



NEAF and Astronomy Day



Panorama of this year's NEAF vendor area. (Tom Cocchiario photo)

President's Message

Now that summer is closer our school public observing program slows down, but our Astro 101 and 201 courses are going strong, with the rescheduled Astro 101 "Stars", Astro 101 "Collimation" and "Deep-Sky Objects" and the Astro 201 "Carbon Stars" coming up on the calendar. All these courses will be held at Young's Farm Observing Site (YFOS) and weather permitting there will be actual observing afterwards.

I will not be running the May NHAS business meeting this month as I am in Oregon for a wedding and some much needed vacation. V.P. **Mike Townsend** will handle the meeting and I'm sure all will go well. I'll see you all when I get back at the end of the month.

★ Gardner Gerry
NHAS President 2008

Highlights for this Month

Bad weather has forced many of the Astro 101 and 201 courses to be rescheduled. We now have a very full calendar of Astro 101 and Astro 201 events scheduled for May and June. Check the club calendar (or

the reminder at the end of this newsletter) for details.

NHAS has received a substantial grant from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation for the purchase of equipment to further our public education and outreach programs.

The NorthEast Astro Imaging Conference (NEAIC) and NorthEast Astronomy Forum (NEAF) took place April 24-27. Several NHAS members attended, and their reports are included herein.

NHAS celebrated Astronomy Day on 3 May, as part of Christa McAuliffe Planetarium's "Spacetacular Saturday". The night before, there was a special Astro 101 course for the public—a clinic on "How To Use Your New Telescope".

★ Paul Winalski
NHAS Secretary 2008

Membership and Astro 101/201

We have four new members since last newsletter...

Alfonso Navarro of Manchester NH
Norman Williams of Bow NH

Andy Fan of Cambridge MA

Rebekah Kibbee of Concord NH

Please introduce yourself and welcome these new members when you see them at Club Events.

NHAS hosted a "How to use your telescope" presentation at the CMP skywatch on May 2nd. This was planned as a presentation followed by field work under the stars. The clouds didn't cooperate but the dome was a nice 2nd choice. We had about a dozen attendees, two brought telescopes.

We have had several weather related push outs for Astro 101/201 events this spring. These reschedules have resulted in a very compressed workshop schedule in May and June. Talk about an embarrassment of riches...

May 16th: **John Bishop** presents an Astro 201 course on "Measurement of Astronomical Distances" at St. Anselm after our Business Meeting.

May 23rd: **Paul Winalski** presents "Deep Sky Observing: Stars" at 7:30PM at YFOS (registration appreciated).

May 30th: **John Bishop** presents "Collimation" at 7:00PM at YFOS (registration appreciated).

June 6th: Paul Winalski presents "Deep Sky Observing: Clusters, Galaxy and Nebulae" at 7:30PM at YFOS (registration is appreciated).

June 27th: Paul Winalski presents an Astro 201 course on "Carbon Stars" at 7:30PM at YFOS. (registration is appreciated).

★ Alan Shirey

Astro Photons

There have been no meetings recently of the Astrophotography Committee, but as always members continue to post amazing images in the "Pictures!" section of the Members' Forums section of the NHAS website. Be sure to check them out. And to post any images of your own.

★ Gardner Gerry

NHAS receives \$5000 Grant

Tom Cocchiaro worked extremely hard to land this grant for us. My thanks to him on behalf of all of us! About a year ago NHAS applied to the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation for a grant to purchase equipment to aid in our educational outreach activities. GPCF has granted us \$5000 which we intend to use to purchase a PC, projector, and solar scope for use in public presentations and sky watches. This will definitely help out our public education program.

★ Paul Winalski

NEAF and NEAIC

Two major annual events for amateur astronomers are the NorthEast Astro Imaging Conference (NEAIC) and NorthEast Astronomy Forum (NEAF), which took place this year April 24-27. NEAF, in particular, is a major trade show where vendors of astronomical equipment from around the globe show off their new wares. Here are some reports, with pictures, from NHAS members who attended these conferences.

