

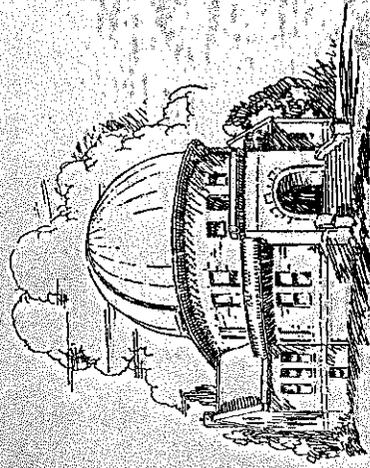
1938 BULLETIN

of the

CHAMBERLIN OBSERVATORY

UNIVERSITY
of
DENVER

Denver,
Colorado



OBSERVATORY STAFF

Albert W. Reicht, Director, Address: 2251 South St. Paul Street, Denver, Colorado, Phone: PEarl 8797.

Ralph J. Meeker, Jr., Walter S. Peterson, Jr., Charles Sibley, Student Assistants.

Samuel J. Cameron, Eugene Willingham, Hyman Zuckerman, NYA Assistants.

Cloyd Alford, Student Custodian of Observatory Building.

Fred Muetzenberg, Doorkeeper on Public Nights.

Arthur W. Beck, Volunteer, Research Associate, Occultation Program.

Caroline Pettie Beck, Volunteer, Research Associate, Occultation Program.

Clendon S. Walton, Volunteer, Research Associate, Variable Star Program.

COURSES IN ASTRONOMY

The director of the observatory carries a full teaching load in the University of Denver. Day classes in astronomy are offered as follows:

College of Liberal Arts, School of Science and Engineering

1. ELEMENTS OF DESCRIPTIVE ASTRONOMY

A non-mathematical course with no prerequisites. Constellations of the fall and winter sky. Daily, 8:00 and 11:40. Autumn quarter.

102. ADVANCED DESCRIPTIVE ASTRONOMY

Plane trigonometry is prerequisite. A mathematical application of Course 1. Daily at 11:40. Winter quarter.

108. PRACTICAL ASTRONOMY

The general knowledge acquired in the previous courses is put to practical use in learning how to manipulate the instruments of astronomy: the large telescope, the transit, the sextant, etc. Daily at 11:40. Spring quarter.

Night classes are scheduled to meet in the observatory on Monday evenings from 6:45 to 8:45. The offering follows:

University College*

1a. A STUDY OF THE SKY

Appreciation course in non-mathematical astronomy. Autumn.

1b. A STUDY OF THE SKY

Continuation of 1a, but may be taken independently. Winter.

108c. SHORT COURSE IN PRACTICAL ASTRONOMY

Use of the astronomical instruments, reduction of observations, celestial photography. Spring quarter.

Courses 1a and 1b may also be taken by correspondence through the Extension Division of the University of Denver.

* Cost \$10 each, course for credit; \$5 only for auditors.

CHAMBERLIN OBSERVATORY—LOCATION AND ACTIVITIES

Chamberlin Observatory is situated in Denver, Colorado, in the extreme southwest part of the city. It is in the 2900 block on East Warren Avenue—four blocks east of the University of Denver campus. The observatory is surrounded by a small park, which makes available a completely unobstructed view of the sky, although city lights interfere somewhat in the northeast.

The observatory has been the scene of much research work in the past, notably with nebulae, comets, and asteroids. At present research is limited to three fields: (1) a systematic watch of novae and irregular variable stars to observe sudden changes in their brightness, in charge of Mr. Clendon S. Walton, Denver amateur astronomer; (2) observation and reduction of eclipses of faint stars by the moon, in charge of Mr. Arthur W. Beck and Mrs. Caroline Petric Beck, who publish six-month lists of these observations; and (3) calculation of a definite orbit for the periodic Comet T'Arrest in order to bring together observations over a period of seventy-two years, this project in charge of the director and conducted with the aid of an electric calculator, recently acquired.

