

Highlights for This Month

There were a lot of public observing events. We also have a report from **Marc Stowbridge** on the efforts of Cornerstones of Science regarding their goal to place a library telescope in every public library in Maine.

✧ Paul Winalski
NHAS Secretary 2012

Solar Observing, Friends of the Earth, Sea, and Space Center, Dover NH, 14 July 2012



Our dioramas (Ted Blank photo)



White light solar observing (Ted Blank photo)

NHAS set up our new blue pop-up tent in Henry Law Park in Dover for a day of solar observing and outreach as part of a craft fair sponsored by Friends of the Earth, Sea and Space. Helping out were **Gerry Smith, Peter Smith, Bob**

Veilleaux, and Ted Blank. Crowds were not heavy, I would estimate maybe 100 people total stopped by the booth. Clouds obscured the sun until about 2 PM, then we had two hours of beautiful clear sky before we broke camp at 4 PM. We handed out lots of literature, talked to a lot of nice people and may have gotten some new members. The big sunspot group that has been spitting out CMEs was the star of the show. We sold eclipse glasses for \$1 each and raised about \$25. The sunspot being visible through the eclipse glasses helped sell them.

✧ Ted Blank



Bob Veilleaux shows both white light and H α views (Ted Blank photo)

Gafney Library Sky Watch, Sanbornville NH, 24 July 2012

The skies cleared up very nicely for this sky watch. **Gardner Gerry, Ted Blank,** and I were there with telescopes. About fifty of the people showed up. There is a floodlight on Turntable Park itself, and the horizon view there isn't very good, so we set up in the parking lot. There were a few bothersome streetlights, but the skies themselves were quite dark.

We got this reply from the organizer:

"I want to thank you again for the wonderful experience you presented us with at the Skywatch on Thursday, July 24, at Turntable Park in Sanbornville for the Gafney Library. I received numerous favorable comments from children and adults, alike. Please extend my thanks to your colleagues. You were all so helpful and knowledgeable."

*"Diane Cassidy
Children's Librarian"*

✧ Paul Winalski

Tracy Memorial Library Sky Watch, New London NH, 25 July 2012

I made a poor call for the Tracy Memorial Library and it got clouded out. **Paul Winalski, John Bishop,** and **Bob Veilleaux.** showed up and left soon afterwards. I gave the presentation to a great group of about fifty kids and parents. The kids asked lots of interesting questions and I was able to stretch it out to an hour or so. Lots of positive feedback from the group and Library folks. They will try to reschedule for the fall.

The library gave us a donation and they are interested in acquiring a Library Scope.

✧ Gardner Gerry

Seabrook Library Sky Watch, Seabrook NH, 30 July 2012

We had excellent sky conditions, the only problem being the gibbous Moon in Sagittarius washing out the

summer Milky Way DSOs.

Gardner Gerry gave the indoor presentation and **Tom Cocchiaro** and I assisted with the sky watch proper. About twenty people showed up. We set up at the boat slip on the end of Farm Lane, and eventually had to pack up because the tide was coming in and threatened to strand Tom on a sand bar.

We got excellent views of Saturn (very steady seeing) and I also showed Mizar, Albireo, 61 Cygni, T Lyrae, M57, and M13. Gardner let me borrow his 8mm Ethos eyepiece and the view of M13 at 230X was spectacular!

✧ Paul Winalski

Philbrick-James Library Sky Watch, Deerfield NH, 1 August 2012

The sky watch was clouded out, but I did do an indoor presentation, and got this email reply:

"Good afternoon, Gardner.

"Thank you for taking time in your busy schedule to prepare the wonderful program which you shared with our small, but "excited about astronomy" audience. It was a very informative program.

"We will try to re-schedule the outdoor skywatch portion of the evening's entertainment for later in the fall.

*"Evelyn DeCota, Director
Philbrick-James Library"*

✧ Gardner Gerry

Whipple Free Library Sky Watch, New Boston NH, 7 August 2012

This event did take place on August 8. Skies were mostly overcast at first but then cleared very nicely. The skies were very dark, and viewing was marred only by a few floodlights on the library building (the Librarian thinks she can get them turned off next time). Several NHAS members participated: **Pat Adams, Herb Bubert, Gardner Gerry, Andy Jaffe, Larry Lopez, Scott McCartney, Gerry and Peter Smith, Paul Winalski.** At the end

of the evening I was able to show off several summertime Milky Way DSOs (M11, M16, Swan Nebula).

