name in print, anonymity can be provided.

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**FROM THE PRESIDENT:** I am indeed happy to have been returned unopposed at the June meeting for another two-year term as President of the BAA and wish to thank our members for showing such confidence in me. Needless to say, I shall serve our Association to the best of my capabilities as I always have done in the past. Dr. John Mack was also nominated as a Presidential candidate, but owing to other commitments he regretfully had to decline. He would have made a fine President had he been elected.

The previous incumbents in the offices of Vice President (Ken Biggie), Secretary (Rowland Rupp) and Treasurer (Joe Provato) all stood for re-election and were all returned to office again. A subsequent look at the ballot results showed that all of them had been re-elected with very large majorities over the alternative candidates. This indicates to me that the BAA membership are well satisfied with the officers we had last year and are not seeking change for the sake of change. My congratulations are extended to the new officers. I want to thank Bill Chambers, Richard Janas and Gertrude Cook for standing as alternative candidates for the offices of Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer respectively. They would have made good officers had they been elected.

Earlier this year the membership voted overwhelmingly to continue meeting both at Buffalo State College and at the Museum of Science, a decision that was personally pleasing to me. Suggestions have been made that we meet on an 'equal time' basis at both places or at each place alternately. The Board of Directors voted to stay at Buffalo State for the remainder of the calendar year; however, since our speaker for November will be Ernst Both, my proposal that we go to the Museum in November to spare Ernst the need to motor to the College was accepted by the Board. My personal view is that common sense should enter into such decisions and that the 'equal time' policy at both places should be interpreted as a guideline rather than as a rule that must be rigidly obeyed.

I have previously resisted suggestions that there be presentations at the June meetings in addition to the business transacted. However, since there were barely sufficient members present at the last June meeting for a quorum, I have decided that at the next business meeting, inclusion of a short presentation by a member would probably attract a better attendance and thereby ensure a quorum with a greater margin of safety; for a few anxious moments at the last meeting, I thought we hadn't the minimum number present for us to conduct business legally.

Finally, shortly before I returned to England for my summer vacation, I heard an unconfirmed rumour that a BAA member, who wishes to remain anonymous for the present, has commenced writing a handbook for amateur lunar observers. It was hinted that if the project goes well, the author would approach certain BAA members for copies of lunar photographs and drawings as illustrative material. If the rumoured book becomes a reality, its publication with drawings and photographs by BAA members would put the BAA 'on the map' in a way that it has not been before, so far as I know. It is to be hoped that the presently anonymous author will identify himself sometime and acquaint us all with progress being made on his book.

I trust that everyone has had a good summer and is looking forward, like myself, to the forthcoming year of BAA activities.

F.W.P.

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#### BAA ANNALS

5 YEARS AGO - Walter Semerau, Vern Siegel, and Dr. and Mrs. Seville Chapman all saw the June 30th African solar eclipse from the ship Canberra off West Africa. Larry Hazel had "some spectacular photos" taken in East Africa. This was the very long 7 minute eclipse, nearly the longest possible.

BAA speakers in September & October were Darwin Christy and Fred Price. They spoke on Micrometeorites and Amateur Lunar Observations respectively. Imagine that!

10 YEARS AGO - New officers installed in September were President Fred Price, Vice President Orrin Christy, Secretary Marjorie Meyer, and Treasurer Edith Geiger.

The October Spectrum carried the memorial for late member Edward A. Stoklosa who contributed significantly to the construction of the mounting of the 12½ inch Newstead Observatory reflector now at Beaver Meadow.

Marie Cain spoke on William R. Brooks, Comet Seeker in September and contributed an article on the same subject to the October Spectrum. The October speaker was Ralph Dakin on the topic Tools of the Astronomer.

20 YEARS AGO - In 1958 the BAA was keenly interested in the IGY (International Geophysical Year). The September meeting featured Operation Moonwatch. "This is a local film.....(an) opportunity to see what the BAA has contributed to the IGY." Ed Lindberg was leader of our Operation Moonwatch effort. (I wonder if this film is still available. It would be worth seeing after 20 years.)

