

POLARIS



Royal Astronomical Society of Canada London Centre Newsletter March 2016

Astronomical Events Not To Miss in 2016

Patrick Whelan

Every year there are scores of astronomical events. Some are fairly routine: full moon, new moon, planets at opposition or greatest elongation etc. Some events are much more important or at least more spectacular to see.

April 22-23 Lyrids Meteor Shower. This is usually an average shower but it will occur with a full moon this year. You may see the very brightest ones but it probably won't be spectacular.

May 6-7 The Eta Aquarids. The Eta Aquarids is an above average shower, capable of producing up to 30 meteors per hour at its peak. It occurs during a new moon so get outside and look up!

May 9 Rare Transit of Mercury Across the Sun!! This is a rare event that occurs only once every few years. There will be another transit of Mercury in 2019 and then the next one will not take place until 2039. It will be the first transit of Mercury since 2006. Wonderfully visible from our part of Ontario. Get out and see this rare event! It will begin at 7:12am as Mercury starts to move in front of the Sun. At 10:57am Mercury will be in the middle of the Sun. As 2:39pm Mercury will begin to move off the face of the Sun. You have almost 7.5 hours to see it.

May 19-23 GA and AstroCATS. London will be hosting the RASC General Assembly and AstroCATS! This just may be the astronomy show of the year! Held at Fanshawe College this is the first time the GA and AstroCATS will be held at the same time and place. Be there! Check out rasc.ca/ga or astrocats.ca for details.

July 4 Spacecraft Juno at Jupiter. We won't be able to see this but what the heck! NASA's Juno spacecraft is scheduled to arrive at Jupiter after a five year journey. Launched on August 5, 2011, Juno will be inserted into a polar orbit around the giant planet on or around July 4, 2016.

July 28-29 Delta Aquarids Meteor Shower. The Delta Aquarids is an average shower that can produce up to 20 meteors per hour at its peak. The second quarter moon will block most of the fainter meteors this year but if you are

patient you should still be able to catch quite a few good ones.

August 12-13 Perseids Meteor Shower. The Perseids is one of the best meteor showers to observe, producing up to 60 meteors per hour at its peak. The waxing gibbous moon will set shortly after midnight, leaving fairly dark skies for should be an excellent early morning show.

August 27 Conjunction of Venus and Jupiter. A spectacular conjunction of Venus and Jupiter will be visible in the evening sky. The two bright planets will be extremely close, appearing only 0.06 degrees apart! Look for this impressive pairing in the western sky just after sunset. Wow that's close!

September 1 Annular Solar Eclipse. Not for us in Canada, darn. The path of the eclipse will begin off the eastern coast of central Africa and travel through Gabon, Congo, Tanzania, and Madagascar before ending in the Indian Ocean.

October 21-22 Orionids Meteor Shower. The Orionids is an average shower producing up to 20 meteors per hour at its peak. The second quarter moon will block some of the fainter meteors this year, but the Orionids tend to be fairly bright so it could still be a good show.

November 17-18 Leonids Meteor Shower. The Leonids is an average shower, producing up to 15 meteors per hour at its peak. This shower is unique in that it has a cyclonic peak about every 33 years where hundreds of meteors per hour can be seen such as in 2001. The waning gibbous moon will block many of the fainter meteors this year, but if you are patient you should be able to catch quite a few good ones.

December 13-14 Geminids Meteor Shower. The Geminids is the king of the meteor showers. It is considered by many to be the best shower in the heavens, producing up to 120 multicolored meteors per hour at its peak. Unfortunately the nearly full moon will block out many of the fainter meteors this year, but the Geminids are so bright and numerous that it could still be a good show.

