

The Flint River Observer

Newsletter of the Flint River Astronomy Club

February 2006

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Officers: President, **Steve Knight:** sdknight@flintriverastronomy.org
Vice President, **Steven (Smitty) Smith:** Saratoga@flintriverastronomy.org
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Treasurer, **Dawn Knight:** sdknight@flintriverastronomy.org
Board of Directors: **David Ward:** dward@flintriverastronomy.org **John Wallace:** JWCOSMOS@att.net and **Scott Hammonds:** Scott@creatorsview.com
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Webmaster: **David Ward** Webmaster (see above);
Club Librarian: **Curt Cole:** 24e29d55c@speedfactory.net
Event Photographer: **Doug Maxwell** (see above)

Club mailing address: 114 Central Lake Cir. Griffin, GA 30223.

Web page: www.flintriverastronomy.org

Discussion group: FRAC@yahoogroups.com

Please notify **Dawn Knight** if you have a change of address, telephone number and or new e-mail address.

President's Message: Well, this is your last chance to think about who you'll want to carry the torch for FRAC in '06, as the focus of the Feb. meeting will be nominations for the upcoming election in March. If there is an office you're interested in, or know of someone that would be up to the job, make sure they're interested and nominate him or her for office. It's a great chance to help the club grow in your own way, with your own ideas. I've done it long enough, and it's time for someone else to handle things from here. Plus with all that's happened this year, along with running the GSV, it's time for me to redirect my focus to take better care of the GSV, not to mention having fallen down on my observing as of late. Do consider if you feel you would like to hold office in the club. It's a rewarding experience, and you don't need to have SA2000 memorized to do a great job. Just open eyes, and an open mind is all that's needed to be a great officer, and a great asset to the club. Here are the current jobs that will be up for re-election: President, Vice President, Secretary and Board Member. We are also looking for someone to distribute the hardcopy of the newsletter that gets mailed out. There are only ten copies that get mailed and the club will cover expenses to mail them.

Club Calendar: February 9, 2006 Club Meeting at UGA Experiment station (directions are posted on the website), February 24 & February 25, Cox Field Observing.

Membership Renewals: All renewals are due during the month of February. You can send in them to Dawn Knight at the club mailing address or give them to her at the meeting or observings.

January Meeting: The meeting for January was held at Maria's Mexican Restaurant. Prior to Maria's we met in the parking lot at UGA and discussed some business. Present were Curt and Irene, Doug (making his triumphant return), Smitty, Larry H., Chuck, Steve and Dawn. We discussed the upcoming elections, advertising that Curt has been doing, upcoming events and GSV 06. Currently we have several speakers lined up and 3 door prizes in hand. We have promises of more door prizes that have yet to arrive and several requests that we have heard nothing back on yet. We are also trying to schedule Jonn Serrie for a concert during the star party. We are trying to work out the financial arrangements with him as this is being written. He has requested that we cover his expenses and we are waiting to find out what a ballpark amount on the expenses will be.

Calendar of Events: Elections will be held during the March birthday party meeting. GSV 06 is in full swing. Make sure to get your registration to Dawn if you plan on attending.

Current Library: At the Jan. 2006 FRAC meeting Larry Higgins donated the following four books to the FRAC library:

Guide to the Return of Halley's Comet - by Flaste, Noble, et al. History and Lore.
Wanderers in the Sky - Edited by Page & Williams. Motions of Planets & Space Probes.

Voyager Neptune Travel Guide - Edited by Kohlhasse.

Our Changing Universe - by John Gribbin. The New Astronomy.

Also donated previously, by Larry Higgins and others, are:

Exploring the Universe - by Roy Gallant.

The Grand Tour - by Miller & Hartman. Traveler's Guide to the Solar System.

Exploration of the Universe - by George O. Abell

Our Universe - by Roy Gallant. National Geographic Picture Atlas.

Universe Sampler - by Amelia Goldberg. A Journey Through the Universe for the Beginner.

Planisphere - Edmund Scientific. 8.5"

Live From the Aurora - Educators Guide.

Saturn poster.

Solar System, Star Finder, Programs 25 & 26.

Please check your personal library for the following items missing from the club library:

A Man On The Moon - by Andrew Chaikin. Vol. I, II, & III.

An Introduction to Astronomy - by Robert Baker.