✧ Paul Winalski



A SCT roundup. Front to back 9.25", 11", 8", 6" (Pat Adams photo)

We made sure everyone could see Saturn, giving those who needed some time at the eyepiece a while so everyone was convinced they saw it. I went on to Alcor and Mizar, Albireo, M13, and NCG457 with a C-6 on a tripod at 43X.

✧ Andy Jaffe

I was there. Showed Saturn and M13 and M51 in the C9.25.

✧ Gardner Gerry

Hampstead Public Library Sky Watch, Hampstead NH, 8 August 2012

Gardner Gerry and John Bishop set up telescopes. I gave the indoor talk. About twenty people attended the indoor talk, most of whom also got to see Saturn through the haze. The northwest sky gradually cleared, allowing us to see an excellent ISS pass some double stars, M3, and M51. The site, at the end of the road that the library is on, is marred only by a couple of floodlights shining from the library building.

✧ Paul Winalski

Lakes Region Conservation Trust Night Excursion, 13 August 2012

Ted Blank and I were there... We each spoke about stars and anything else we could think of as we waited, hoping for more breaks in the clouds. There were about forty or so people there, and they were very enthusiastic! A library telescope was there, and I told the crowd about the program. Ted got a standing ovation from everyone for traveling so far (OK, it was in a field and there were no chairs, but the ovation was real enough).

The site is quite dark, and will provide wonderful views, if the weather cooperates next time.

✧ Marc Stowbridge

Hesser College Sky Watch, Concord NH, 14 August 2012

The Hesser College event took place as scheduled. I presented the standard "what's up in tonight's sky" and photos of deep sky and planets made by NHAS members. There were about twenty or so students there.

✧ Gardner Gerry

Observing Report and Mirror Cleaning Questions, Nashua NH, 16 August 2012

I had noticed that the mirror of my OA-9 had gunk on it, so I washed it with soapy water, an alcohol rinse, many water rinses, ending with distilled water rinses. The gunk was still there. The mirror has several hundred dots which up close look like small squashed mosquitoes: brown centers and faint radial lines. The don't project up out of the surface. Although there are lots of them, I don't notice a fuzziness when I look at reflections.

Any one out there have some suggestions? I'd really rather not touch the mirror surface with anything other than liquids!

Despite the spots, I set up my OA-9 last night in my mag-3 in-town back yard. The last few years have been good for the trees and bad for my sky; less than ever is visible but I can see the “top” of the sky with some narrowing arms going lower down. Then I had Lyra, Cygnus, Cassiopeia, Cepheus Boötes and a few others to look at.

I had spent some time inside re-targeting the focuser tube so that it was as square to the secondary as I could get it, so I had to re-collimate a bit. That went really quickly because I’ve made a cover for the upper cage and had painted a white dot near its center to mark the place that a laser in the focuser tube hit the cover after I had carefully star-collimated the telescope some time ago. So collimation was a simple matter of adjusting the secondary so that the laser dot hit the center of the primary and then adjusting the primary so that the laser dot hit the white dot on the cover (which of course has a mark so that it’s always put on in the same orientation). That got me close enough that I only needed a few tweaks during star collimation.

The sky was still, with fair seeing (no arcs, no ring, but steady small star images). It was good enough that I could resolve some of the brighter stars in M71, the small globular cluster M71 in Sagitta. Double stars split really well at low powers (e.g. the double-double split both pairs at 91x, which is my TeleVue zoom at lowest magnification setting). Nice color contrasts on colored stars, too. α Herc., η Cas., β Cyg., η Lyr., γ Del., etc.

I could see some detail within the ring in M57. It looked as though the ring were constructed of overlapping arcs.

Saturn had set behind a neighbor’s house by the time I was ready to observe, so no planetary report!

Not a long session, but a fun one.