A major activity of the observatory and its director for many years has been the entertainment and instruction of visitors. For example, the observatory entertained during the last school year 1,487 visitors, of whom 165 came on Tuesday evenings, the regular public night. In addition, the director spoke on astronomical subjects to audiences comprising 1,458 persons.

This bulletin is compiled annually to give visitors information concerning the observatory and the celestial objects that may be seen through its great telescope.

VISITORS' EVENINGS

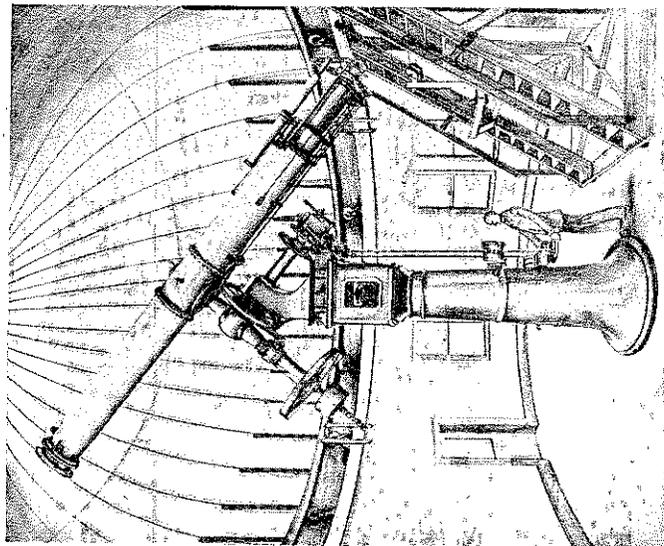
Chamberlin Observatory is open to the public on clear Tuesday evenings throughout the school year between the hours of 7:30 and 9:30. So that attendance may be limited to persons that are really interested in astronomy, and in order to avoid unwieldy groups, an admission fee of twenty-five cents is charged. The observatory may be visited on other evenings by classes or other groups interested in astronomy, and although no charge is made for this service or for talks given by the director, all engagements must be made far in advance to avoid conflicting with observatory routine.

Visitors look through the 20-inch telescope one at a time. Because of this the number of objects shown on a given night depends upon the number of people and the time taken by each one. Generally six or seven objects make up the evening's program, and a brief description of each object is given by the director. During the evening a short lecture, illustrated with slides, is given in a downstairs room. The titles of these talks are changed each month; they are listed under Monthly Programs. Whenever convenient, visitors are permitted to inspect the other astronomical equipment.

Perhaps it would be well to explain that first-time visitors to a large observatory usually anticipate seeing more than it is possible to observe. They are therefore disappointed until they learn to appreciate the power of the telescope, and how many things are disclosed to them that would have remained forever invisible without the instrument's aid.

Anyone visiting the observatory in cold weather should come prepared with sufficient wraps, because the temperature of the dome room is always the same as out-of-doors. If the room were heated, the warmth would only escape through the opening in the dome and the warm air currents passing out near the object lens would distort light rays entering the telescope. A similar phenomenon may be observed in the heat rays rising above a hot radiator or stove.

For those interested in seeing a great variety of objects the winter season is best, because the visiting groups are smaller.



THE CHAMBERLIN 20-INCH REFRACTOR
Pencil Sketch by Wm. N. Turnbull, Jr.

HISTORY AND PUBLICATIONS

The ground for the observatory building was broken in 1888. The building and equipment were the gift of Humphrey Barker, Chamberlin's high altitude, but who died in 1897, before he had an opportunity to see them fully realized. The cornerstone of the observatory was laid in 1890 and the building was completed in 1891. The telescope was not installed, however, until the summer of 1894.

