

THE NEWSLETTER OF

THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA -KINGSTON CENTRE

and the QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY ASTRONOMY CLUB.

Dec.1,1977

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"Greetings again and Good Observing during the winter season!"

Everyone who came enjoyed hearing Dr. A.H. Batten's talk at our last meeting. We all appreciated it and we wish him well in all his endeavours in the future.

Along with his usual work, and his duties in connection with being President of the R. A. S. C., Mr. Batten is now engaged in the planning for the I. A. U. (International Astronomical Union) Congress which is to take place in Montréal in August of 1979 (Aug.14-24.) This is the first such event ever held in Canada, and its planning requires a lot of work. I mentioned to him something about helping with some of the behind-the-scenes preparations, and he said that he could be contacted if anyone were interested, and so if you think you could help out before or during the big event, let me know and we will contact Dr. Batten. (I hope to be able to offer some help at the time of the assembly.) If you want to find out what some of these assemblies are like, I would refer you to Sky and Telescope (Nov. 1976) where the last such event, held in Grenoble. France, is reported.

While mentioning the subject of I. A. U. General Assemblies, I should say that the Canadian who has attended more of them than anyone else is Dr. A. V. Douglas, Honorary President of our own centre. Perhaps next year we will be lucky enough to have her come and speak to us about some of them.

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O.K. IS O.K.

In the past year or more, the popular press has had many articles reporting on the discoveries or so-called discoveries of objects/in the Solar System - firstly, the supposed discovery of the so-called 'Planet-X', and secondly, the actual discovery of the ring-system of Uranus, and now an object that will probably attract just as much attention as the others. For those who have not yet read about it, it is 'Object-Kowal', nicknamed "O.K.".

Within the past several months, C.Kowal of the Hale Observatory on Mount Palomar in California, has confirmed the existence of an object far out in the solar system, beyond the orbit of Saturn.

This gives rise to a number of questions. Is it an asteroid? If so, is there another asteroid belt out between the orbits of

Saturn and Uranus? Will there be many more 'asteroids' discovered far out in the Solar System? Is it a comet? Will it be followed and studied for months to come? Or, is it a satellite that long ago escaped from an outer planet?

As yet there is no answer to any of these questions. The object - whatever it is - has merely been named after its discoverer, and so is called 'Object Kowal'. Mr. Kowal is already well-known for his discovery in 1974 of Jupiter's Satellite XIII (Leda) and the subsequent search for a fourteenth Jovian moon. As one of his colleagues said, "If Kowal says it's there, it's there."

Welcome, O.K. You're O.K.

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#### THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE FOR ANYONE.

One of the most heartening stories in a long time was the one which appeared in last month's issue of Sky and Telescope - the one that told the story of the discovery of a comet by an amateur in California. This person was using a very ordinary eight-inch telescope. (yes; and his name was not Bradfield, and he had not been conducting a half-century search for comets.)

There is hope for anyone -even in North America. Let's get some members interested in the coming year. Who Knows??????

By the way, it has been a long time since a Canadian has had his name put to a comet, and only two have done it.

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#### IT'S A SCI-FI WORLD IN 1977.

The old cliché told us that 'Today's science-fiction is tomorrow's science-fact.' If that be true, then today's movie-viewers must certainly want to know tomorrow's facts. (Or is it the movie mogul's mania for money?)

Remember the especially successful one called "2001 - A Space ~~Kixey~~ Odyssey"? How many times have your friends seen "Star Wars"? For how many months have we been reading the advance notices for "Close Encounters of the Third Kind"? The byline is 'We are not alone.' The very latest extravaganza is one called: "Starship Invasions" (The byline is 'We know they are here. What do they want?') No doubt, there will be many more of them in the coming weeks and months.

Who is ready to come forward with the study of the mind of

the typical entertainment-seeker of 1977. the study we are awaiting to tell us how much of it is due to escapism and sensationalism, and how much is due to an interest in learning and in the possibilities of CETI (Communication with Extraterrestrial Intelligence.)

If you intend to make it your study, send me a copy before you publish it so that it can appear first on these pages.

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Watch For The Next Issue

In the next issue, I hope to publish the schedule containing the main feature of each of the meetings between January 10<sup>th</sup> and May 30<sup>th</sup>: 1978. There is still a chance to give a presentation for some of these meetings. See me soon if you wish to have your name appear on the schedule.

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PLEASE REMEMBER THESE DATES

- 1 THE MEETING OF DECEMBER 6th, 1977.  
SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER:  
DR. JOHN R. PERCY, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT, R.A.S.C.  
(AN OUTSTANDING ASTRONOMER AND THE  
EDITOR OF THE OBSERVER'S HANDBOOK)

TIME AND PLACE:

8:00 p.m. ELLIS HALL ROOM 222  
PLEASE COME AND BRING A FRIEND.

- 2 THE MEETING OF TUE. DECEMBER 20<sup>th</sup>, 1977.  
SPECIAL ACTIVITY:  
DISPLAY YOUR BOOKS AND MAGAZINES AND PRINTED  
MATTER DEALING WITH ASTRONOMY

TIME AND PLACE:

8:00 p.m. ELLIS HALL ROOM 222.

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The topic of Dr. Percy's speech is "PULSATING STARS."

*Leo.*