The BAA held an open house at the Museum in October. Talks by Dr. Chapman, Lou Reinagle and Ed Lindberg all dealt with the IGY and that brand new technology -- satellites.

Rowland A. Rupp

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#### SPY AND TELL

Congratulations to Ernst Both! He is not only the Curator of Astronomy at the Buffalo Museum of Science, but is also the newly appointed Curator of Lycology. Ernst has had a busy summer with large crowds attending his Sun Shows at the Museum.

Ed Lindberg, Director of Education for the WNY Holographers Association, along with a professor of chemistry from Genesee Community College will coordinate ten sessions of a credit free course on "Lasers: Understanding Functions and Applications" at the University of Buffalo from Sept. 28 through Dec. 7.

Carl Milazzo reports that while at Beaver Meadow during the Perseid meteor shower, he saw an average of 50 meteors per hour with a fireball every half hour. One unusual meteor of about a -6 magnitude left a trail for 15 seconds as seen by eye, but for two minutes seen through binoculars. There was a weird twisting and curling to its path. This all-night vigil lasted until 5 A.M.

Carl has a cactus in bloom at his home. He hopes to find the name of this spectacular blooming plant. He has photos, and sketches of its needle pattern and growth habit. If you are a cactus expert, please contact Carl.

Tom and Jim Pasek have returned from their journey to the various observatories out west, with many pictures to recall their extraordinary trip.



Rabes, who leave for Wales on Sept. 23, have decided on a trip to Italy while they are abroad.

Ken Biggie, who has moved to 37 Villa Maria St., in West Seneca, 14224, reports that he has everything but the living room, dining room and bedroom furniture, carpets etc., etc. He has, however, a beautiful swimming pool, a nice lot with no street light problems. Now I'm sure you'll all want his new telephone number - 675-8932.

You may be interested to know that Ken Biggie is a doughnutholic. He purchases a dozen doughnuts and tears through them unmercifully. "Marty! Better hide the doughnuts at our meetings when you see Ken coming!"

At the BAA picnic at Chestnut Ridge Park, Jerry Cook, who has been contemplating the benefits of jogging, made it from a picnic table to a nearby tree and back and called it quits. It wasn't her day -- a football splashed her orange pop over her physiognomy; she arrived at the picnic without Bruce's wheelchair and had to go back to her home in Snyder to get it; and she almost forgot to take their cat on leaving their cottage on Lake Chautauqua.

Tom Dessert, the "sandman", reports that his sand business is so good that he really has too much business. No wonder everyone is half asleep these days!

Edith L. Geiger

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This summer's BAA Star Parties were a big success. The weather didn't always cooperate, but those who attended had a good time, with or without the stars.

