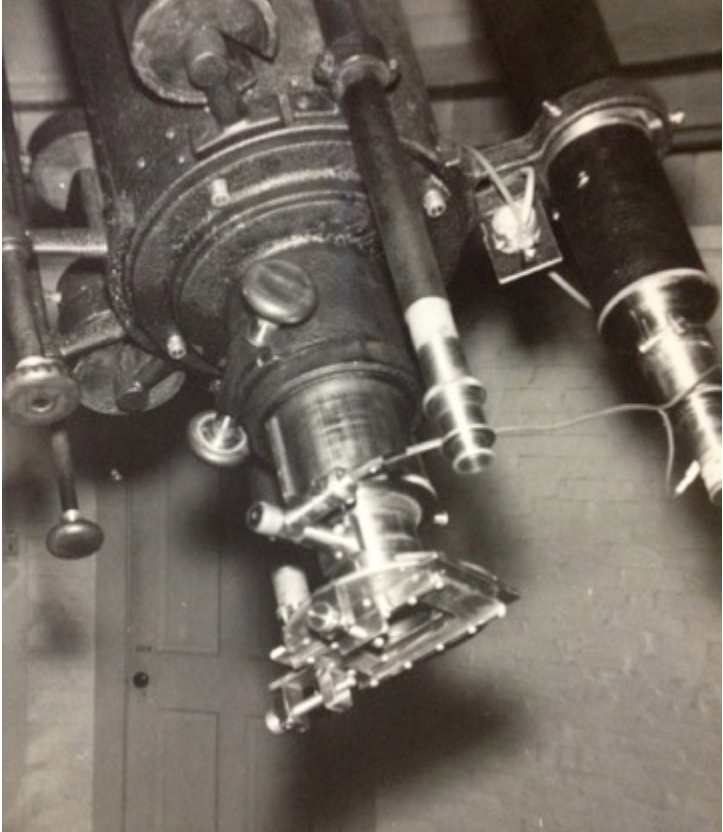


Friends of the Observatory

Issue #22 December 2017

Winter Solstice



Astrophotography – Then and Now

Amateur

The origins of the word “amateur” can be traced to the Latin word *amator*, or lover. Whether “professional” astronomers, “amateur” astronomers, or just curious, the Observatory has been the place where we all gather to share our love of the night sky and together explore our place in the universe.

Sky-Gazing Illini circa 1922

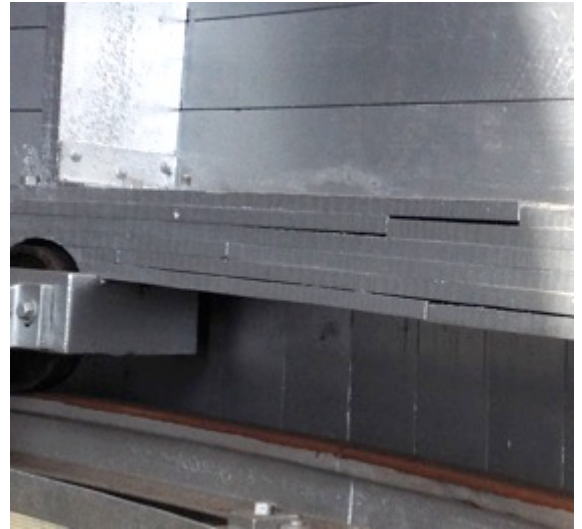
“The room is without heat and is open to the sky. Here, in romantic revelry, come students, pair by pair, children taken with a sudden hobby of stars and some truly curious people from the two cities, among them a number of foreign students. In awed silence, at the thought of seeing the heavens laid bare of its glamour of distance, with Mars and its canals and poles and the man in the moon, sit the visitors in the round bare room at this foot of Olympus.”

Holly Pomeroy, *Daily Illini*, 20 Dec 1922, page 6.

Update: Homecoming 2017 and plans for 2018

The 6th annual Homecoming open house welcomed approximately a hundred visitors even with cloudy skies. The following Saturday was a work day with Friends Craig Sutter, Dave Ryan, Matt and Natascha Vogel, Mike Svec and Frank Oriold teaming up with UIAS members Landon Gelman and Raj Majumder. Projects included replacing the casters on the ladder (see picture lower right), cleaning the clock room, and improving the exhibit space. Repairs of the shortwave radio and the H-alpha filter plus new exhibit signs were the results of donations by Craig Sutter, Dave Ryan, and Mike Svec.

At the Saturday board meeting we welcomed new board members Frank Oriold, Joaquin Vieira, and the current UIAS president Dawn Haken. University campus planner Tony Battaglia updated the board on the architectural feasibility study, cost estimates, and the potential timeline for critical repairs to the roof and exterior of the building. A historic plaque is progressing through the university committees. After reviewing the recent repairs to the dome shutter, the board voted to fund additional repair work. The dome's supporting sill is constructed of six layers of wood that have begun to pull apart and sag (see picture upper right). Work will be completed by summer 2018. Plan ahead for the next Homecoming on Saturday October 13, 2018.