✳ John Bishop

LTP in Maine

Tomorrow the world! We have this report from Susan Ryan of Cornerstones of Science concerning their deployment of library telescopes in Maine:

“Over fifty people came out to view the night sky last Thursday (12 July) at the Star Party hosted by Pittsfield Public Library. Forrest Sumner and Ron Thompson of the Southern Maine Astronomers (SMA) dazzled new stargazers with views of the Alberio, Saturn and the Ring Nebula (see image right)..

“Pittsfield joined forces with SMA and with help from nearby Cornerstones libraries, Newport and Hartland (graciously lending their telescopes for the event), were able to offer local residents an array of viewing stations. Partnerships like these, and libraries working together in creative ways to bring science to life at local libraries are just part of the Cornerstones of Science experience.

“In the past month, we have hosted 4 workshops in Maine to distribute telescopes and train librarians on the fundamentals of telescope viewing, so that they, in turn, can share their knowledge with their patrons. We are pleased to announce that as of this date, twenty libraries have adopted a telescope, and have begun lending them out for use by families and adults this summer and all year round.”

✳ Marc Stowbridge

NHAS July 2012 Business Meeting

The July business meeting was held at St. Anselm College on 13 July 2012, our President **John Bishop** presiding.

Evening Presentation

In a departure from our usual order of business, we started the meeting with a presentation from Tom Field: an Introduction to Spectroscopy for the amateur astronomer. Tom gave his presentation over the Internet.

The teleconference link worked very well.

President’s Report

We received a commendation from the Governor’s Council for our work with the Discovery Center.

There have been a lot of successful public sky watch events.

We have lately received lots of newspaper publicity. We must be prepared to talk to reporters about our club, and be prepared for photographers at our observing events.

Burn-out is becoming an issue for our members who are active in our public outreach programs. We need more members to step up and participate.

It’s not too early to start thinking about officer nominations for 2013. Both our current President and Vice President have served two consecutive terms in their respective offices and therefore aren’t eligible for reelection.

Most of the action items from April’s Officers’ Meeting have been done:

- We have extended the Rey Center outreach program.
- We acquired and awarded prizes for this year’s Astronomy Bowl.
- Planning for the 2012 New England Fall Astronomy Festival (NEFAF) has started.
- The sky watch planning process has been improved.

Board of Directors

Chairman **Gardner Gerry** reported that NHAS received a commendation from the Governor of New Hampshire and his Executive Council for our volunteer work for the McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center. Dan St. Hilaire (a founding NHAS member) presented the commendation to Gardner, who was representing NHAS at the event.

We received donation of a 10” Orion classic dob. It will be available as a club loaner scope.

Educational Outreach

Scott McCartney reported that **Matt Amar** is stepping down as co-chair of EOC and Scott will take his place.

The New England Fall Astronomy Festival (NEFAF) takes place September 21-22. NHAS has a major supporting role in this event. The date conflicts with the NHAS business meeting on Friday and on Saturday with Portsmouth sidewalk astronomy. John Bishop will work on a solution.

Library Telescope Program: The last of the scopes donated by Oceanside Photo and Telescope (OPT) are being distributed. Now that we have sixty scopes being deployed, the program will be more formalized now. **Ted Blank** has set up a forum for LTP on the NHAS website. If you are a mentor for an LTP scope, please post news about your scope on the website.

We would like to increase the NHAS presence on Facebook.

Rey Center update: We have designated astronomers for the Rey Center events through the end of 2012, but there are not back-up astronomers assigned for all of them. There were not a lot of people there in May, but as we move into the fall season there should be more.

Public Observing

Paul Winalski reported that we continue to have a busy, and successful, summer sky watch season. Interest from libraries is way up, no doubt due to LTP.

Membership

Volunteers are needed to present Astro 101/201 workshops. Also, there is a workshop you would like to see presented, contact Bill Steele.

Miscellaneous Business

We still need a guest speaker for November 2012, and we need speakers for all of 2013. We also need a Scope of the Month and Book of the Month for every month next year.

Joel Harris is planning the annual NHAS outing to Stellafane, which

takes place on August 16-19. Gardner Gerry will be bringing the club tarp.