Chamberlin Observatory was designed by Herbert Alonzo Howe, who was its director until his death in 1926, and it was built under his personal supervision. Dr. Howe was then Dean of the University of Denver. It was through his efforts that the gift was obtained, and it was through his great patience and industry that Chamberlin Observatory became one of the well-known observatories of the world.

In the 1937 bulletin there was published a complete list of the publications that have issued from Chamberlin Observatory since its founding. In this and successive bulletins it is planned to list only the publications of the preceding year. For 1937 these were as follows:

A. W. Beck and Caroline Petric Beck. 94 Occultations by the Moon. *Astronomical Journal*, vol. 46, p. 101.
Annual Report from Chamberlin Observatory. Publications of American Astronomical Society; Vol. 9, p. 64.

TELESCOPES

20-INCH REFRACTOR—This telescope is the main instrument of the observatory and is housed in the larger building. Its 20-inch lens was made by Alvan Clark and the mounting by Sargemitter. It weighs over twelve tons and was built at a cost of \$21,000, of which the lenses cost \$11,000. The telescope is generally used with a 175-power eye-piece for visitors. Its focal length is 26 feet 8 inches and the crown lens is reversible for photography. At the time of its construction the Chamberlin telescope ranked fifth in size in this country. It is still the twelfth largest refractor in the United States. The nearest refractors to Denver that are larger are the Yerkes 40-inch telescope at Williams Bay, Wisconsin, the largest in the world, and the 24-inch Lowell telescope at Flagstaff, Arizona.

6-INCH REFRACTOR—This smaller telescope is housed in the Students' observatory, located two hundred feet southwest of the main building. Its lens is by Brushner and the mounting by Grubb. It is used mainly by students and for observations of the sun, whose disk is observed directly with a polarizing eye-piece.

Meridian Circle

This instrument is in the east part of the main building. Its lens is four inches in diameter and it is used by students in practical astronomy classes for determining the time from the stars.

Astronomical Clocks

SIDEREAL CLOCK—This instrument keeps star-time, valuable to the astronomer for the location of celestial objects.

MEAN SOLAR CLOCK—This clock keeps standard time. Its error is obtained regularly by radio signals sent from the Naval Observatory at Washington, D. C. Both of these clocks have compensated second pendulums, powered by a weight which is wound up once a week. While these clocks are not of the highest precision, their daily change is only a few tenths of a second.

Chronographs

There are two drum chronographs which are used in connection with the clocks for electrically and graphically recording the exact times when observations are made.

Other equipment includes chronometers, a sextant, an electric calculator, and a short-wave radio receiver. There is also a fairly complete library. The cost of the observatory and its equipment was \$36,000.



Quarter Moon, October 19, 1931. Full Moon, October 26, 1931.
Photographs Taken with Chamberlin Telescope.

CELESTIAL OBJECTS SHOWN TO VISITORS

During the entire year about fifty different celestial objects are shown to the public. Generally six or seven of these make up the program each Tuesday evening for a given month. The routine is listed under Monthly Programs and will be adhered to whenever possible. The same objects are shown throughout a given month with the exceptions that the moon is not always in the sky during visiting hours, and at other times the moon may be too bright to permit the showing of faint nebulae.

The attempt has been made to select the most favorable and spectacular objects for each month. The result is that the same objects sometimes appear on more than one monthly program. The seven classes to which the objects observed belong are explained below.

The Moon

Most of the planets have moons, or to call them by their true names, satellites, revolving about them. The earth has one satellite, and it is closer to us than any other celestial body; it has a diameter one-fourth that of the earth, but is a dead world, having neither air nor water. Opera glasses help to reveal the moon's features, but only a large telescope can show the fine details of its craters, mountains, and plains. The moon is seen to best advantage at the time of its first quarter or "half moon" phase. This is because the sunlight, instead of shining straight down upon the lunar mountains as it does at full moon, is then striking diagonally across them, causing black shadows which make the surface features of the moon stand out in bold relief.

