



REGULUS

MAY-JUNE 1994

NEWSLETTER OF THE KINGSTON CENTRE
OF THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA

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CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME: Articles, notes on observations, humour, poetry, artwork, anything on astronomy or related topics, are invited. Submitted material may be edited for brevity or clarity. Contributions should be sent to the **Editor** as follows:

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MEETINGS AND EVENTS HORIZON

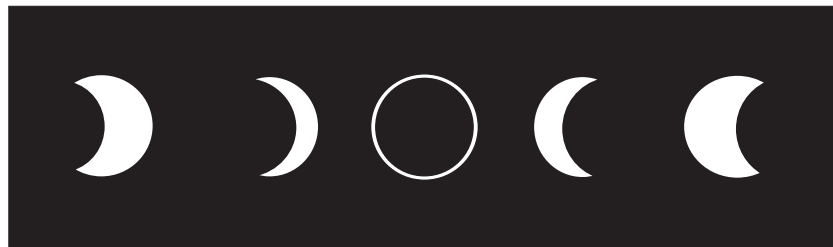
Regular Meetings of the Kingston Centre, RASC, are held on the **second Friday** of each month (unless noted otherwise) at **8 p.m.**, in **Room B-201, Mackintosh-Corry Hall, Queen's University**. **Non-members are welcome.** Executive Council Meetings are at 7 p.m.

Tues., May 10 **ANNULAR ECLIPSE.** Start 11:48 am.
Mid 1:30 p.m. End 3:12 p.m.

Fri., May 13 **REGULAR MEETING.** Speakers, Rob Dick & Glenn Ledrew (Ottawa Centre), "Astronomy and Videography."

Fri., June 10 **REGULAR MEETING.** Speaker, Cathy Hall (Ottawa Centre), "Astronomy in Available Light Photography."

Fri., July 8 **REGULAR MEETING.** Speaker, Gord Taylor. "Gravitational Lenses."



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THE MARCH 1994 NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

By Walter MacDonald, National Council Rep

A national council meeting was held in Toronto on Saturday, March 5th. This meeting turned out to be quite boring after all the high drama of the previous two meetings! The meeting was to be adjourned at 5pm but had to be extended to 5:30 to finish everything on the agenda. Here are the highlights...

President Peter Broughton opened his report with some good news. He announced that Terry Dickinson had had an asteroid (#5272) named after him. Terry was informed of this during a recent Quirks & Quarks show on CBC radio. (Another Canadian with an asteroid named in his honour was present at this meeting --Allan Batten, from Victoria.) Peter told us that he and other RASC members had made presentations to the Royal Commission on Learning, and were recommending that Astronomy be a compulsory unit in high school. Hopefully this will come to pass. The Helm Fund GIC has come up for renewal, and has been put into a balanced mutual fund since GIC rates are now quite low (about 3%). The controversy involving the London Centre has been resolved to the satisfaction of all the parties involved. The controversy involving Montreal Centre appears to be on the road to resolution: the expelled member has been attending meetings again, and the centre president has asked the centre executive to reverse their expulsion order.

It was announced that the office of 2nd vice-president will remain open until the GA this July, since anyone filling the position between now and the GA will not be allowed to run for the position again at the GA. Two consecutive terms are not allowed by the society's by-law. The by-laws will be amended this year at the annual meeting to allow anyone serving an interim position to stay on for a full term immediately afterwards. In some good news, Mike Watson has agreed to stand for nomination for the position of 1st vice-president at the upcoming GA. Peter then informed us that Terry Hicks will be stepping down as treasurer at the upcoming GA. Terry has been ably filling the role of treasurer for two (rather stormy!) years now and his dedication to organizing the society's finances will definitely be missed.

