



AU AstroNews

The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

September 2024

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History



Secretary, Andy Allen, sets up his scope for the public at a recent SBMNH Star Party. Photo: T. Totton.

OUTREACH SUMMARY

SBAU volunteers must have undergone the SBMNH background check, and conform with the SBMNH policies for dealing with the public, to participate in outreach activities. To get vetted, contact SBMNH Volunteer Manager Rebecca Coulter <rcoulter@sbnature2.org>. It's quick and painless.

Since the last newsletter, certified SBAU/SBMNH volunteers Brandy Ackerman, Henk Aling, Andy Allen, Tim Crawford, Joe Doyle, David Feinberg, Tessa Flanagan, Morgan & Brian Green, Art Harris, Ronnie Herron, Mary & Sean Kelly, Ila Komasa, David Larson, Mike Lawson, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Bruce Murdock, Edgar Ocampo, Javier Rivera, Charles Schueler, Cez & Tom Totton, Diane

Welcenbach, Tom Whittmore, Lee Wilkerson, and Andre Yew showed the sky to ***1082*** guests. Jen Ito and Chuck Wood helped out.

OUTREACH EVENTS FOR SEPTEMBER

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 7 PM

Our monthly meeting in Fleischmann Auditorium at SBMNH. This will be a hybrid meeting, also on Zoom. Watch your email or find the link on the SBAU web page. Our speaker will be Dr. Joseph Masiero of Caltech/IPAC on the NEOWISE mission's hunt for dangerous asteroids

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, SETUP 7 PM

Telescopes for campers at Refugio State Beach, setup in the southwest corner of the day use parking lot.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, SETUP 7 PM

Telescope Tuesday at the Camino Real Marketplace, in the plaza by the theater.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, SETUP 7 PM

Telescopes for Carpinteria State Beach. We set up next to the sidewalk to the south of the entry kiosk.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 4:30 PM

AU monthly planning meeting on Zoom. Watch your email for the link.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, SETUP 7 PM

Monthly Public Star Party at SBMNH, next to Palmer Observatory, 8 to 10 PM. **International Observe the Moon Night!**

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, SETUP 7 PM

Monthly Public Telescope Night at Westmont, at the Keck Observatory, next to the athletic fields.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jerry Wilson

Pat and I just returned from three weeks in London and the Republic of Ireland. Ireland was home to a major portion of each of our families up until 1847. It's referred to as black '47 in Ireland. Amazingly, it felt like going home. The people there have the same crazy sense of humor and colloquialisms that I heard from my family growing up.

It's a beautiful place and well worth a visit. It rained part of every day, but we did get short and sudden periods of sunshine periodically. The Irish part of the trip was based on a guided week long hike by "BackRoads". We did a portion of the Kerry Way which is a hiking trail that roughly follows the Ring of Kerry. We hiked it; the locals run it. We hiked up to ten miles each day from one hotel to another, in a sense emulating another old Irish tradition known as a pub crawl.

Before the Back Roads hike, we visited Birr Castle where the Earl of Rosse built the largest telescope in the world, in 1845. At 72 inches it was the largest until the 100 inch Hooker telescope was built on Mount Wilson in 1917. The 6 foot diameter mirror was made of Speculum, an alloy of copper and tin, that is highly reflective when polished. However it tarnishes quickly and needs to be repolished and refigured every 6 months. Located in central Ireland, Birr castle gets, on average, 60 clear nights per year.

Despite these inconveniences, the telescope gave the first views of the structure of several circumpolar nebulae. The term "spiral nebula" was coined to describe the appearance of galaxies such as M51 and M101. At that time the true nature of universe with regard to galaxies was not known.

It's worth a trip. As I write this we are at day 8 of our Covid infection. It was still worth the trip.



Tim Crawford ponders the night sky for an interesting object to share with his newly-built 6" f/4 telescope. Photo: T. Totton.

MERCHANDISE AVAILABLE, 9/6/24!

Pat McPartlin, the Merch Manager, will have all merchandise for selling before and after the club meeting on Friday, September 6, 2024. Come early at 6pm-7pm to Fleischmann Auditorium at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History and buy club merchandise to support the club! There will be a little time after the speaker finishes until 9:15pm to clean up, because the hall closes at 9:30pm. Look on the [SBAU.org/Store](https://www.sbau.org/Store) tab for all items that the club sells. If you have any questions, you can reach Pat by email to: merchmgr@sbau.org

CAMPOUT AND POTLUCK!

Cachuma Lake Campout and Potluck for SBAU members: Camping Oct 25th - Oct 27th.
Potluck is Saturday evening Oct 26th.
More info will be forthcoming
RSVP to Diane at Events@SBAU.org

ARTS CORNER

"Every passing hour brings the Solar System forty-three thousand miles closer to Globular Cluster M13 in Hercules – and still there are some misfits who insist that there is no such thing as progress."
- RANSOME K. FERN

A Letter from Never Before

Ted Kooser

It arrived with the rest of the mail
in our box by the road, came
bearing a standard Forever stamp.

a little American flag, and the letter
handwritten in pencil. “You don’t
know me, “ it opened. “Never before

have I written to you....” It had a quaint
syntax, its rhythm like that of
a waltz that was ever so gracefully

taking me into its arms. It had no
past to offer, only the present, as if
everything started from there,

with that Never Before, and this
on such an ordinary day, a few clouds,
birds flying high in the clouds,

then this, a few words of thanks,
carefully chosen and shaped
with a No. 2 pencil, which I knew

had been recently sharpened,
all this from a stranger, setting out
for Forever from Never Before.

Dogs

by [Aaron Kramer](#)

Looking foolish next to the tree in a one o'clock rain:
umbrella aloft, the leash in my other hand—
I wanted my late-coming neighbor to understand
that dogs are worth the expense, inconvenience, and pain;

their tails are truthful, no coiled rebellion beneath
a loving look; they are quick to kiss you, and quick
to fetch for you, and —should you raise a stick
threateningly—they are quick to show their teeth;

and better still (but this I never revealed),
when you bring downfall home, the death of a hope,
their nonchalant manner does more for you than a drink;
and best of all, when triumph's to be unsealed,
such lack of respect they show for the envelope,
—your fingers halt, the brain cools, and you think.

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SBMNH Astronomy Programs Manager CURRENTLY VACANT

AU AstroNews, the monthly publication of the
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SEPTEMBER 2024						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 NEW MOON	3	4	5	6 SBAU HYBRID MEETING 7PM	7 REFUGIO STATE BEACH 7PM
8	9	10 FQ MOON CAMINO REAL MARKETPLACE 7PM	11	12 CARPINTERIA STATE BEACH 7PM	13 EL CAPITAN STATE BEACH 8PM	14 ZOOM PLANNING MEETING 4:30PM STAR PARTY 7PM
15	16	17 FULL MOON	18	19	20 WESTMONT PUBLIC STAR PARTY 7PM	21
22	23	24	25 LQ MOON	26	27	28
29	30					