Planets

There are nine bodies revolving about the sun which are called planets, one of them our earth. They have no light of their own but are visible only because the sun is shining upon them. The brighter planets are shown through the telescope when they are in favorable positions during visiting hours. Mercury and Venus, the two planets closer to the sun than our earth, are seldom seen at these hours—Mercury practically never, and Venus only when it is the so-called evening star, at its farthest apparent distance from the sun at intervals of twenty months. It is visible in the early evening

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during May-October, 1938. The planets farther from the sun than our world are best seen when they are on the same side of the sun as the earth. In 1938 Mars will not be visible. Jupiter and Saturn are the largest and most interesting planets to observe. Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto are too far away to be seen in detail.

Red Stars

These are giant stars and are as red as stars ever become. They are generally variable in brightness.

Bright Stars

All of the stars are suns. Also our sun is a star, and only an average star at that. It is so much closer to the earth than any of the other stars that people seldom realize that it is the same kind of body as the thousands of lights that dot our night sky. Our sun is over a million times larger than the earth. Stars never appear any larger in a telescope because they are too far away to reveal their disks, although the Chamberlain telescope makes them appear about ten thousand times brighter.

Double Stars

Many stars that appear single to the unaided eye are revealed as double or multiple in a telescope. Some of these double stars are actually near to one another while others only appear close together because they happen to be in almost the same direction from us. The separation of double stars is given in seconds of arc. An arc of 1" (one second) is equal to 1/1800th the angular width of the moon, or the apparent width of a dime observed at a distance of three miles. Only the bright and wider doubles are shown to visitors.

Star Clusters

These are aggregations of stars and are of two main types, the loose and the globular clusters. In loose clusters the separate stars are visible; in the globular type the stars are so concentrated in the center of the cluster that they are indistinguishable. Some of the latter type contain thousands of stars and are hundreds of light years in diameter.

Nebulae

Objects of this class are sometimes disappointing because they are so faint, although a few can be shown in full moonlight. Nebulae are of two types: those in our own Milky Way which are composed of dust and gas illuminated by surrounding stars, and those called spiral or elliptical nebulae which are entirely separate universes from ours. The latter type are composed of stars and are so large and far away that the human mind cannot comprehend the distances. A more accurate name for these is exterior galaxies, or Milky Way systems beyond our own.

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

A part of each public night's program is a lecture upon some phase of astronomy. The same lecture is repeated throughout a given month. The talks for the year form a brief resumé of the field of descriptive astronomy, and without exception they are illustrated with slides. The title of each lecture is listed at the beginning of the month in which it is given.

The distances to nebulae objects are so great that they are usually given in light-years. A light-year is the distance that light travels in one year at the enormous speed of 186,284 miles a second, or about 5,600,000,000,000 miles.

The magnitude of a star means its classification according to brightness. Each unit of magnitude represents a difference in brightness of 2 1/2 times. For instance, a first magnitude star is 2 1/2 times brighter than a second magnitude star, and a second magnitude star is in turn 2 1/2 times brighter than a third, and so on. A sixth magnitude star is barely visible to the unaided eye. The limit of the Chamberlain telescope is magnitude 15 1/2; the limit for the 100-inch reflector at Mt. Wilson is magnitude 19.

JANUARY

LECTURE. "Keeping Time with the Earth."

MOON. First quarter on January 9.

URANUS. Seventh planet from the sun. 32,000 miles in diameter. Almost two billion miles distant. Has four moons, only two visible with the Chamberlain telescope. Shows small greenish disk.

SIRIUS (Alpha Canis Majoris). Brightest of all stars. White in color. Called the "Dog Star." Nine light-years distant. Diameter twice our sun's, 1,700,000 miles.

ETA CAASSIOPEIA. Double star. Separation, 6". Magnitudes, 4 and 8. Revolve about each other in 508 years. 17 light-years distant.

