

minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Cape Astronomical Society held at the SAAG on Wednesday 9th November 1983.

The meeting was opened by the Chairman Mr Saltynski. He welcomed everyone and especially Mrs Roach ~~from~~ from Berlin. Apologies for absence were then received from Mr Green, Mr Du Preez and Mr Ayer. After the previous meeting's minutes had been read, the chairman announced that Danie Overbeek would be at the informal meeting on 21st ~~November~~ ^{and that there} November, ~~there~~ would be another informal meeting on 30th November.

He then called on the director of observing Dr Mach to give us his sky observing notes. Dr Mach first described the expedition to Algeria where there was excellent seeing. ~~and that~~ They had looked at M7, M8, MGC 253, the Andromeda galaxy and Pegasus (Bowl of Andromeda). He mentioned that another expedition to Algeria was planned, and that details would be in the next Cape Observer, due out on 30th ~~November~~ November.

The chairman then introduced the speaker, Wilfrid Turk who would be speaking about Amateur variable star observing.

Mr Turk said that this was his 300th lecture on astronomy. ~~and~~ Amateurs after getting a telescope and doing general sight-seeing often get bored and ~~get~~ ^{are} ~~lost~~ lost to astronomy. An observing program is therefore essential. Limitations are that you can't observe at any time of the month, telescope size ^{and} ~~conditions~~ trees restricting visibility. There are 6 avenues for the amateur - Messier objects - often difficult to find, - Nova search it takes a great deal of patience to constantly check one area of sky with little results, comet search - ~~is~~ one can look for new ones and observe them, but most comets are very faint - below 12th magnitude or beyond the reach of most amateur telescopes. Photography is possible but drive and attachments can be a problem. Variable stars can be done at any time, and it is easy to do.

To do the observations, a reasonable size telescope with RA and Dec circles ^{and} a star chart to assist in locating the star ~~and~~ are needed.

Mr Turk then gave an example of a finder chart with the name

of the variable star, abbreviation, Harvard number (the RA & Dec at 1900, Period and range of visual magnitude. The usual field of view is $3/4$ to 1 degree.

There three types of variable ~~star~~ star - extrinsic if ~~variable~~ ~~star~~ (double star) intrinsic (usually longer period if not eclipsed variable) and flare stars (such as Nova).

In recording results the following should be given - The date (Julian is starts at noon GMT. and is in days.), the name of the star, the estimated magnitude, conditions of seeing and an estimate of how accurate you think your results are. The report can be sent to many people such as D. Nash or direct to America, but it should be mentioned who ~~do~~ you have sent them to to avoid duplication of results.

Finding stars is usually ~~done~~ usually by using known stars and a star chart, but if your telescope has setting circles and an equatorial mount these can be used as an accuracy of $\pm 1^\circ$ is sufficient.

While doing variable star observing one star gets to know the sky, and also any occultations, comets etc can be fitted in the observing program if they are available. This is why variable star observing is so well suited to amateur work.

The talk was accompanied by slides of Mr Turk's equipment and an example of how the correlated evidence is published showing clearly how the ~~light~~ changes in magnitude through the years.

Mrs Kramer thanked the speaker and the meeting was adjourned for tea at 9.40 p.m. &

Signed as correct

Chairman.