★ Paul Winalski

Check out the following for a list of the NEAIC presenters--some really neat people, work and techniques.

<http://www.rocklandastronomy.com/NEAIC/>

Most impressive were Jay GaBany, Ken Crawford and Thierry LeGault (solar imager). OK, so that's a given. I've been all three years they've offered it and have come back with a notebook full of material. Also got a chance to talk personally for a while with Craig Stark (PHD, Nebulosity, etc.) Really nice guy, very helpful and accommodating.

All right, now for the intrigue and equipment reviews—William Optics, four new scopes—a 70mm doublet (nearly colorless, tack sharp—William was trying to get rid of the floor model for \$430 cash—luckily the ATM ran out); FLT98mm, carbon fiber body, red anodized trim, beauty, FPL-53 glass, tack sharp, colorless—only 100 will be made, get yours while you can, \$2,000; a beautiful gold on gold 110mm—didn't get a chance to check it out, and an FLT157mm, a monster—now you won't have to wait in line for an AP.

Bob Denkmayer and Russ Lederman of Denkmeier Binoviewers parted company in July of 2007. This year a new company turned up at NEAF offering sexy black and gold trim binoviewers suspiciously similar to the Denkmeiers. The company, EarthWin—the president, Bob Denkmayer—more to come.

Andy Lunt and Lunt Solar Systems—if you put your order in quickly, you can get a 60mm, double-stacked solar scope with a BF-1200 blocking filter suitable for astrophotography (<.5A) for \$1,500. But you'll need to order quickly. If you're fast, and you order it from Lunt directly, you can get it by July. If you wait to order it from an authorized dealer, you'll go to the end of the line and not likely get your hands on one until Christmas or after.

Found an 80mm, carbon fiber triplet for \$600 made by APM Telescopes—not sure whether or

not this was a show special. Ever so, almost imperceptible color with a 10mm eyepiece pointed at the grill of one of the overhead gym lights. Could read the numbers on a \$5 bill taped to the concrete wall on the gym overlook nearly 100 yards away. **Chase McNiss** and **Mike O'Shaughnessy** went around checking all the doublets and triplets of this particular model—several were on the floor. Mike even went so far to make the phone call to Cathy to get permission to purchase one of them he was so impressed with the performance—as was I. Not sure if he ever got a chance to snag one as they were disappearing fast off the floor.

David Back appears to be partnering with APM Telescopes—looks like he is going to be supplying TMB optics for the scopes. David is the brother of the late Thomas M. Back. Apparently he is going to try and keep the brand alive.

I purchased a bunch of eyepieces some of which I may end up selling. Bought three versions of 5mm eyepieces—a straight Vixen Lanthanum 5mm, a Vixen Lanthanum LVW 5mm and a TMB 5mm. Will see which one I like best, I think it will probably be the LVW 5mm (read some glowing reviews on it). Also got a Baader Hyperion 8mm modular eyepiece at a steal price and two TMB 10mm eyepieces for my new binoviewer. Bought the full boat Denkmeier binoviewer direct from Russ Lederman—the new and improved model spotlighted in this past issue of Astronomy Technology Today. Got 20% off the going price for the whole Universal kit which includes all the OCS pieces needed for my Meade SN10 and WO FLT110. Also picked up a pair of Oberwerk 10.5x70 binos from Kevin Buskarow of Big Binoculars—they are supposed to be some of the sharpest to the edge, flattest field binos around this side of Zeiss—but for 1/7 the price. These appear to be the same ones offered by Garrett in their Signature Series. When will I learn not to bring plastic to NEAF.

Will be interesting to see if Cloudy Night plans on posting the webcast for others to see, but I expect that being there is way better than watching it on TV. Accomplished one of my must dos as well, shook hands and talked with Dr. Heidi Hammel of Science Channel fame (Shoemaker-Levy collision segment showing her behind the computer monitor shrieking at the incoming video of the bombardment is priceless). She is as exuberant and animated in person as she is on TV. Jealous yet?