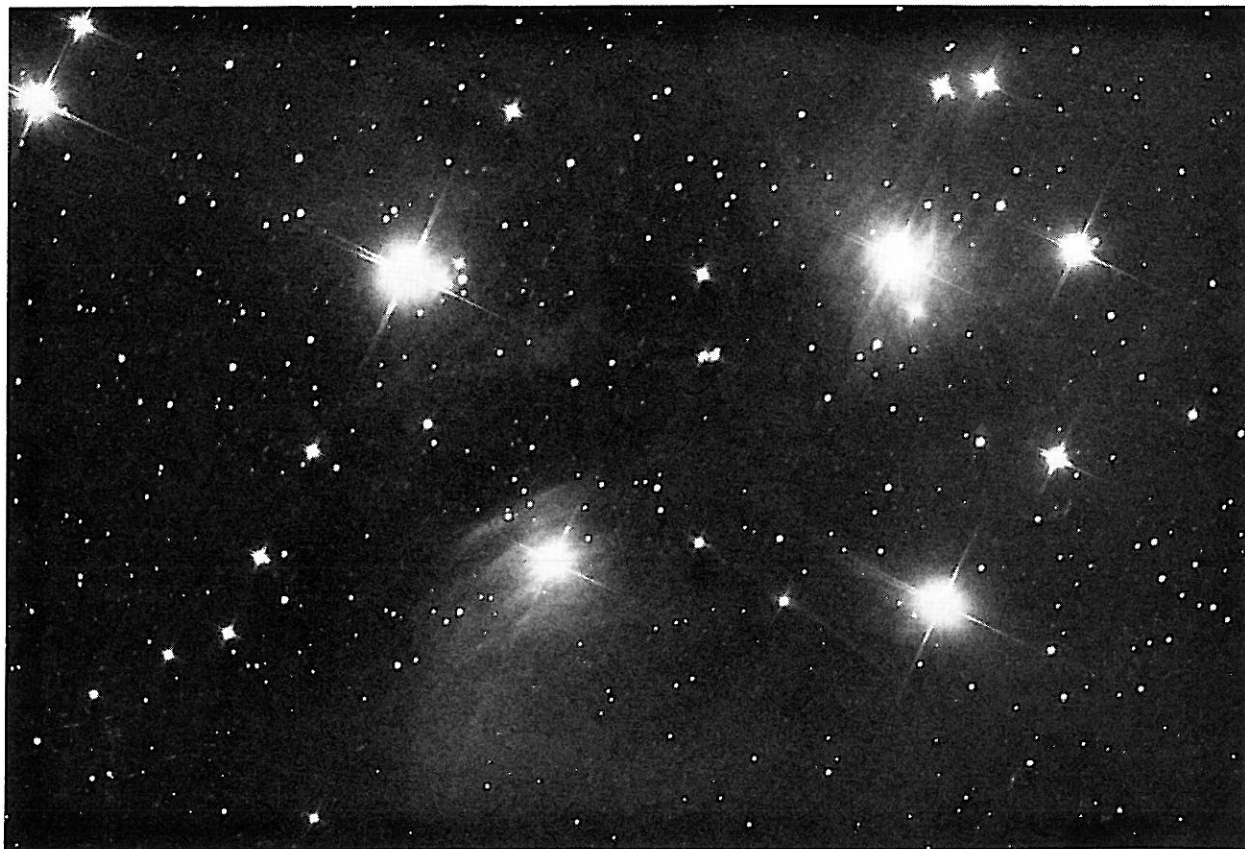
Sprucelands, on July 7th, was partly cloudy, but a few people, the eternal optimists, showed up for the party.

The July 28th star party at Tom and Marty Dessert's was very well attended by 40 to 50 people. The skies cooperated for part of the evening also.

On August 26th about 30 people visited Charlie and Nancy Miess' new (under construction) observatory in Concord. The skies were fantastic, as was the food!!

The Beaver Meadow evenings were not as popular with the membership. However, the public nights (Saturdays) were very well attended when clear. Three Saturdays saw more than 100 people each!

The annual BAA picnic at Chestnut Ridge was fun for those who attended. We'd like to see more of the members there next time, but those who did go can vouch for the food and fellowship. The weather and the park were beautiful. See you there next year.