Above: Raj Majumder and Frank Oriold work on the ladder.

Below: An Alumni Association camera crew filmed the open house for a future production.

BOARD MEMBERS

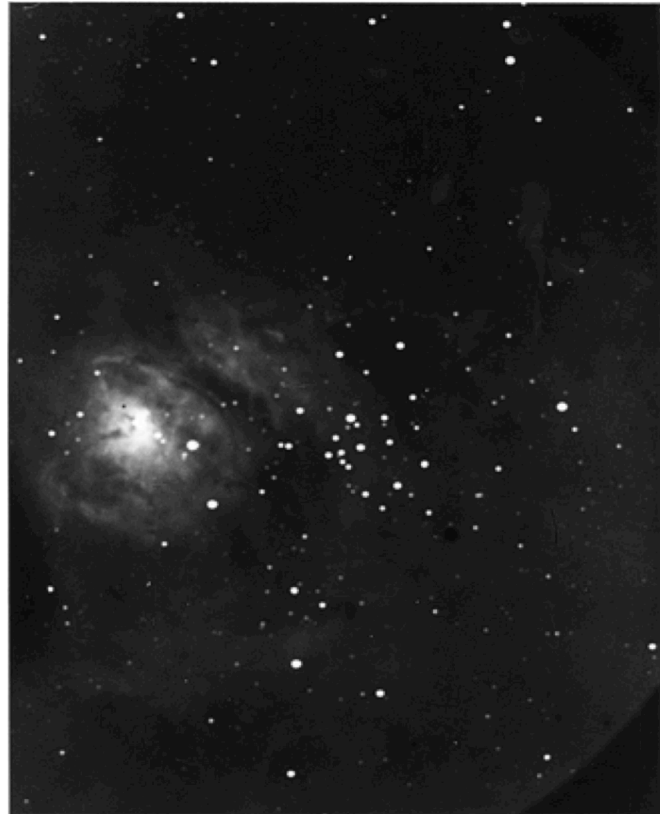
Michael Svec, FUIO President, Furman University
 Dawn Haken, Student, UIAS president
 David Leake, FUIO Secretary, Parkland College
 Steve Licata, Jet Propulsion Laboratory
 Joaquin Vieira, University of Illinois Dept. of Astronomy
 Michael McCann, FUIO Treasurer, Chase Bank
 Frank Oriold, Kleinschmidt Inc
 David Ryan, Republic Bank of Chicago
 Craig Sutter, Retired
 Matthew Vogel, Baxter Healthcare



Then and now: A history of astrophotography



M-13 by Landon Gelman on April 21, 2017 with a Canon 450 D, 31 stacked exposures, 25 seconds each for a total of 13 minutes.



M8 The Lagoon Nebula by Fred Wefer on May 4, 1962 with the plate camera at prime focus using 103a E glass plate film, 2 ½ hour exposure with continuous guiding.



The moon taken with Olympus SRL camera and eyepiece projection on Tech pan film.



Orion Nebula by Mike Svec on October 25, 1986 with the Olympus SRL camera, a 15-minute exposure on 1000 ASA film at prime focus.

Thank you

Over the last year your donations helped us surpass our goal and fund a plaque and the repairs to the dome shutter. Since 2011 the Friends have helped secure over \$87,000 in donations. Thank you for your contributions toward the preservation of the Observatory. We are a proud example of “to thy happy children of the future, those of the past send greetings.”

The Friends’ Board wishes to thank **Edward Murphy** for 6 years of service on the Board. We appreciate his experience and insights. We also want to thank past Astronomy Department chair **Brian Fields** for his support of our efforts and encouragement, as well as past UIAS president **Thomas Kirsh** for his leadership among the undergraduates.

How to Contribute

Your support has contributed to the preservation of the Observatory and the telescope. Your continued assistance and



advocacy is needed. Tax-deductible gifts can be made through the University of Illinois Foundation. **Direct the gift to the Friends of the Observatory**

(# 340897). Learn how to contribute by visiting the web site below:

observatory.astro.illinois.edu/friends/donate/

Who are we?

The Friends of the University of Illinois Observatory is an advisory committee to the Department of Astronomy committed to the preservation of the National Historic Landmark Observatory and to enhance its educational, cultural and economic value for the people of Illinois.

In order to accomplish its mission, the Friends of the University of Illinois Observatory shall:

- Support maintaining and improving the observatory building, surrounding land, and collection of historical artifacts in order to retain the physical integrity expected of a National Historic Landmark.
- Plan and document to assist in maintaining the Observatory in a historically accurate manner.
- Support the Department of Astronomy through diligent conservation, maintenance, preservation and restoration efforts.
- Promote public programming and provide educational opportunities and resources for the public at large, school and university educators and students, and professional and amateur astronomers.

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<http://observatory.astro.illinois.edu/>