

POLARIS



Royal Astronomical Society of Canada
London Centre Newsletter
January 2015

Old Technology

Patrick Whelan

I'm not sure about the rest of you, but I have a love/hate relationship with technology. Tech is great, but I find the constant change tiring and frustrating. First there was TV which you had to watch when a program was on. Then there was film and you could make your own movies. Then there were video tapes, then DVD and now Blu-ray. These made it possible to record a show and watch it later. You could buy a movie and watch it whenever you like. The problem is the constant changing of formats. If you had movies on film, chances are you want to convert them to video tape DVD or Blu-ray. Who wants to thread film into a movie projector? I had some old 8mm video films that I had converted to DVD. That made it easy to share them with my family.

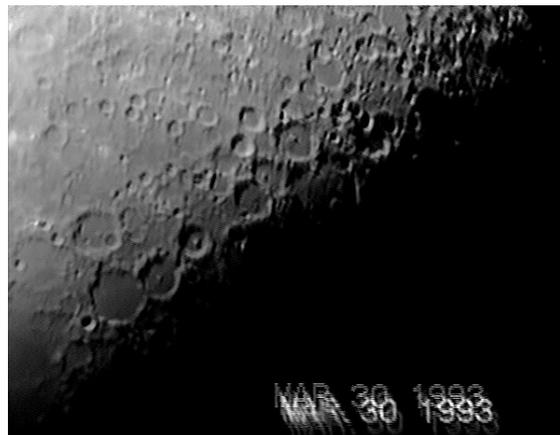
Another tech challenge is photography. Most everyone has a digital camera now, film is pretty much dead. I have boxes of photographs (with negatives) and I shudder at the task of converting them to digital. (I have started) Recently I was looking through my old photos and was surprised to see how many astro photos and aurora photos I had taken. My trusty Minolta X700 coupled to my Tasco 4.5" reflector gave some nice images. It also gave me a lot of fuzzy crappy images too!

My latest undertaking was converting my old Sony 8mm video tapes to DVD. The camera is quite large compared to the digital video cameras of today. It has video out and mono out. (no stereo sound) I plugged it into my Sony DVD recorder. The Sony is a stand alone piece of equipment that used to sit by my TV. It allowed me to play DVD's

and also record from cable or satellite. It is much easier to accomplish than using a computer and hardware and software. Lot of these video were so old I don't remember making them!

One of these videos really brought back memories. I had my Sony video camera coupled to my 4.5" Tasco. The adapter was a huge piece of pine (from a waterbed) that I made to clamp around the tube of the telescope with a camera mount to hold the video camera. I have many minutes of the Moon and even Jupiter. I was amazed at the quality of that old technology. Mind you, it is nothing in comparison to what we have today, but still amazing for its time. If I pause the video of the Moon, you can hardly make out the craters for all the noise, but as long as the video is playing it looks great.

I quickly grabbed some frames of the Moon and put them through Registax pretty much on its auto-magic settings. This is the result. Not too bad for such old technology. Yes the date is right, that video is from March 30, 1993!



Moon Phases



January 5 2015



January 13 2015



January 20 2015



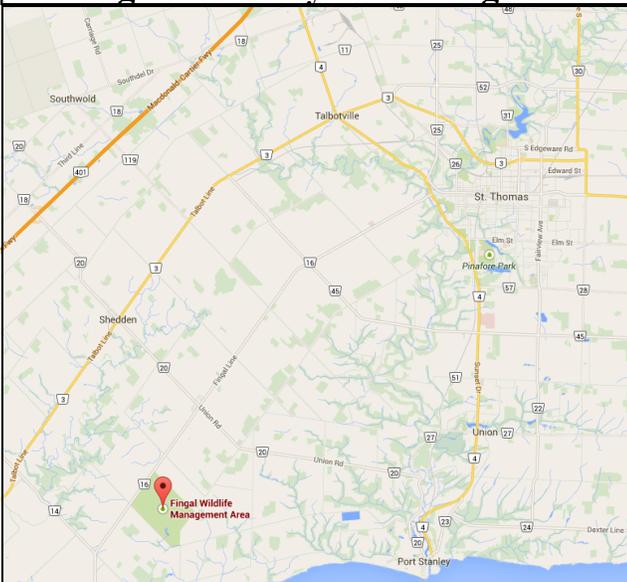
January 27 2015

January

Our guest speaker this month will be Professor Peter Brown from Western University talking about Chelyabinsk, the view from two years post-impact.