Moon Phases



March 15 2016



March 22 2016



March 31 2016



April 7 2016

January Meeting

Our scheduled speaker

for this month is

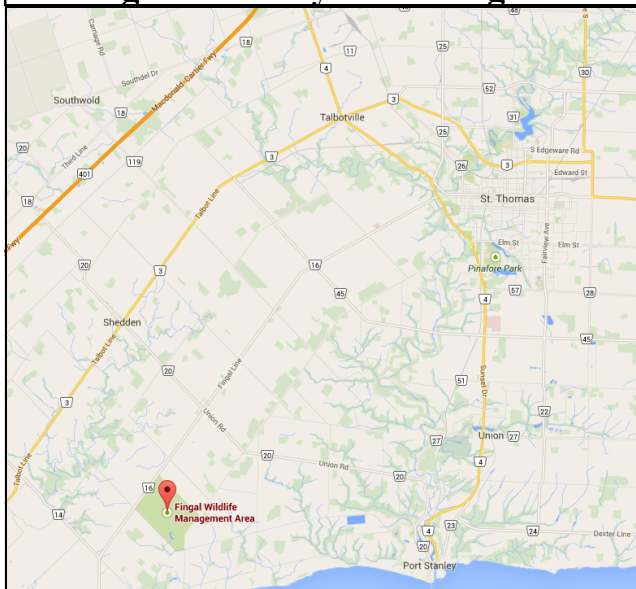
Randy Attwood

Executive Director of the national RASC

His talk will be:

30 Years of Winged Spaceflight

Fingal Dark Sky Observing Site



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

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

The first mission of the ExoMars program, launched on March 14th 2016 and scheduled to arrive at Mars in October 2016, consists of a Trace Gas Orbiter plus an entry, descent and landing demonstrator module, known as Schiaparelli. The main objectives of this mission are to search for evidence of methane and other trace atmospheric gases.

Sky Events for Late March and early April

March 20 Equinox
 March 20 Venus 0.5° S of Neptune
 March 22 Double shadow transit on Jupiter
 March 23 Double shadow transit on Jupiter
 March 25 Zodiacal light visible in N latitudes in W after evening twilight
 March 25 Double shadow transit on Jupiter
 March 29 Double shadow transit on Jupiter
 April 1 Double shadow transit on Jupiter
 April 3 Double shadow transit on Jupiter
 April 5 Double shadow transit on Jupiter
 April 8 Double shadow transit on Jupiter
 April 10 Aldebaran 0.3° S of Moon, occultation (daytime)



May 19-23 RASC General Assembly and AstroCATS in London
 For more see: rasc.ca/ga or astrocats.ca

Mercury heading toward conjunction with the sun
 Venus shines brightly in the dawn sky
 Mars rises around midnight
 Jupiter rises around sunset and visible all night
 Saturn rises near midnight
 Uranus vanishes into the evening twilight
 Neptune reappears in the morning sky in mid-April



R.A.S.C. London Centre Library **Books of the Month March 2016** *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 March 2016 are as follows:

Cataclysmic Cosmic Events and How to Observe Them, by Martin Mobberley. c2009. (Astronomers’ Observing Guides)

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

A Portfolio of Lunar Drawings, by Harold Hill. 1991.
(Practical Astronomy Handbooks, 1)

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/joomla34/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

Cronyn Observatory Public Nights & Exploring the Stars **Events, February 22nd—March 12th, 2016**

By Robert Duff

Cronyn Observatory Public Night, Monday, February **22nd, 2016**

Mostly cloudy skies greeted some 33 visitors to Western University’s Cronyn Observatory Public Night, Monday, February 22nd, 2016, 7:00 p.m. They were welcomed by graduate stu-

dent Dilini Subasinghe and, since there was no slide presentation, were directed—upstairs into the dome.

RASC London Centre was represented by Everett Clark, Tricia Colvin, Paul Kerans, Peter Jedicke, Steve Gauthier and Bob Duff. Graduate student Shannon Hicks was telescope operator early in the evening and changed places with Dilini around 8:00 p.m. Shannon directed the big 25.4cm refractor (32mm Erfle eyepiece, 137X) in the dome to show visitors the red lights on the communications tower in south London. Shannon later directed the 25.4cm refractor towards the rising full Moon, just before Dilini took over.

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On the roof patio outside the dome, Tricia Colvin showed visitors the star Rigel, the Orion Nebula (M42) and the Moon with the London Centre's 25.4cm Dobsonian (17mm Nagler eyepiece, 66X). Paul Kerans helped his young niece with her alt-azimuth mounted Celestron 70mm refractor to view and show visitors the communications tower, M42, Jupiter and the Moon.

A few visitors were shown the astronomy software program "Stellarium" on the dome computer and Everett reported that one "Star Finder" planisphere, 3 "Moon Gazers' Guide" cards and 7 "Getting Started in Astronomy" (RASC, SkyNews [2015]) pamphlets were distributed with the visitors gone by around 9:00 p.m. after an enjoyable evening of astronomy.