M 45 THE PLEIADES by Nancy Miess



NGC 4565 in VIRGO by T. L. Dessert



M 33 by T. L. Dessert



THE LAGOON NEBULA



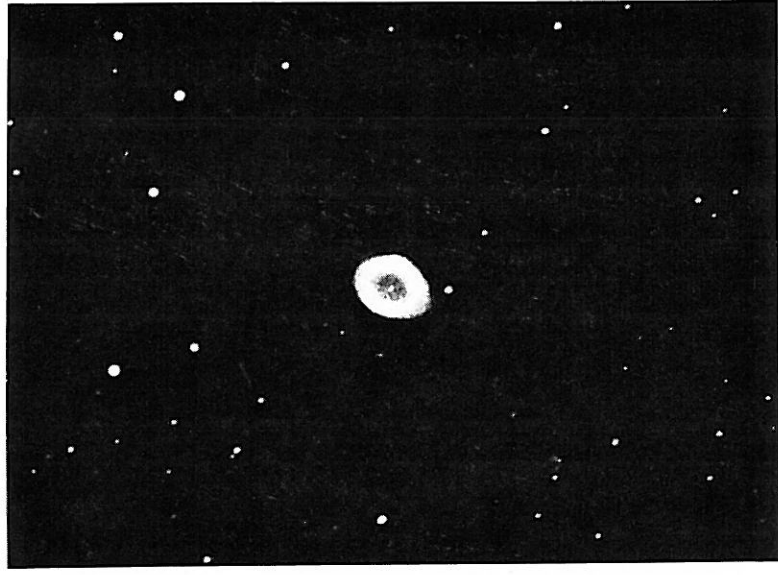
THE OWL NEBULA



THE TRIFID NEBULA



THE DUMBELL NUBULA



THE RING NEBULA



M 101 in C Vn



THE OMEGA NEBULA

PHOTOS BY T. L. DESSERT



## BAA PROFILE

### Robert Stanley Mayer

Robert Stanley Mayer was born in Buffalo, the son of an excellent precision craftsman who undoubtedly passed his talent on to his son, Robert. A distant relative of Bob's mother married Sir Henry Morton Stanley, of Stanley and Livingston fame, so his mother decided to bestow the name, Stanley, on Bob.

Bob's formal education is a product of the Buffalo Public Schools. After graduating from School 61, he went to Buffalo Technical High School for three years where he took a course in machine designing. Being in high school during the depression years, he knew that he couldn't look forward to a college education, so he decided to go into the trades, taking a two year course in pattern-making at McKinley Vocational High School from which he graduated.

For one year following graduation, he worked at Jewel Steel Foundry as a pattern-maker. From there he went on to become an apprentice at Aero Pattern Works, a jobbing pattern shop where they did custom work. He remained with this company for 16 years.

During World War II, Bob worked for two years at Buffalo Pattern Works where he did layouts for aircraft engines. At last the war came to an end, and Bob decided to form his own company which was called Precision Patterns, Inc. It was located on Leroy Avenue and employed ten craftsmen. After a successful 23 years, the company was liquidated.

Bob's son, Robert, who had graduated from the Rochester Institute of Technology, bought some of the remaining machinery and set up shop in the Mayer backyard on Hedstrom Drive in Amherst where he would cater to professional photographers.

Robert designed a tripod and his father helped in the making of it. Putting an ad in Modern Astronomy brought inquiries from all over the world. The late Dr. Henry Paul bought one of the tripods and told Frank Mayer, brother of Bob Sr., that the tripod was No. 1 in the world and that No. 2 wasn't even close.

Tragedy struck the Mayer home in 1972 when son, Robert, at 24 years of age, was fatally injured in a car accident on the Thruway when a drunken driver stopped suddenly in front of him. Understandably, adjustment to this loss has been very difficult. Robert was a fine young man and an excellent tuba player. As a student at R.I.T. he had made, as a senior project, a view camera of superior quality. This exceptional piece of work remains in Bob's (Sr.) possession.

Mr. Mayer started taking courses in photography at the museum in 1938. As a result of his interest in the subject, he now possesses 16 cameras, all of which are collector's items. Among his cameras one will find a Graflex, a Speed Graphic, three or four different kinds of stereo, even the kind that takes old fashioned "parlor" pictures, and a circuit camera which takes panoramic views.

In 1949, Bob attended museum classes in mirror making led by Jim McCartney, who was president of the Buffalo Telescope Makers and Observers. This was before Dr. Shirley Jones, local astronomer of note, became instrumental in changing the name of the organization to the Buffalo Astronomical Association, which seemed to her to be a more suitable name for the group.

Bob is well-known for his exceptional ability as a craftsman. Though retired, he is always busy. He makes special mounts for astronomical equipment, special adapter rings for cameras, adapters for astrophotography, and clock gears for clock repairmen or dealers, to name a few of his pursuits. In his well equipped home shop he has a lathe with which he makes parts that he needs for various projects. He also has a milling machine for making setting circles and worm gears.