B4 ANDROMEDA. Red star. Magnitude of 8.

OPEN CLUSTER IN AURIGA. Hundreds of stars filling the entire field of view. 3,400 light-years away.

GREAT NEBULA IN ORION. Gaseous nebula. 600 light-years distant. About four light-years in diameter.

FEBRUARY

LECTURE. "Observatories and Telescopes."

MOON. First quarter on February 7.

URANUS. Planet just beyond Saturn. Diameter four times that of earth, 15 times earth's distance from sun. Period, 84 years. Barely visible to eye. Shows small greenish disk in telescope.

BETELGEUSE (Alpha Orionis). First star to have its diameter measured. Diameter, 225 million miles. 217 million times larger than our sun and 1,600 times as bright. Orange in color. 250 light-years away.

RIGEL (Beta Orionis). White double star. Separation, 9". Magnitudes 0 and 7. 12,000 times brighter than the sun. 450 light-years away. Faint companion almost hidden in brilliance.

B4 ANDROMEDA. Red giant of eighth magnitude.

30 STARS IN ORION. Distance, 1,500 light-years. Cluster geometric in shape.

GREAT NEBULA IN ORION. All the gas and stars seen in the telescope appear as a single star to the naked eye. 600 light-years distant.

MARCH

LECTURE. "The Earth's Moon."

MOON. Is at first quarter on March 9.

NEPTUNE. Cannot be seen without the telescope. Eighth planet from the sun, 31,000 miles in diameter. Nearly 3 billion miles away. Shows small green disk.

SIRIUS (Alpha Canis Majoris). Brightest of all stars. Magnitude, -1.58. Distance, nine light-years. Commonly known as the "Dog Star."

CASTOR (Alpha Geminiorum). One of the Gemini, "The Twins." Blue double star. Apparent separation, 5"; actual separation, seven billion miles. 43 light-years distant. Period of revolution, 347 years.

R CRATERIS. Variable red star. Its magnitude is 8.

DOUBLE CLUSTER IN PERSEUS. Loose cluster. 8,000 light-years away. Old grouping.

ELLIPTICAL NEBULA IN URSA MAJOR. Fine spiral. First nebula in which internal motions were detected

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APRIL

LECTURE. "Our Neighbors of the Solar System."
MOON. First quarter occurs on April 7.
NEPTUNE. Next to outermost planet from sun. Diameter four times that of earth. Distance, three billion miles. Shows a small greenish disk in telescope.
PROCYON (Alpha Canis Minors). The "Little Dog Star." White star; magnitude 0.5. 10 light-years distant. Has diameter about $1\frac{1}{2}$ times that of sun.
AL CHEBA (Gamma Leonis). Beautiful golden-yellow double. Separation, 4". Magnitudes, 2 and 4. Period of about 400 years.
R CRATERIS. Red star of magnitude 3. Invisible without telescope.
GLOBULAR CLUSTER IN CANES VENATICI. Composed of thousands of stars. Distance, 40,000 light-years. About 470 light-years in diameter.
SPIRAL NEBULA IN CANES VENATICI. Made up of stars too far away to be separated. Receding into space at a speed of 170 miles a second.

MAY

LECTURE. "The Nearest Star, Our Sun."
MOON. At first quarter on May 6.
VENUS. Most brilliant planet. Second from the sun. Slater planet of earth, being nearly same diameter. About 140 million miles away. Sets about 8:30 p.m.
SPICA (Alpha Virginis). Blue star. Distance, 190 light-years. Magnitude, 1.2. A spectroscopic double, with a four-day period.
GAMMA VIRGINIS. Double star. Separation of 6". Both stars of fourth magnitude. Period of revolution, 180 years.
R CRATERIS. Variable red star of magnitude 8. Has color of spark.
GLOBULAR CLUSTER IN CANES VENATICI. Compact group of thousands of stars at distance of 40,000 light-years. Stars all giants; our sun could not be seen with largest telescope at this distance.
PLANETARY NEBULA IN HYDRA. Called so because of an apparent disk illuminated by a bright central star of an unusual type.