Exploring the Stars, Association for Bright Children & Kids Learning Connections, February 23rd, 2016

Clear skies with some high hazy clouds greeted 40 visitors (21 children and 19 adults) from the Association for Bright Children and the Kids Learning Connections for Exploring the Stars at Western University's Cronyn Observatory, Tuesday, February 23rd, 2016, 6:00 p.m. Graduate student Shannon Hicks made the digital slide presentation "Big Bang" and fielded questions. Shannon followed this with the activity "Telescope Kits," with the children assembling simple telescopes from small reusable kits.

RASC London Centre was represented by Everett Clark, Paul Kerans and Bob Duff. When everybody arrived upstairs in the dome, Bob gave a brief talk on the history of the Cronyn Observatory and some of the technical aspects of the big 25.4cm refractor. Everett directed the 25.4cm refractor towards Sirius which made a dazzling view in the 18mm Radian eyepiece (244X). Shannon supervised observing through the 25.4cm refractor and the 28mm Meade Super Wide Angle eyepiece (157X) was later swapped in to view Jupiter. Bob showed visitors Sirius and a few people the Orion Nebula (M42) as well as the one-day-past-full Moon, rising between hazy clouds in the east, through the observatory's 8-inch (20.3cm) Meade Schmidt-Cassegrain (12.5mm Ortho eyepiece, 160X).

Paul showed the visitors M42 and Jupiter through the London Centre's 25.4cm Dobsonian (17mm Nagler eyepiece, 66X). Paul also set up his Nikon 10 X 50mm binoculars on his Orion Parallelogram Mount and tripod on the roof patio to show the adults and some of the children M42, Jupiter and the Moon. Paul brought 2 meteorites, including an iron / nickel and a chondrite meteorite along with a tiny sample of the Tagish Lake carbonaceous chondrite meteorite in a small display case, which he showed to a couple of people.

There were 5 "Star Finder" planispheres given to visitors and 23 "Getting Started in Astronomy" (RASC, SkyNews [2015]) pamphlets taken from the 50 laid out beside the computer on the table in the dome. The visitors were very appreciative of this very enjoyable and informative evening of astronomy and were gone by around 8:20 p.m.

Exploring the Stars, Ingersoll Calvinist Cadet Corp, February 25th, 2016

Cloudy skies and cold weather greeted 14 visitors (10 children and 4 adults) from the Ingersoll Calvinist Cadet Corp for Exploring the Stars at Western University's Cronyn Observatory, Thursday, February 25th, 2016, 7:00 p.m. Graduate student Laura Lentic presented the Exploring the Stars digital slide presentation "The Basics" and fielded questions. Laura followed this with the "Constellations Activity," distributing 14 "Star Finder" planispheres and showing the visitors how to assemble them with transparent adhesive tape. She then showed the visitors the slide "Reading a Star Finder" followed by several constellations slides from the astronomy software program "Stellarium" to help them learn how to use the planispheres.

RASC London Centre was represented by Everett Clark, later joined around 7:40 p.m. by Bob Duff. Everett opened the dome and made ready the 25.4cm refractor (32mm Erfle eyepiece, 137X), directing it towards a flashing red light on the communications tower in south London. Everett also set up the London Centre's 25.4cm Dobsonian (17mm Nagler eyepiece, 66X) inside, later moving it outside the dome on to the roof patio, where he directed it towards the wind turbine on the Engineering building.

When everybody arrived upstairs in the dome, Bob gave a talk on the history of the Cronyn Observatory and some of the technical aspects of the big 25.4cm refractor. Bob used his green laser pointer to show the visitors the finderscopes while Everett pulled down the main telescope to show them the 25.4cm lens. Bob also explained how a reflector telescope worked, using his green laser pointer to show them the Cassegrain reflector and Schmidt camera piggy-backed on the 25.4cm refractor.

At Laura's suggestion the visitors formed 2 groups with one going outside to view the wind turbine through the 25.4cm Dobsonian (17mm Nagler eyepiece, 66X), supervised by Everett. Bob supervised from near the top of the observing ladder as the children and adults in the second group climbed the steps to view the flashing red light on the communications tower in south London through the 25.4cm refractor (32mm Erfle eyepiece, 137X). Bob later took over the 25.4cm Dobsonian from Everett for a short time. Both groups had the opportunity to view through both telescopes.

The visitors took 7 "Getting Started in Astronomy" (RASC, SkyNews [2015]) pamphlets, of the 20 that Everett had laid out beside the computer on the table in the dome. Everybody was very appreciative of this enjoyable evening learning about astronomy and telescopes, despite the cloudy sky, and they were gone by around 8:50 p.m.