Secretary Randall Brooks gave his report next. The National Capital Commission is looking for ideas on the commemoration of significant individuals in Canada. Anyone with any ideas in this regard should contact Randall directly. The terms of the society's national insurance policy have been looked into closely. Liability coverage for personal injury applies to any sanctioned official function of an RASC centre. This means there is no provision for property damage, and no coverage of any kind for private observatories. The insurance policy was originally purchased to cover Astronomy Day events (mall displays and star parties) held by centres, and it may not cover other events. Two resignations were received: Frank Shepley (Windsor Centre) has resigned as chair of the Membership and Promotion Committee, and as a member of the Computer Use and Light Pollution committees; Suzanne Moreau (Montreal Centre) has resigned as centre rep and from the Membership & Promotion and Long Range Planning committees. A revised RASC manual is due out in the near future. Niagara Centre has a new e-mail address: RASCNIAG@spartan.ac.brocku.ca. A new Messier Certificate application form was distributed, and allows candidates who can't find witnesses (say if they are unattached members or live in an isolated location) to apply.

Treasurer Terry Hicks reported that the Millman Fund GIC of \$101,600 is coming up for renewal. This will be split into two GICs so that it will be covered by CIDC. Terry has made a change to the national council meeting travel expenses: if any of the funding for a particular meeting goes unused, the surplus will be carried over to the next meeting (but not beyond the end of the year). The 1994 budget prepared by the Finance Committee was, after some discussion, approved.

Terry also discussed the issue of charitable donation receipts for RASC membership. Both he and Mike Watson had spoken with Revenue Canada and been given different information. A vote was taken, and it was decided to not issue receipts without something in writing saying that we are allowed to do so.

Librarian Garry Woodcock announced that some books had been received from the London Centre, which has finished liquidating its library.

A report from the Observer's Handbook editor, Roy Bishop (Halifax Centre) was read. About 13 000 1994 handbooks were printed, and due to slower sales about 1000 fewer 1995 handbooks will be printed. The idea of using a spiral binding for the handbook was voted down.

Beginner's Observing Guide (BOG) editor Leo Enright (Kingston Centre) reported that sales of the guide were going well. Unfortunately, little headway has been made with Scouts Canada on listing the guide in their catalog. Efforts in this regard are continuing however.

1st vice president Doug Hube (Edmonton Centre) gave the Publications Committee report. Work by Dave Lane (Halifax Centre) on the combined Journal/Bulletin mockup is proceeding on schedule, and should be available for this summer's GA. Some desktop publishing software (PageMaker) has been purchased for this project: Up to \$1000 from the Centennial Fund was approved at this meeting to help complete this project. It was felt by several people present that, due to the importance of this venture, the final mockup should be as "real" and of as high a quality as possible. To achieve this, it was felt that (after the mockup is complete and been examined by national council) the services of a professional graphics designer should be employed to tweak the mockup into final form. Also, it was felt that the final copy should be professionally printed so that it will be of the same quality as the eventual publication will be (if it is ultimately approved).

Doug also reported on the Edmonton Centre's grazing occultation expedition to Fort Nelson. The clouds thinned enough just before the event to allow most of the stations to get good observations. After some more work the data will be sent to IOTA. The expedition was welcomed by several hundred people (most of the town's population!) and was even given the keys to city hall! So the expedition was a total success and Doug thanked the society for its support.

Astronomy Day will be Saturday, April 16th this year. The theme is "Astronomy for Children". An Astronomy Day information pack has been sent to each centre.

Damien Lemay (Québec Centre) gave the Nomination Committee report. So far, the nomination slate looks like this:

President	Doug Hube	(Edmonton Centre)
1st VP	Mike Watson	(Unattached)
2nd VP	Don Hiadiuk	(Calgary Centre)
Recorder	[To be determined]	
Librarian	[To be determined]	

Garry Woodcock (Hamilton Centre) will be stepping down as librarian and Mary Anne Harrington (Toronto Centre) will be stepping down as recorder at the GA. Nominations for these positions are being sought.

Bob May (Toronto Centre) gave the Property Committee report. A new appraisal will be sought for the Dupont Street property so that the proper insurance coverage can be obtained. Right now the society could be caught short if the building was destroyed.

Randy Attwood (Toronto Centre) presented the BOG Marketing Committee report. About 30% of the BOGs have been distributed so far, and a one page promotional ad has been prepared for use by centres.

