

## THE LOS ANGELES MEETING OF WESTERN AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS

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More than three hundred Western amateur astronomers held a meeting at Bovard Auditorium, University of Southern California, August 22–24, 1949, under the sponsorship of the Los Angeles Astronomical Society. Registration took place on Monday morning, August 22, and the first session for papers was that afternoon, with Professor G. Bruce Blair, University of Nevada, presiding. The meeting was opened with an invocation by Dr. D. V. Johnstone, past president of the L.A.A.S., and an address of welcome by Walter DePalma, president of the Society. Following the presentation of several astronomical papers, Charles Federer, Jr., editor of *Sky and Telescope*, told about his trip to Europe last year to attend the meetings of the International Astronomical Union. In the evening, the Griffith Observatory was host to the convention. Dr. Dinsmore Alter, director of the observatory, in speaking on “Co-operation Between Professional and Amateur,” discussed the growing importance of amateur observing. Dr. C. H. Cleminshaw, assistant director, described “A Trip to the Moon” using both the Zeiss projector and a space-travel projector, newly developed at the observatory. George W. Bunton, chief technician, concluded the evening program by explaining the fundamental optics of the planetarium.

Tuesday was devoted to the reading of many interesting papers. The morning session, devoted to telescopes and their accessories, was presided over by H. L. Freeman, business secretary and treasurer of the L.A.A.S. The afternoon session was devoted to observational problems under the chairmanship of Professor W. H. Haas, University of New Mexico. At the convention banquet Tuesday evening, with Walter DePalma as toastmaster, life memberships in the Los Angeles Astronomical Society were presented to H. L. Freeman for his untiring work in behalf of the Society and to Les Mawhinney, who publicized the convention so well nationally in the newspapers and on the radio. After the banquet an exhibit of telescopes and accessories

and of astronomical photographs and drawings was enjoyed by all.

On the last day the convention met on Mount Wilson. R. S. Richardson, Edison Pettit, and Joseph Hickox demonstrated the various solar instruments during a tour of the observatory. A session for papers was held in the late afternoon in the auditorium atop the mountain, Dr. Richardson presiding. Two proposals for organization were made, one by Mr. Schopke and one by Professor Blair. A committee was appointed to study plans for next year's convention and possibly to organize an Association of Societies: the committee is G. B. Blair, Charles Schopke, Walter DePalma, Henry Power, and Mrs. Champ.

After dinner at the Mount Wilson Hotel, thirty telescopes were set up in the parking lot for an evening of observing. Prizes were awarded for the best telescope optically, the best mounting, the most unique telescope, and the best accessory. Carl Helms won a Barlow lens with his 10-inch f/8 reflector—the best telescope optically. George Schmitt won two prizes with his 10-inch reflector and its driving clock, a 12-inch Pyrex mirror kit and a finder objective, for the best mounting and the best accessory. Five of the Harvard Books on Astronomy were awarded to Chalmer Meyers for the most unique telescope, his 2½-inch refractor mounted on an astro-compass.

The convention ended as the delegates dismounted their telescopes at midnight and prepared for their homeward journeys. Everyone had enjoyed this first meeting of Western amateur astronomers and was looking forward to 1950 and another convention.