Exploring the Stars, Space Society of London, February 29th, 2016

Cloudy, later partly clearing skies greeted 10 visitors from the Space Society of London—including the Society's President, undergraduate student Ian Mulholland—for Exploring the Stars at

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Western University's Cronyn Observatory, Monday, February 29th, 2016, 7:00 p.m. Graduate student Shannon Hicks presented the digital slide presentation "Big Bang" and fielded questions.

RASC London Centre was represented by Everett Clark, Tricia Colvin, Mark Tovey, Paul Kerans, Steve Gauthier, Peter Jedicke and Bob Duff. When everybody arrived upstairs in the dome, Shannon gave a talk about the big 25.4cm refractor. Everett directed the 25.4cm refractor (32mm Erfle eyepiece, 137X) towards the communications tower in south London. Shannon sat down at the top of the observing ladder to supervise as visitors climbed the steps to view the lights on the tower through the big telescope.

When the sky partly cleared, Shannon directed the 25.4cm refractor overhead and Bob located the star Capella in the telescope's field of view for the visitors to observe. Shannon soon redirected the 25.4cm refractor towards Jupiter, emerging from clouds in the east. Shannon and Everett swapped in the 18mm Radian eyepiece (244X) for a better view of Jupiter, but clouds of steam from the University's heating plant smeared the image and the 32mm Erfle eyepiece (137X) was swapped back in for a somewhat better view at lower magnification through the 25.4cm refractor.

Paul set up his Nikon 10 X 50mm binoculars on his Orion Parallelogram Mount and tripod on the roof patio outside the dome and invited visitors to view some landscape objects and, as the sky cleared, the Pleiades (M45), the Orion Nebula (M42) and Jupiter. The visitors were gone by 8:35 p.m. after a very enjoyable evening of astronomy.

Exploring the Stars, St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Secondary School, March 1st, 2016

Cloudy skies with some occasional light snow flurries greeted 5 visitors (4 students and one teacher) from the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Secondary School Grade-9 class for Exploring the Stars at Western University's Cronyn Observatory, Tuesday, March 1st, 2016, 6:00 p.m. Graduate student Kendra Kellogg made 2 digital slide presentations, beginning with the presentation "Mars" and followed by the presentation "Telescopes." Kendra fielded questions after the presentations.

RASC London Centre was represented by Everett Clark, Paul Kerans and Steve Gauthier, and they were soon joined by Bob Duff. The dome remained closed due to snowy conditions and Everett, Paul and Steve set up the observatory's 8-inch (20.3cm) Meade Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope, the London Centre's 25.4cm Dobsonian and Paul's Nikon 10 X 50mm binoculars on his Orion Parallelogram Mount and tripod, all inside the dome for display.

When everybody arrived upstairs in the dome, Steve gave a talk on the technical aspects of the big 25.4cm refractor and the Cassegrain reflector and Schmidt camera piggy-backed on the main telescope. He also showed them the 25.4cm Dobsonian—with the 17mm Nagler eyepiece (66X) used for demonstration—and the 8-inch (20.3cm) Schmidt-Cassegrain. He explained the difference between a refractor and reflector telescope and how each tele-

scope worked. Showing them Paul's 10 X 50mm binoculars on the parallelogram mount, Steve explained that binoculars were an excellent way to explore the sky and get started in astronomy. He also explained how the big 25.4cm telescope's motor drive compensated for the Earth's rotation as stars appeared to move from east to west across the sky and the difference between Standard and Sidereal Time, as shown on 2 the clocks on the east wall.

There were 5 "Moon Gazers' Guide" cards, 5 "Getting Started in Astronomy" (RASC, SkyNews [2015]) pamphlets and 5 "The RASC General Assembly and AstroCATS, May 19—23, 2016" posters taken by the 4 students and the teacher. The visitors were gone by 8:00 p.m. after an enjoyable evening learning about astronomy and telescopes, despite the cloudy sky and snowy weather.

Exploring the Stars, 1st Lambeth Girl Guides, March 3rd, 2016

Cloudy skies greeted 18 visitors (12 children and 6 adults / leaders) from the 1st Lambeth Girl Guides for Exploring the Stars at Western University's Cronyn Observatory, Thursday, March 3rd, 2016, 6:30 p.m. Graduate student Dilini Subasinghe presented the digital slide presentation "Girl Guide Astronomy Badge" and fielded questions. Dilini followed this with the activity "Telescope Kits," with the children assembling simple telescopes from small reusable kits.