Peter Broughton reported (as the Centennial Committee report since Centennial funds were used) that the publication date for "Looking Up" is now late March. Dundurn Press has pushed back the date several times already, so don't hold your breath!

A submitted report from the Light Pollution Committee was read. The Calgary Centre has awarded 5 "good lighting" certificates. An article will be appearing in an upcoming Bulletin in which they will share their experiences in this regard. It was hoped that other centres will start awarding these certificates too.

Randy Attwood gave the 1994 Annular Solar Eclipse Committee report. Several Ontario institutions have collaborated on the design of an information flyer giving not only information specific to the upcoming eclipse, but about eclipses in general. Centres will be receiving this flyer and other information shortly. Also, solar eclipse viewers will be distributed to centres for public eclipse viewing gatherings. The committee will be purchasing five or six thousand of these.

Leo Enright read a letter of intent from the Kingston Centre, saying that it intended to submit a bid for the 1997 RASC GA. This would be Kingston's first ever GA. The list of upcoming GAs ('96 and '97 to be approved) looks like this:

1994	St. John's
1995	Windsor
1996	Edmonton
1997	Kingston

Allan Batten informed us that an effort is under way to send a telescope to Viet Nam, which has no astronomical instruments suitable for use in universities. Anyone wishing to contribute to this effort should contact him either directly or through the national office.

Dan Hladiuk distributed information on a November 1994 solar eclipse expedition to Peru and Chile. 3 minutes of totality will be visible from the proposed high altitude observing site. Extra cost, optional tour extensions to Machu Picchu are available too. If you are interested, contact Let's Talk Travel at 1-800-661-1335.

Randy Attwood told us that the Toronto Centre is concerned about the increasing cost of Observer's Handbook distribution. He asked that the Finance and Publications Committees look into finding a way to reduce the cost of Handbook distribution.

Finally, Rajiv Gupta (Vancouver Centre) presented a report on the RASC Calendar. Up to \$3800 (as required) was approved for printing and distribution of the 1995 calendar.

For anyone wishing more information on the doings of National Council at this meeting, the minutes will be available in the near future from your National Council Rep. This report has been uploaded to the RASC Net, and will also appear in an upcoming issue of the Bulletin.

The fire came by and destroyed the forest, the reindeer, and the storehouses. Afterward, when the Tungus went in search of the herd, they found only charred reindeer carcasses. (Witness to the Siberian explosion of 1908 as quoted in the book THE FIRE CAME BY, by John Baxter & Thoma Atkins, Warner Books, 1976.)

DAVID LEVY DOES IT AGAIN--WITH COMET NUMBER 21!

Leo Enright

It has been duly noted by many writers that each of **David Levy's** comet discoveries has a story with it. His most recent visual discovery provided good news for amateur astronomers who gathered on Saturday, April 16, to celebrate international Astronomy Day.

Just hours before the events of Astronomy Day began, there had been confirmation of David's twenty-first comet discovery. (I hope my counting is correct. One always wonders when they come as fast as his have. In fact, just three days before, I had received word of his most recent photographic discovery, still another **Comet Shoemaker-Levy**, discovered on Mount Palomar.) In the early morning hours of **Friday, April 15** from his backyard in Corona de Tucson, site of many previous events of astronomical significance, David again spied a faint fuzzy object in the eastern sky in the tiny constellation **Equuleus**, making an isosceles triangle with the stars Alpha and Beta. It was at R.A. 22h 23m, Dec. +5°.7, and David's brightness estimate put it at about magnitude 10.5. It appeared to be moving northwestward.

A Japanese amateur, **Kazao Takamazawa**, just a few hours before David's visual sighting, had observed it on a photograph, and was given credit for a **photographic discovery**. The object would be known as **Comet Takamazawa-Levy**.

At the present time (one week after its discovery), with its orbit now well established, it is known that this comet will reach **perihelion** in late May. It has now brightened slightly to about magnitude 10, and is moving northward at a rate of about one degree per day. Though these positions, which are for next week, will be out of date by the time this article is read, they do show the comet's very steady northward movement through the constellation **Pegasus**.