Or as I like to think about the event: hurray for people with dash cams!

Fingal Dark Sky Observing Site



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Women's Programs

Youth Programs

London RASC Website: <http://www.rasclondon.ca/>

London RASC Forums: <http://forums.rasclondon.ca/>

Sky Events for Late January and Early February

January 16 Saturn 1.9 S of Moon
 January 17 Double shadow transit on Jupiter
 January 19 Mars 0.2 S of Neptune
 January 20 Double shadow transit on Jupiter
 January 24 Double shadow transit on Jupiter
 January 24 Triple shadow transit on Jupiter!
 January 24 Triple shadow transit on Jupiter!
 January 25 Uranus 0.6 S of Moon
 January 27 Double shadow transit on Jupiter
 January 29 Aldebaran 1.2 S of Moon
 January 29 Juno at opposition
 February 1 Venus 0.5 S of Neptune
 February 6 Zodiacal light visible in W after evening twilight for next 2 weeks
 February 6 Jupiter at opposition



Mercury Well placed in the morning sky from February 6 to 28
 Venus Low in the SW evening twilight
 Mars Low in the SW evening sky
 Jupiter Rises in the ENE in early evening in Leo
 Saturn In the dawn sky in Libra
 Uranus In the western evening sky in Pisces
 Neptune Low in the western early evening sky in Aquarius



R.A.S.C. London Centre Library **Books of the Month January 2015** *By Robert Duff*

As always, these “Books of the Month” are available for loan to members, to be returned at the following monthly meeting. The books for January 2015 are as follows:

Foundations of Astronomy, by Michael A. Seeds. – 7th Edition, c2003.

The Science of Shakespeare: A New look at the Playwright’s Universe, by Dan Falk. c2014

The Complete Sky & Telescope [compact disc]: Seven Decades Collection, a set of 8 DVD-ROMs, including 818 monthly issues, November 1941—December 2009 (7 discs) and Index (1 disc), plus a printed User Guide [4 pages].

Sky & Telescope [compact disc]: January—December, 2010 (1 DVD-ROM disc).

Sky & Telescope [compact disc]: January—December, 2011 (1 DVD-ROM disc).

Sky & Telescope [compact disc]: January—December, 2012 (1 DVD-ROM disc).

Sky & Telescope [compact disc]: January—December, 2013 (1 DVD-ROM disc).

For a complete listing of our library collection please go to the Main Menu on the left side of the RASC London Centre Web site main page and click on Club Library: <http://www.rasclondon.ca/index.php/library-and-rentals>

If there is a particular book or video you wish to borrow, please feel free to contact me by telephone at (519) 439-7504 or by e-mail at rduff@sympatico.ca