Gadget of the Month

Ted Blank presented gear ties—reusable rubber twist ties that can be used to hold tripod legs and other such items together.

Scope of the Month

Mike Townsend presented a Celestron 80mm doublet APO, with diffraction-limited optics.

Meteorite of the Month

Bob Veilleux presented an iron meteorite that is part of the Gibbean meteorite from Namibia. It is believed to be from the core of an asteroid.

The Bottom Line

Starting Balance:	\$8384.73
Deposits/Credits:	
Membership:	30.00
Donations:	200.00
Bank interest:	0.64
Total :	230.64
Accounts/Paid:	
Rackspace Cloud:	22.87
Pro Portsmouth (deposit returned)	75.00
Total:	52.13
Net Account Balance:	\$9667.50
Petty cash drawer:	\$100.00
Cash Balance:	\$9767.50

EOC Share: **5211.57**

Membership: 138

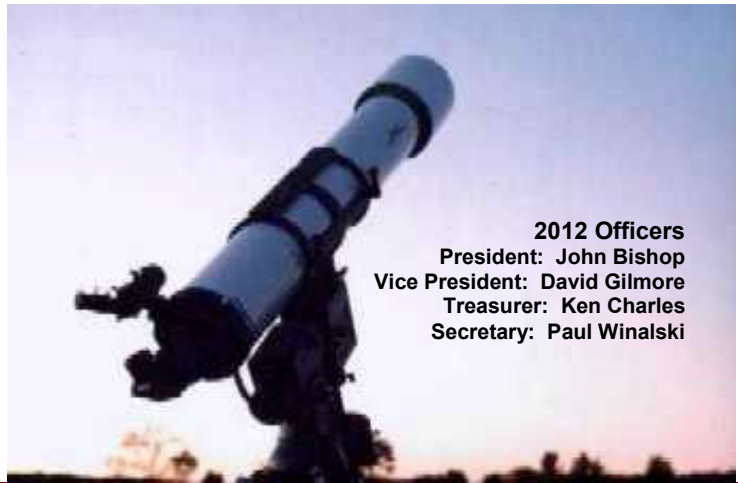
New Members:

Henry Barnard, Portsmouth NH

Donations:

Dunbar Free Library 200.00

* Ken Charles
NHAS Treasurer 2012



2012 Officers
President: John Bishop
Vice President: David Gilmore
Treasurer: Ken Charles
Secretary: Paul Winalski

DEADLINE September 2012 Issue: 5 PM September 13

E-mail articles to the Editor.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS – Notify the Treasurer of changes to postal or e-mail address.

How to Join N.H.A.S.

Write to us:

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 P.O. Box 5823
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 Attn: Treasurer

Send E-mail to:

info@nhastro.com

Use our web site:

<http://www.nhastro.com/>

This month's contributors:

Ted Blank, Gardner Gerry, Andy Jaffe, John Bishop, Marc Stowbridge

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NHAS Upcoming Events

Event	Date	Time	Location
Stellafane 2012	August 16-19	all day	Breezy Hill, Springfield VT
Rey Center Sky Watch	August 18	9:00 PM	Curious George Cottage, Waterville Valley NH
Rocket Race Solar Observing	August 25	8:30 AM	McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center, Concord NH
Sidewalk Astronomy	August 25	6:00 PM	Market Square, Portsmouth NH
Lafayette Place Campground Sky Watch	August 30	8:30 PM	Lafayette Place Campground, Franconia NH
Discovery Center Sky Watch	September 7	7:30 PM	McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center, Concord NH
Bedford High School Sky Watch	September 13	8:00 PM	Benedictine Park, Bedford NH
Fall Messier Marathon	September 14	5:00 PM	Wickett Residence, Lyndeborough NH
Astro 101: Navigating the Night Sky	September 14	7:30 PM	YFOS
Owls Landing Campground Sky Watch	September 15	7:30 PM	Owls Landing Campground, Holderness NH
Rey Center Sky Watch	September 15	8:00 PM	Curious George Cottage, Waterville Valley NH
Goffstown High School Sky Watch	September 18	7:30 PM	Goffstown High School, Goffstown NH