RASC London Centre was represented by Everett Clark, Paul Kerans and Bob Duff. When everybody arrived upstairs in the dome, Bob gave a talk on the history of the Cronyn Observatory and some technical aspects of the big 25.4cm refractor. Bob also explained the Standard and Sidereal Time clocks on the east wall. Dilini rotated the dome to demonstrate how it worked but it remained closed due to cloudy skies and possible snow flurries. Paul showed them the wind turbine on the Engineering building through the London Centre's 25.4cm Dobsonian (17mm Nagler eyepiece, 66X) set up inside the dome door to the roof patio.

The visitors took 13 of the "Getting Started in Astronomy" (RASC, SkyNews [2015]) pamphlets laid out by Everett beside the computer on the table in the dome. The visitors were gone by 8:30 p.m. after a very enjoyable evening learning about astronomy, despite the cloudy weather.

Exploring the Stars, Dorchester Brownies & Sparks, March 7th, 2016

Mostly clear skies greeted 51 visitors (25 children and 26 adults / leaders) from the Dorchester Brownies and Sparks for Exploring the Stars at Western University's Cronyn Observatory, Monday, March 7th, 2016, 6:00 p.m. Graduate student Kendra Kellogg presented the digital slide presentation "Girl Guide Astronomy Badge" (title slide "The Basics") and fielded questions. Kendra followed this with the "Constellations Activity," distributing 25 "Star Finder" planispheres and showing the visitors how to assemble them. She then showed the visitors the slide "Reading a Star Finder" followed by several constellations slides from the

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astronomy software program “Stellarium” to help them learn how to use the planispheres.

RASC London Centre was represented by Everett Clark, Paul Kerans, Bob Duff, Tricia Colvin and Mark Tovey. Everett directed the big 25.4cm refractor (32mm Erfle eyepiece, 137X) towards the star Sirius in the still bright sky around 6:50 p.m. after sunset and swapped in the 18mm Radian eyepiece (244X) for a better view. Everett also set up the RASC London Centre’s 25.4cm Dobsonian (17mm Nagler eyepiece, 66X) and, later, the Cronyn Observatory’s 8-inch (20.3cm) Meade 2080/LX3 Schmidt-Cassegrain on the roof patio outside the dome. Paul also set up his Nikon 10 X 50mm binoculars on his Orion Parallelogram Mount and tripod on the roof patio.

When everybody arrived upstairs in the dome, Bob gave a talk on some of the history of the Cronyn Observatory and technical aspects of the big 25.4cm refractor. Bob also explained the Standard and Sidereal Time clocks on the east wall. At Bob’s suggestion the leaders divided everybody into 2 groups, with the Brownies lining up in the dome to view through the big 25.4cm refractor and the Sparks going outside to view through the telescopes set up on the roof patio. The 2 groups later switched with the Sparks coming back inside the dome to view through the big 25.4cm refractor and the Brownies going outside to view through the telescopes on the roof patio.

Everett showed the visitors Sirius and later Jupiter through the 25.4cm refractor (18mm Radian eyepiece, 244X). On the roof patio outside the dome, Paul showed them Sirius, Jupiter and the Orion Nebula (M42) through the 25.4cm Dobsonian (17mm Nagler eyepiece, 66X). They also viewed Jupiter through Paul’s Nikon 10 X 50mm binoculars on the parallelogram mount, which Bob supervised for a while and later redirected to show a few visitors M42. Tricia and Mark showed the visitors M42 through the 8-inch (20.3cm) Schmidt-Cassegrain (12.5mm Ortho eyepiece, 160X).

The visitors took 3 of the “Getting Started in Astronomy” (RASC, SkyNews [2015]) pamphlets and 6 of the “Moon Gazers’ Guide” cards laid out by Paul beside the computer on the table in the dome. The visitors were gone by 8:00 p.m. after a very enjoyable evening of astronomy.

