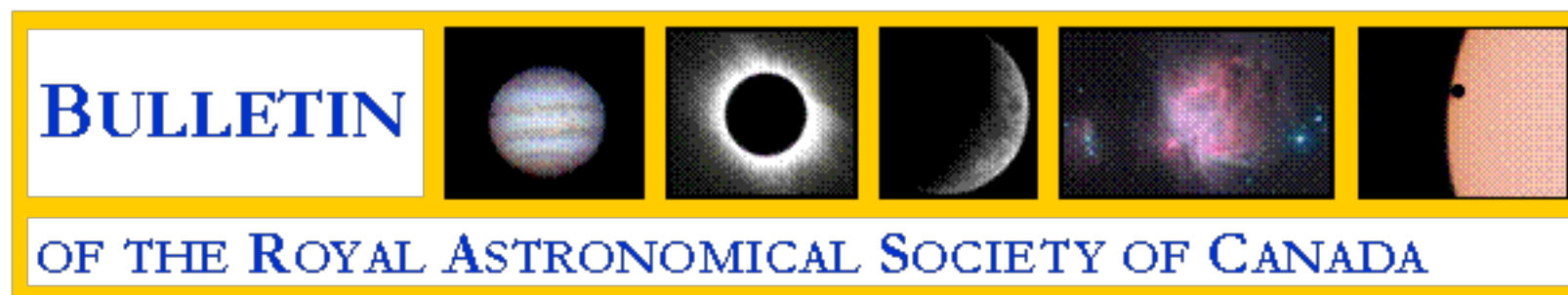


2009-09



September 2009 - Volume 4, Number 9

Ian Levstein, Editor

We welcome your comments on the *Bulletin*. Email them to the Editor at bulletin@rasc.ca [1].

► [Editor's Notebook](#)

by Ian Levstein

[FYI: About *Bulletin* Submissions](#)

When articles are sent to me for publication in the *Bulletin*, I always acknowledge the submission by return email. If you do not receive a response from me within 24 hours, I did not receive it.

[Leo Enright \(1943-2009\)](#)

As many of you already know, the RASC lost one of its most active members in August. Leo died peacefully at his home in Sharbot Lake, Ontario. **Ken Kingdon** broke the news and **Walter MacDonald** subsequently wrote about the service. With both Ken's and Walter's permission, I have posted their thoughts [here](#) [2]. On behalf of the RASC, we express our most sincere condolences to Leo's wife, Denise Sabatini, and his entire family. He will be sorely missed.

► [News @ RASC.ca](#)

By-Law No. 1 Revised and Online

by **James Edgar**, National Secretary

During the Annual Meeting, a motion was passed to wind down the Life Member program. This resulted in an amendment to By-Law No. 1, which is now posted online in its complete form as a PDF and an HTML file. You can access these files at the [members only](#) part of the RASC Web site [here](#) [3]. After you log-in with your personal ID and password, use the username "rasc" and the password "galileo" to access this information.

Extended Annual Report Online

by **James Edgar**, National Secretary, and **Dave Lane**, RASC President

The Extended Annual Report has been placed on the [RASC Web site](#) [4]. Use the username "rasc" and the password "galileo" to access this information. This is the coloured version, with reports from all the Centres, plus Centre Treasurers' Reports and Centre Secretaries' Reports.

RASC's New Honorary President

During the 2009 GA, National Council elected **Dr. Jim Hesser** as the new Honorary President of The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. Jim succeeds **Dr. Bob Garrison** in this post, and he will hold it for four years.

Constitution Committee - Call for Volunteers

by **Denis Grey**, Chair, Constitution Committee

I would like to draw your attention to the work that the Constitution Committee is planning for 2009-10. As noted in the [article](#) [5], we are looking for 2-3 people to work with the Committee in an unofficial capacity to renew our Constitution. If you have a few hours a month, some legal or similar expertise and are looking to make a contribution to the long-term vibrancy of the Society, please consider putting your name forward.