★ Tom Cocchiaro

NEAF photos by **Rich Schuller**:



Gardner Gerry, Joe Derek, Chase McNiss, and Mike Townsend on the NEAF exhibit floor.



Marc Stowbridge (here with Gardner and Rich), demonstrated creating an analemma using a goto scope, stakes and laser pointers.



Gardner couldn't stop smiling seeing this El Capitan mount. This was his goal of the day. I

think he's got some ideas brewing there.



Rich has a few ideas of his own. I did make the bolt pattern this size, now if I can only convince the wife about the combo. (Will the observatory fit it?)

★ Rich Schuller

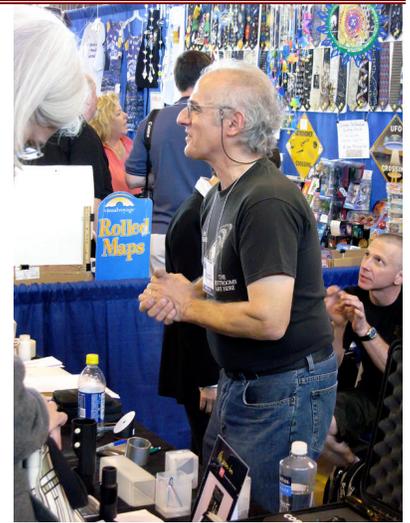
And more NEAF images from **Tom Cocchiaro**:



Andy Lunt shows off his new line of solar scopes.



Lots of telescopes and publications at this year's show.



Howie Glatter talks to passersby about his laser collimators.

★ Tom Cocchiaro

New Scope Clinic

We had a productive Friday evening at the Scope Clinic. The rain and overcast skies eliminated the sky watch aspect but the dome was comfortable.

Our audience numbered over 12 people. NHAS members that came to help included **Chase McNiss, Bill Steele, Gardner Gerry** and myself.

Two people brought scopes. One couple seemed to have a time pressure and although they were dutifully taking notes during the talk, they left prior to the help session.

We did have fun with an Celestron AstroMaster Telescope, and helped a family with guidance on how to use it. This is a curious little Newtonian reflector that is indicated as a 114mm F8.77 with a FL of 1000mm. The tube length is only about 18 inches, so the FL was achieved with the help of a barlow integrated into the focuser mechanism.

Overall, despite the overcast and inability to do field work, it was a good session.

★ Alan Shirey

Astronomy Day

While the weather was almost the worst it could be for Spacetacular

Saturday, May 3 at the Christa McAuliffe Planetarium, there were a number of hardy and curious souls who came out for the event. Some even stopped by the NHAS Tent to visit and talk about Astronomy.

Photos by **Tom Cocchiaro**:



The NHAS Tent, albeit a little soggy.



A young lady who stopped by during the day to pick up information and ask questions.



John Bishop explains something to visitors. (Gardner Gerry photo)



Under the NHAS tent. (Gardner Gerry photo)

★ Tom Cocchiaro

★ Gardner Gerry

NHAS April 2008 Business Meeting

My thanks to **Matt Amar** for taking minutes, as I was late to the meeting and didn't arrive until after the break.

ATM

Larry Lopez reports that an old-style mount fixed up by **Steve Forbes** is available.

YFOS

Larry reports that the porta-potty needs to be pumped, and its light doesn't work.

Membership

Gardner Gerry reported that the Astro 101 talk on "Collimation" has been rescheduled for 9 May. The Astro 101 talk on "How To Use Your New Telescope" will be 2 May at CMP.

Astrophotography

Gardner reports that the committee hasn't met recently. **Herb Bubert** has published five years of his Saturn images on the website.

Radio Astronomy

No report.

Public Observing

Marc Stowbridge reported that there are several sky watches, and sidewalk observing sessions, in the works.

Webmaster

No report.

Astronomy Day

Gardner has a list of volunteers. We will be setting up between the trees along the road just in back of the Planetarium.

Other Business

Paul Winalski presented an animation of a close pass (1/2 solar diameter) of Mercury and the Sun at superior conjunction, courtesy of the Solar and Heliographic Observatory (SOHO) C2 coronagraph.