Moon Map.

The Moon, Compliments of Astronomy.

All of the books listed under "Books for Young Astronomers" are missing. Bill Warren checked the Beaverbrook library, which is where the FRAC library used to be stored, but could not find them there.

If you see anything you would like to check out, please contact Curt Cole, the club librarian.

Observing report by Felix Luciano:

Equipment: Orion XT8 Dob, 9X50 RACI Finder, and Telrad

NGC 1501 – Planetary Nebula – 60X and 75X - N-NW of NGC 1502 in Kemble's Cascade, located nebula in between two bright stars making up an almost in-line formation, small, round form, faint patch of light, increasing magnification washes away the nebula, nebula shows an even glow

M35 & NGC 2168 – Open cluster – 75X - a large irregular shaped cluster with lots of loose bright member components. NGC 2158 is located within the same field of view as M35

Saturn –

16 Nag with 5X Powermate = 375X – a sharp high contrast image is seen of Saturn, image is very well defined, A & B Rings very clear, the SEB is a wide, dark beige band spanning across the globe

5 TAK LE – 240X – smaller image in the field of view but very sharp and clean, A & B Rings showing high contrast, C Ring is a dull gray shade color and between it and the planet is nothing but the very blackness of space

Astronomy News:

FROM: Academy of Achievement

<http://www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/tom0bio-1>

Clyde Tombaugh, Ph.D., Discoverer of Planet Pluto

Date of birth: February 4, 1906

Date of death: January 17, 1997

Clyde W. Tombaugh was born in 1906 in Streator, Illinois. He attended high school in Streator and moved with his family to a farm in Western Kansas, where a hailstorm destroyed the family's crops, dashing his hopes of attending college. Tombaugh continued to study on his own, teaching himself solid geometry and trigonometry.

In 1926, at the age of 20, Tombaugh built his first telescope. Dissatisfied with the result, he determined to master optics, and built two more telescopes in the next two years, grinding his own lenses and mirrors, and further honing his skills.

Using these homemade telescopes, he made drawings of the planets Mars and Jupiter and sent them to the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona. The astronomers at Lowell were so impressed with the young amateur's powers of observation they invited him to work at the Observatory.

Clyde Tombaugh stayed at the Lowell Observatory for the next 14 years. The young astronomer earned a permanent place in the history of science when he discovered the planet Pluto on February 18, 1930.

In 1932 he entered the University of Kansas where he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in 1936. He continued to work at Lowell Observatory during the summers and after graduation he returned to work at the Observatory full-time. In 1938, he received his master's degree from the University of Kansas.

During his years at Lowell Observatory, Tombaugh discovered hundreds of new variable stars, hundreds of new asteroids and two comets. He found new star clusters, clusters of galaxies including one super cluster of galaxies. In all, he counted over 29,000 galaxies. Tombaugh remained at Lowell until he was called to service during World War II. The astronomer taught navigation to the U.S. Navy at Arizona State College in Flagstaff from 1943 to 1945.

After the war, Lowell Observatory was unable to rehire Tombaugh due to a funding shortfall so, in 1946, he returned to work for the military at the ballistics research laboratories of the White Sands Missile Range in Las Cruces, New Mexico, where he supervised the optical instrumentation used in testing new missiles.

In the course of this work, Tombaugh designed many new instruments, including a super camera called the IGOR (Intercept Ground Optical Recorder) which remained in use at White Sands for 30 years before it was finally improved upon.

After nine years at White Sands, Tombaugh left the missile range in 1955. He was awarded the medal of the Pioneers of White Sands Missile Range.

From 1955 until his retirement in 1973, Clyde Tombaugh was on the faculty at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces. In later years, Tombaugh crisscrossed the United States and Canada giving lectures to raise money for New Mexico State University's Tombaugh scholarship fund for post-doctoral students in astronomy. He died at home in Las Cruces, shortly before his 91st birthday.

I hope everyone had a great New Year and I look forward to seeing all of you in 2006.

February

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
			1	2	3	4 Clyde Tombaugh Born - 1906
5 First Qtr Moon	6	7	8	9 Club Meeting	10	11
12 Full Moon	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21 Last Qtr Moon	22	23	24 Cox Field Observing	25 Cox Field Observing
26	27 New Moon	28				

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