Exploring the Stars, Exeter Christian Reformed Church Cadets and GEMS Clubs, March 9th, 2016

Hazy, cloudy skies greeted 38 visitors (27 children and 11 adults) from the Exeter Christian Reformed Church Cadets and GEMS Clubs for Exploring the Stars at Western University’s Cronyn Observatory, Wednesday, March 9th, 2016, 6:30 p.m. Graduate student Laura Lenkic presented the digital slide presentation for the “Girl Guide Astronomy Badge” (title slide “The Basics”) and fielded questions. Laura followed this with the “Constellations Activity,” distributing 38 “Star Finder” planispheres and showing the visitors how to assemble them with transparent adhesive tape. She then showed the visitors the slide “Reading a Star Finder” followed by one constellations slide from the astronomy software

program “Stellarium” to help them learn how to use the planispheres.

RASC London Centre was represented by Everett Clark, Paul Kerans and Bob Duff. When everybody arrived upstairs in the dome, Bob gave a talk on some of the history of the Cronyn Observatory and technical aspects of the big 25.4cm refractor. Bob also explained the Standard and Sidereal Time clocks on the east wall. Everett directed the big 25.4cm refractor (32mm Erfle eyepiece, 137X) towards the star Capella, faintly visible through the hazy clouds, and swapped in the 18mm Radian eyepiece (244X) to show the visitors a better view. On the roof patio outside the dome, Bob showed the visitors Capella through the London Centre’s 25.4cm Dobsonian (17mm Nagler eyepiece, 66X). Paul set up his Nikon 10 X 50mm binoculars on his Orion Parallelogram Mount and tripod on the roof patio, but it was not used. Capella seemed to be the only star visible in the sky.

Paul showed visitors 4 meteorites that he had brought including a slice of the Gibeon iron meteorite he had purchased from the American Museum of Natural History in New York and a carbonaceous chondrite meteorite, as well as samples of Moon and Mars meteorites in small display cases. These Paul invited visitors to examine with his microscope set up beside the computer on the table inside the dome.

The visitors took 10 of the “Getting Started in Astronomy” (RASC, SkyNews [2015]) pamphlet laid out by Everett beside the computer on the table in the dome. The visitors were gone by 8:30 p.m. after a very enjoyable evening of astronomy, despite the hazy, cloudy sky.

Cronyn Observatory Public Night, Saturday, March 12th, 2016

Hazy, cloudy skies greeted some 100 or more visitors to Western University’s Cronyn Observatory Public Night, Saturday, March 12th, 2016, 7:00 p.m. Graduate student Kendra Kellogg presented her digital slide presentation “Our Connection to the Cosmos” twice, with people coming downstairs from the dome for the second presentation (8:00 p.m.), which had 37 visitors in attendance. Undergraduate student William Hyland greeted and supervised visitors at the entrance of the Cronyn Observatory. RASC London Centre member Peter Jedicke reported 88 visitors in total (dome and lecture room) around 8:08 p.m. and, with more people arriving, there was an estimated 100 or more visitors by the end of the evening.

RASC London Centre was represented by Everett Clark, Paul Kerans, Charlene Kerans and Peter Jedicke, and they were joined by Bob Duff, who arrived around 7:57 p.m. Peter gave a talk on the history of the Cronyn Observatory and technical aspects of the big 25.4cm refractor. Graduate student Laura Lenkic was telescope operator for the first hour and left around 8:00 p.m., with Everett taking over operation of the big 25.4cm refractor in the dome. Visitors viewed the 4-day-past-new crescent Moon through hazy clouds in the 25.4cm refractor, first with the 32mm Erfle eyepiece (137X) and then the 52mm Erfle eyepiece (84X)

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for a better view. They also viewed Jupiter in the 25.4cm refractor through the 52mm Erfle eyepiece (84X) and then the 32mm Erfle eyepiece (137X).

On the roof patio outside the dome Charlene showed visitors the Moon and Jupiter and, briefly, the star Sirius through the London Centre's 25.4cm Dobsonian (17mm Nagler eyepiece, 66X). Paul set up his Nikon 10 X 50mm binoculars on his Orion Parallelogram Mount and tripod on the roof patio and Bob later used it to show a few visitors the communications tower in south London, with its red and white lights, and the Moon. Paul showed a few visitors 4 meteorites that he had brought including a stony-iron and an iron / nickel meteorite, as well as samples of Moon and Mars meteorites in small display cases.

There were 6 "Star Finder" planispheres, 20 "Moon Gazers' Guide" cards and 8 "Getting Started in Astronomy" (RASC, SkyNews [2015]) pamphlets distributed to visitors, who were mostly gone by around 9:00 p.m. after an enjoyable and informative evening of astronomy.