Joel Harris gave a most impressive walk-through of his CMP dome design proposal in SolidWorks CAD software. Unfortunately, CMP had already committed to a design by the time the presentation was ready for submission.

Scope of the Month

Mike Townsend brought a Vixen 103mm f/7.7 (785mm focal length) 2 element ED apochromatic refractor. It has a 2" focuser, carrying handle, and 9x50 finder. It has good optics, with 1/8 wave spherical correction and good color correction.

Evening Program

Dave McDonald gave us a presentation on the CMP dome of the Dutch documentary "Dawn of the Space Age". CMP has the only high-definition copy in the USA. Using computer-generated graphics, this film presents the entire history of mankind's exploration of space, from Sputnik through Apollo. Coming from the Netherlands, it gives a very balanced presentation of both the US and USSR space programs. I highly recommend this if you haven't seen it.

★ Paul Winalski

The Bottom Line

Starting Balance:	\$5293.65
Deposits/Credits:	99.00
Accounts/Paid:	77.70
(Handy House, USPS/stamps)	
Net Account Balance:	\$5314.95
Petty cash drawer:	\$100.00
Cash Balance:	\$5414.95

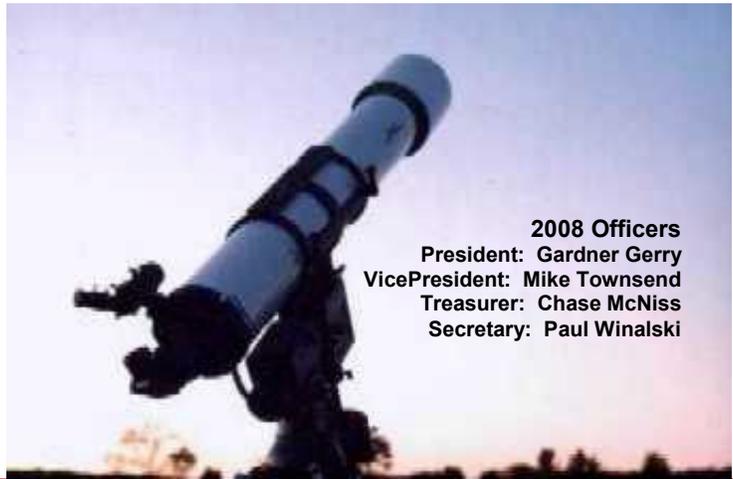
2008 Membership: 131

New members:

Rebekah Kibbee, Concord, NH

Andy Fan, Cambridge, MA

★ Chase McNiss



2008 Officers
President: Gardner Gerry
VicePresident: Mike Townsend
Treasurer: Chase McNiss
Secretary: Paul Winalski

DEADLINE June 2008 Issue: 5 PM June 13

E-mail articles to the Editor.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS – Notify the Treasurer of changes to postal or e-mail address.

How to Join N.H.A.S.

Write to us:

NHAS
 P.O. Box 5823
 Manchester, NH 03108-5823
 Attn: Treasurer

Send E-mail to:

info@nhastro.com

Use our web site:

<http://www.nhastro.com/>

This month's contributors:

Gardner Gerry, Tom Cochiaro, Alan Shirey, Rich Schuller, Chase McNiss

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NHAS Upcoming Events

Event	Date	Time	Location
Astro 101: Stars	May 23	7:30 PM	YFOS
Astro 101: Collimation	May 30	7:00 PM	YFOS
CMP Public Sky Watch	June 6	7:00 PM	Christa McAuliffe Planetarium
Coffee House Night	June 6	5:00 PM	YFOS
Astro 101: Deep Sky Objects	June 6	7:30 PM	YFOS
Spring Cleaning Session	June 7	12:00 PM	YFOS
NHAS Business Meeting	June 20	7:30 PM	Christa McAuliffe Planetarium
Astro 201: Stellar Evolution	June 21	7:00 PM	Grainger Observatory, Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter NH
Astro 201: Carbon Stars	June 27	7:30 PM	YFOS