Coordinates for **Comet Takamazawa-Levy** for Epoch 2000.0 at UT:

	R.A.	Dec.
April 24	21h18m	+12°.3
April 26	21h16m	+14°.3
April 28	21h14m	+16°.4

Once again our Centre extends its sincere congratulations to our Honorary President **David Levy** on this discovery. We take note that he seems to be well on the way to being not just the greatest living comet discoverer, but possibly the greatest comet discoverer of all time. The amazing feats continue.

* * * * *

Note Submitted by Christine Kulyk: **David Levy** reports the discovery of his 8th visually-discovered comet, spotted with his 16-inch telescope in his backyard. This brings his grand total of discoveries and co-discoveries to a whopping 21, making him the No. 3-ranked comet finder of all time! The latest **Levy** comet will reach perihelion on **May 22**, at which time it will be excellently placed for observing, located between **Vega** and **Polaris**, in **Draco**, and predictions are that it might reach magnitude 8.5 or 9 at that time.

Also, **David Levy** reports that his new book on comets is just out. The title is **The Quest for Comets: An Explosive Trail of Beauty and Danger**, published by **Plenum**.

PAUSE FOR THOUGHT: TWO CLOSE CALLS

By Leo Enright

We have all heard of the Tunguska Event of June 30, 1908, and the considerable devastation that occurred over Central Siberia at that time.

Twice in the first three months of this year, there were sightings of objects that, had the conditions been slightly different, could have given rise to considerable devastation as well.

On February 1, 1994, six members of the early-warning satellite system detected a meteoric object that was also seen as a daytime fireball over several small remote islands of the western Pacific Ocean. Its magnitude was an incredible -25!!! For those who have forgotten, the magnitude of the Sun is slightly over -26. In other words, the brightness of this object would have been great enough to cause impaired eyesight or blindness. In fact, it was witnessed by very few people; reports from the area say only a few fishermen saw it. The object exploded about 20 kilometres above the Earth with a force equal to a hundred kilotonnes of TNT. It is estimated to have been 15 metres across, certainly large enough to have caused considerable devastation if it had penetrated the atmosphere!

On March 15, 1994, a small asteroid, subsequently named 1994ES, passed uncomfortably close to the Earth. This object, which is 20 metres across and was travelling at a velocity of 19 kilometres per second, passed only 185,000 kilometres from the Earth. That distance is less than the lunar distance; in fact, it is only 42.9% of the mean lunar distance! Certainly a close pass, if ever there was one.

These two events give pause for thought. There seem to be more solar system objects than we would like that come uncomfortably close to us.



THE STRING OF PEARLS COMET PIN

*Specially created to commemorate this July's historic
encounter between planet and comet*

An original design, the colourful $\frac{3}{4}$ " by $\frac{3}{8}$ " lapel pin depicts:

- Jupiter in orange and almond
- comet fragments & highlighting in gold-coloured metal
- a midnight blue background

\$5.50 each

(Quantity discounts available)

For more information or to order,
phone Christine Kulyk at (000) 000-0000, or send
cheque or money order (payable to Mary Patton) to:
Comet Pin, XXXXXXX, Kingston, ON XXX XXX.
Please add 8% Ontario PST and \$2 shipping per pin.

Concept by Christine Kulyk, Carole Greig and Mary Patton
Original Design by Carole Greig

ASTRONOMY DAY/WEEK IN KINGSTON

By Bill Broderick

Once again members of Kingston Centre conducted a very nice Astronomy Day **mall display**, this year at the Kingston Centre Mall on Saturday, April 16.

Besides the usual assortment of telescopes, members set out examples of astrophotography, books on astronomy and archeoastronomy, various posters, and information on the up-coming May 10 annular solar eclipse. We also had a quantity of glass and mylar eclipse viewers which the public could obtain for a small donation.

Steven Manders set up his computer and demonstrated "Dance of The Planets," etc., to the delight of astronomers and public alike.

A new feature this year was a model of the Sun-Earth-Moon system, built by **Hein van Asperen**, which showed how the Moon revolves around the Earth and demonstrated the basic principle of eclipses.