Bob has given much of his precious time, making and installing special equipment for the Beaver Meadow telescope, for which we are all grateful. When members of the BAA are having problems with their telescopes it is to Bob they turn for a helping hand. Or if a special piece of equipment is needed for a certain project, it is Bob who is called upon to create the necessary parts. He is always willing to discuss troublesome areas and suggest remedies. Bob attends the meetings of the Instrument Section at the museum under the leadership of Ed Lindberg, where he finds joy in helping its members.

As a change from working with metal, Bob finds relaxation in working with wood. He makes furniture, wooden bowls of exquisite beauty, and has made a cup rack, and also a library step for displaying objects.

His wife, Verna, whom he married in 1947, is a fine natural musician, and enjoys knitting, crocheting, and painting with water colors, using her brush for landscapes, water along the shore, and lighthouse scenes.

The Mayers derive great pleasure from their trips to their cottage in Canada on the water's edge on Lake Huron at the tip of Bruce peninsula, which is a 70 mile strip separating Georgian Bay from Lake Huron. The view is exceptional with its unlimited 180° clear horizon. Bob has a 6" telescope with an altazimuth mount on a foundation of stones out on a dock in the bay. He is making another mount with setting circles which will enable him to photograph deep-sky objects.

Bob and Verna like to go to antique shows, and Bob, quite naturally, enjoys machinery auctions. They find great satisfaction in traveling and have been to Europe twice. They have 2000 slides of their visits to Luxembourg, France, Switzerland and Germany. During Bob's (Jr.) senior year in high school, 1965-1966, the Mayers, through the American Field Service, were hosts to a young lad from Luxembourg. Bob and Verna were, at that time, Home Chairmen for the selection of residences for American Field Service students. While here, the young man decided that he would like to become a doctor. He went on to receive his M.D. degree, and when the time came for him to be married, the Mayers were invited to Luxembourg for the wedding. Bob gave a travel talk



on Luxembourg on the museum's Fairchild Lectures last March. Another travel talk will be upcoming sometime in '79. The Mayers have been west several times, and journeyed to Florida last spring. Their next trip will take them to the Maritime Provinces.

Bob is a highly respected member of the BAA, being elected to the College of Fellows in 1977. He also serves as a member of our Board of Directors. In him we have a master craftsman, and a kind, generous, knowledgeable gentleman of great talent.

Edith L. Geiger

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### THE MOON ISN'T THE ONLY WORLD THAT HAS CRATERS

In 1609 craters were discovered on the Moon by the newly invented telescope, and since then the average person thinks that only the Moon has craters. But actually, just about any solid world in the Universe, probably has or had craters. Worlds that are not solid like Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune won't have craters because they are made of dense gas, surrounded by clouds, with a small nucleus deep down in the center.

In the early days of our Solar System, the only craters that existed were impact craters, which are formed by the collision of Asteroids, Meteors and Comets. And to this day, impact creates the vast majority of the craters found on worlds in our Solar System. The only exception is Earth because it is so active geologically, due to its mass, rotational period and its chemical make-up. Today volcanic craters are found on Earth by the thousands; but on Mars we find only a few dozen. On Venus, thus far, just a few have been found and on our moon they are extremely rare.

Impact craters were discovered on Mars by telescopes on Earth in 1915 and they were seen much more clearly by spacecraft in 1965. About 200 impact craters still exist on Earth today, the first of which was discovered in 1925. But four billion years ago there were as many as there are on the Moon. After years of weathering by wind, rain, glaciers, etc., they've nearly all disappeared.

In 1971 impact craters were seen by spacecraft on the two small moons of Mars. The first were found on Phobos and then later that year some were found on Deimos.

In 1972 Venus was found to have many impact craters, but not by photography because Venus is always covered by clouds. Radar was used on Earth to penetrate Venus' clouds.

In 1974 a spacecraft discovered thousands of impact craters on Mercury, even one that was 800 miles in diameter and is the largest crater presently known to exist in the Solar System.

Within the next 20 years, craters will probably be seen by spacecraft on the 31 known moons of Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune, and even on the planet Pluto. There are thousands of asteroids, and millions of comets with icy nuclei that have craters, and some may be explored by spacecraft in less than 20 years.

Carl T. Milazzo

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FIRST CLASS