January 2015

Cronyn Observatory Public Night, Saturday, January 10th, 2015

By Robert Duff

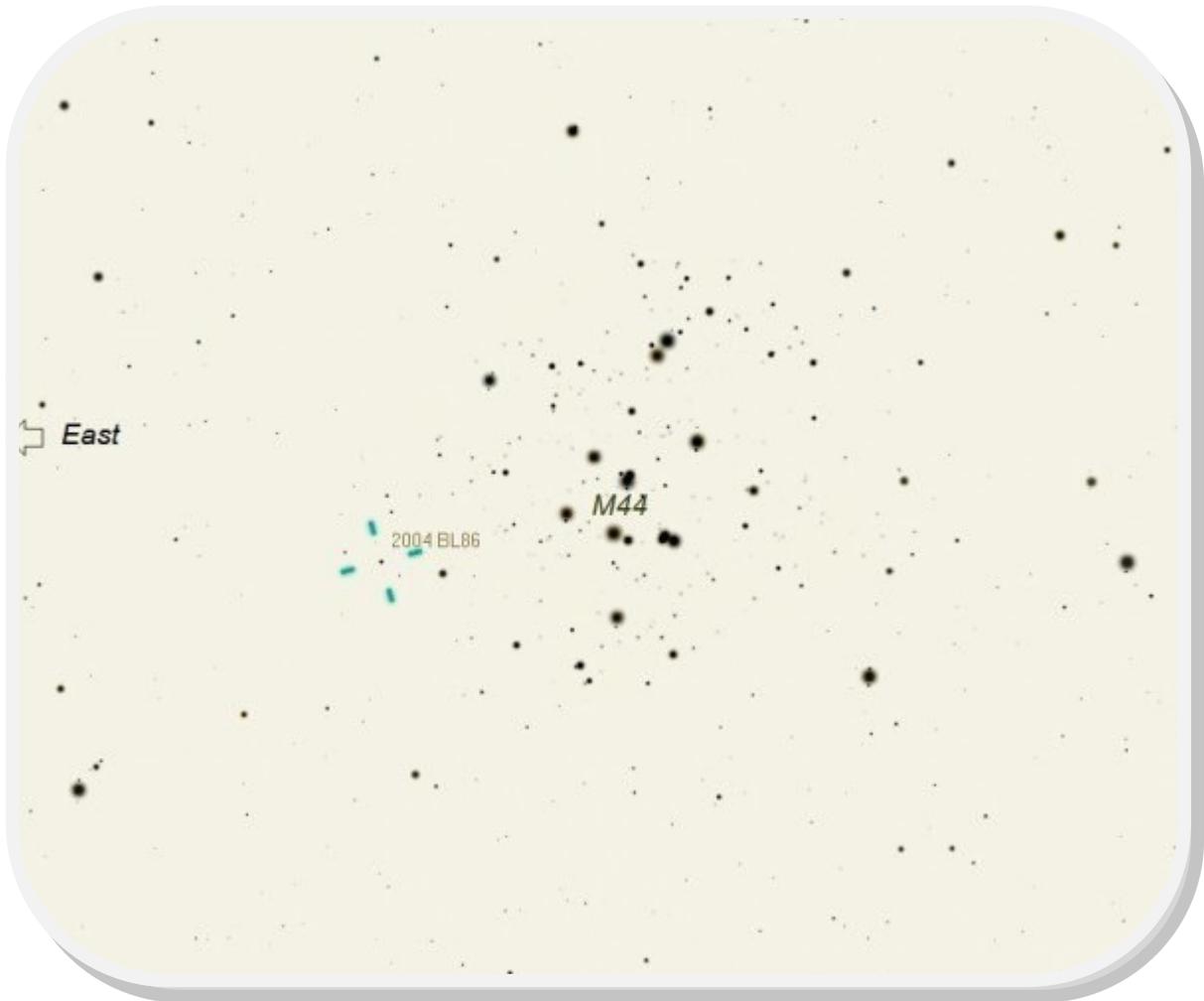
Partly cloudy, hazy skies and cold temperature greeted 49 visitors to the Cronyn Observatory Public Night, Saturday, January 10th, 2015, 7:00 p.m. Graduate student Shannon Hicks made her digital slide presentation “Exploring Comets” and answered questions. Graduate students Parshati Patel and Emily McCullough operated the big 25.4cm refractor in the dome.

RASC London Centre was represented by Tricia Colvin and Bob Duff. RASC London Centre member Richard Gibbens was also there and listened to the slide lecture. When everybody arrived upstairs in the dome Parshati invited Bob to give a talk on the history of the Cronyn Observatory and the technical aspects of the

big 25.4cm refractor. He also explained the 2 clocks on the east wall of the dome and the difference between Standard and Sidereal Time. Ice prevented the dome from being fully opened and it was difficult locate objects with the big 25.4cm refractor (52mm Erfle eyepiece, 84X) and so Emily and Parshati began by showing visitors various stars including the giant red star Betelgeuse and explained how stars could have different colours. Shannon also searched for Comet Lovejoy with binoculars, but without success in the hazy sky.

Finally, Emily directed the big 25.4cm refractor towards the communications tower in south London, with Bob centering one of the red lights on the tower in the telescope’s field of view. The visitors were pleased with the views through the big telescope, despite the cold. Everybody was gone by 9:00 p.m. after an enjoyable and interesting evening of astronomy.

Watch an asteroid slide by the Beehive in Cancer!



This illustration depicts asteroid 2004 BL86 at 12:22 a.m. EST (05:22 UTC) on the morning of January 27. As that time, it will be passing near the famous star cluster M44, also known as the Beehive, in the constellation Cancer. Graphic and caption via Stellarium via Eddie Irizarry / Astronomical Society of the Caribbean.