A hearty thankyou to everyone who participated: LEO ENRIGHT, DENISE SABATINI, STEVEN MANDERS, DIETER BRUECKNER, CHRISTINE KULYK, HEIN & JEAN VAN ASPEREN, PEGGY TORNEY, IAN LEVSTEIN, KIM HAY, BILL BRODERICK, RUTH HICKS. If we've missed anyone, our sincere apologies; the efforts of all are very much appreciated.

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Following up on a Kingston Centre suggestion, the **Kingston Public Library** mounted a special Astronomy Week display at all three branches, complete with posters, information handouts about the RASC and upcoming Kingston Centre meetings, and astronomy books available for borrowing. The Library also hosted a free public talk by **Terry Dickinson** entitled "A Tour of the Universe," which drew a record attendance of about 200 or more people of all ages! **Christine Kulyk**, Past President of the Kingston Centre, was on hand to give a short speech of introduction before **Terry's** talk, including an announcement about the Centre's Astronomy Day activities. **Christine** reports that it was especially nice to see the many children in attendance, all of whom seemed equally enthralled as their parents to see and bear about the wonders of astronomy. Many of the people who came to the talk were very eager to get information about the local RASC group and our meetings, and dozens of copies of our Centre brochure were handed out that this event. Thank you to the Library staff, especially **Stella Carney** and **Janet Ritchie**, for their work in organizing these highly successful contributions to Astronomy Week in Kingston!

READ ALL ABOUT HIM! DAVID LEVY PROFILED IN EQUINOX: **Christine Kulyk** reports that the **June 1994 issue of EQUINOX magazine** will carry a feature article by **Terry Dickinson** on the life and work of our Honorary President **David Levy**, including the story of the discovery of **Comet Shoemaker-Levy 9** and its approaching encounter with Jupiter. Copies of EQUINOX are readily available in retail outlets across the country.

EXPLORING THE NIGHT SKY--WITH TERENCE DICKINSON: **Terry Dickinson** hosts another session of his popular short course at **St. Lawrence College** for beginning astronomy hobbyists, on the **first two Sundays in June**. The two-day workshop will take place on **June 5 and June 12. 1:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. both days** (with a two-hour recess for dinner). **Course fee is \$80.00 plus GST**. To register, or for further information, please contact **St. Lawrence College** at King 6 Portsmouth, Kingston, ON K7L 5A6, phone: (613) 545-3923.

NEWS AND NOTES

NEW MEMBERS

The Kingston Centre is pleased to welcome TIM SEITZ of Kingston who joined in March. We also welcome back SUN SAK, also of Kingston, who rejoined in April.

LOOKING UP--ONE BEAUTIFUL BOOK!

I have just today (April 29) received my copy of Looking Up--A History of The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. Although I haven't had a chance yet to really get into it, my first impression is that this is one beautiful book. There seems to be much in it to interest every serious member of our Society.

The book is generously sprinkled with photos of people, places and events and many of the names (of people) mentioned will be familiar to almost everyone.

Peter Broughton has put together a fine history of our Society from its beginnings in 1868 nearly to the present. The book makes a great addition to any library or coffee table collection. I don't see how anyone could be disappointed with it. ED.

1994 INTERNATIONAL SPACE DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE (TORONTO) MAY 26-30

This year's edition of the **International Space Development Conference** will take place in Toronto (at the Regal Constellation Hotel) on May 26-30. The conference is co-sponsored by a number of organizations, including the (U.S.) National Space Society, the Canadian Space Society, and the RASC Toronto Centre. Scheduled speakers include NASA scientists, Apollo astronauts, Canadian and shuttle astronauts, plus leading researchers, engineers, educators, and industry representatives in the space science field. Also included will be various space exhibits and workshops (including one on astronomical telescopes and another on astronomical art), astronomical equipment and space-related items for sale, plus a special kids' conference where kids will have the chance to meet an astronaut and take part in some hands-on workshop projects. The conference is open to the general public, and one-day passes are available. There are discount rates for seniors and students. ***THERE'S ALSO A SPECIAL 20% DISCOUNT OFF REGISTRATION FEES FOR KINGSTON CENTRE MEMBERS!*** For details and conference fee schedule, please contact: ISDC '94 at (416) 626-0505; fax (416) 626-0792.