JUNE

LECTURE. "The Tale of the Comets."
MOON. Is at first quarter on June 4.
VENUS. Shows brilliant disk in telescope, but no surface markings, because of clouds. About 120 million miles distant.
ARCTURUS (Alpha Bootis). Bright orange star. 40 light-years distant. Diameter about 22 million miles. Its light used to turn on illumination at Chicago's Century of Progress Exposition.
36 ORPHUCHI. Long period double star. Both of the 4th magnitude. Separation, 4".
T LYRAE. Red star of the seventh magnitude.
GLOBULAR CLUSTER IN SERPENS. 35,000 light-years distant. One of the nearest clusters.
SPIRAL NEBULA IN CANES VENATICI. An exterior Milky Way system. Shows but dimly on darkest nights. Long-exposure photographs required to show magnificent details.

JULY

MOON. First quarter phase occurs on July 4.
VENUS. Second planet from sun, and nearly same size as earth. Easily shows gibbous phase. By end of month is just as far away as the sun.
VEGA (Alpha Lyrae). Second brightest star visible from northern latitudes. Blue-white color. 26 light-years distant. Diameter about $2\frac{1}{2}$ times that of sun; fifty times brighter. In 12,000 years will be the pole star.
POLARIS (Alpha Ursae Minoris). The Pole Star. Has a ninth magnitude companion. Separation, 18". The North Star is 470 light-years away.
T LYRAE. Burnt orange colored star of magnitude 7. Giant star, temperature 2,500".
GLOBULAR CLUSTER IN HERCULES. Finest globular cluster, 50,000 stars have been counted in photographs. 34,000 light-years away. 320 light-years across.
PLANETARY NEBULA IN DRACO. About 600 light-years away. Illuminated by a central star of such high temperature that energy is released in ultra-violet.

AUGUST

MOON. First quarter on August 2.
VENUS. Brightest object in the evening sky except the moon. About 80 million miles away this month. Greatest brilliancy in 1938 occurs on October 15 and again on December 26 as a morning star. On September 19 will be farthest east from the sun, and will show first-quarter phase.
ARCTURUS (Alpha Bootis). Bright orange star. 40 light-years away. Diameter about 22 million miles. Its light was used to turn on illumination of Chicago's Century of Progress Exposition.
EPSILON LYRAE. A double-double star. 250 light-years distant. The doubles are separated by 20". The separations of the individual pairs are 2" and 3".
T LYRAE. Red star of magnitude 7.
100 STARS IN SAGITTARIUS. A fine coarse cluster. About 3,000 light-years away.
TRIPEID NEBULA IN SAGITTARIUS. A diffuse gaseous cloud which is partly obscured by lanes of dark matter.

SEPTEMBER

LECTURE. "Stars and Their Stories."
MOON. First quarter occurs on September 1.
JUPITER. The largest planet, 83,000 miles in diameter or 11 times that of earth. Fifth planet out from the sun. Has nine moons, four visible in telescope. About 400 million miles away.
VEGA (Alpha Lyrae). Bright blue star, second brightest, visible from northern latitudes. Fifty times as bright as our sun. At distance of 26 light-years.
MIZAR (Zeta Ursae Majoris). Wide double; separation 14". Magnitudes 2 and 4. Each star is a close double, detected only by spectroscopic distance, 72 light-years.
B21 CYGNI. Red star. Eighth magnitude.
GLOBULAR CLUSTER IN HERCULES. Best cluster visible from northern latitudes. Contains many thousands of stars. 34,000 light-years distant.
RING NEBULA IN LYRA. Planetary type illuminated by a central star, at limit of visibility for the Chamberlin 20-inch. Over 300 light-years away. One of few nebulae to be seen in full moonlight.

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