THE "KINGSTON CONNECTION"--By Christine Kulyk

As you know from reading the previous issue (REGULUS, March/April 1994), **Terry Dickinson** recently was granted the special distinction of having an asteroid named after him. What you may not yet know is that there was something of a "Kingston Connection" involved in the process. As told by **Terry** in his recent column in the Kingston Whig-Standard (April 9):

Unbeknownst to me, the seed for the naming of asteroid Dickinson was planted last fall, right here in Kingston. On October 22, I was giving a talk to the RASC at Queen's U. In the audience was RMC physics professor (and Kingston Centre member) Phil Somers. Seated beside him was Canadian asteroid expert Clifford Cunningham, then working on a research project with Somers.

It was apparently while they were sitting in the audience at that talk, hosted by the Kingston Centre, that **Phil** and **Clifford** hatched the idea of recognizing **Terry's** accomplishment as Canada's foremost writer and popularizer of astronomy by suggesting that an asteroid be named after him!



ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL OF CANADA ST. JOHN'S CENTRE 1994 GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE

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MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND
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February 11, 1994

ATTENTION ALL ASTRONOMERS:

The St. John's Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada invites astronomers from all parts of the world to attend the 1994 General Assembly of the RASC in St. John's Newfoundland, June 30 to July 4, 1994.

The 1994 General Assembly will be held on the St. John's campus of Memorial University, 15 minutes drive from the airport, 20 minutes walk from a large shopping centre, and 20 minutes by bus from historic downtown St. John's. We invite you to come to the General Assembly in North America's oldest city but we hope you will make your trip into an extended holiday and tour Canada's youngest province. If you stay in Newfoundland until the weekend after the General Assembly, you can participate in our Star-B-Q which is held annually in Terra Nova National Park (described further in the registration package).

This year's Helen Sawyer Hogg Lecture will be given by Professor George Efstathiou, Savilian Professor of Astronomy and Head of Astrophysics at Oxford. Dr Efstathiou is an internationally recognized authority on the origin of galaxies and of course this will be the topic of his talk. Since our speaker is from the United Kingdom, and since St. John's is closer to the UK than any other RASC centre, it was decided to invite members of the British Astronomical Society to attend the 1994 GA.

Registration forms for the 1994 GA are enclosed. Please note that the form for accommodation includes bed, breakfast and lunch and this form is to be returned to the University Conference Office. The remainder of the forms are to be returned to the General Assembly address printed on the forms. When you are booking your flight to St. John's, please note that Air Canada is the Official Airline for the GA and quote the Event Number listed on the enclosed flier to your travel agent.

Many people have indicated that they would like to make their trip to Newfoundland into a summer vacation. We have enlisted the services of Wildland Tours to help you arrange your holiday. The company specializes in ecological tours within Newfoundland but can help you arrange the holiday of your choice. A flier is enclosed and Wildland Tours will have a desk in the GA registration area.

The "Tors Cove" trip planned for Monday, 4 July 1994 will be for all GA participants who register for the tour. However, a number of additional activities will be offered for non-participating guests and these are outlined in the Wildland Tours flier. Guests can sign up for these tours at the registration desk or contact Wildland Tours directly.

If you have any questions please contact us at the phone or email address listed above or by FAX at (709) 737-3316. If you need a phone number for emergency contact, Campus Enforcement and Patrol can be reached 24 hours a day at (709) 737-8562.

Members of the St. John's Centre are looking forward to renewing old friendships and meeting new people. Newfoundlanders are warm people but it would be wise to bring a sweater for cool nights and the boat trip.

Se you at the end of June,



Frederick R. Smith
Chairman, 1994 General Assembly Committee

**FOR A COMPLETE INFORMATION
AND REGISTRATION PACKAGE ON
THE 1994 GA
PLEASE CONTACT KIM HAY
(000) 000-0000**