Is There a RASC Observatory Near You?

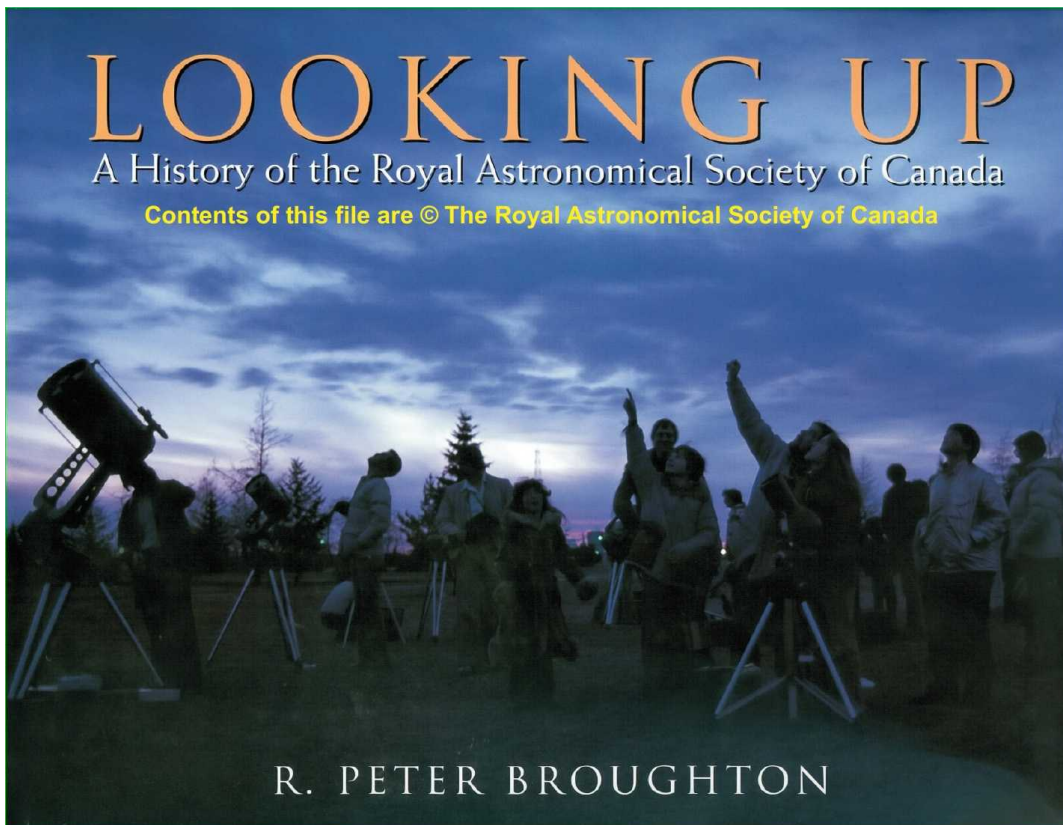
by **Barry Matthews**, Chair, RASC History Committee

The History Committee of the RASC has created an incentive known as the "RASC Observatory Project"

with the mandate to collect photos and brief descriptions of RASC observatories in and outside Canada. These observatories can be Centre-, private-, or member-owned, or simply operated by members for public outreach. What the History Committee would like is to receive two or three photos (JPG format), a description of the building, and basic location information (city, province (or lat/long), owner, main equipment, etc.)

A proposed data input form has been created and is available from me via [email](#) [6] or by telephone (613) 829-5251. Centre reps are asked to encourage members to take part in this project and perhaps even act as local contact for the project. If anyone has questions concerning this project or needs data input forms, please [contact me](#) [6]. It is hoped that the collected data will be published and/or made available to members by CD or some other electronic format that may become available in the future, and will also become a resource to those who may, in the future, wish to build or manage an observatory.

Looking Up Update



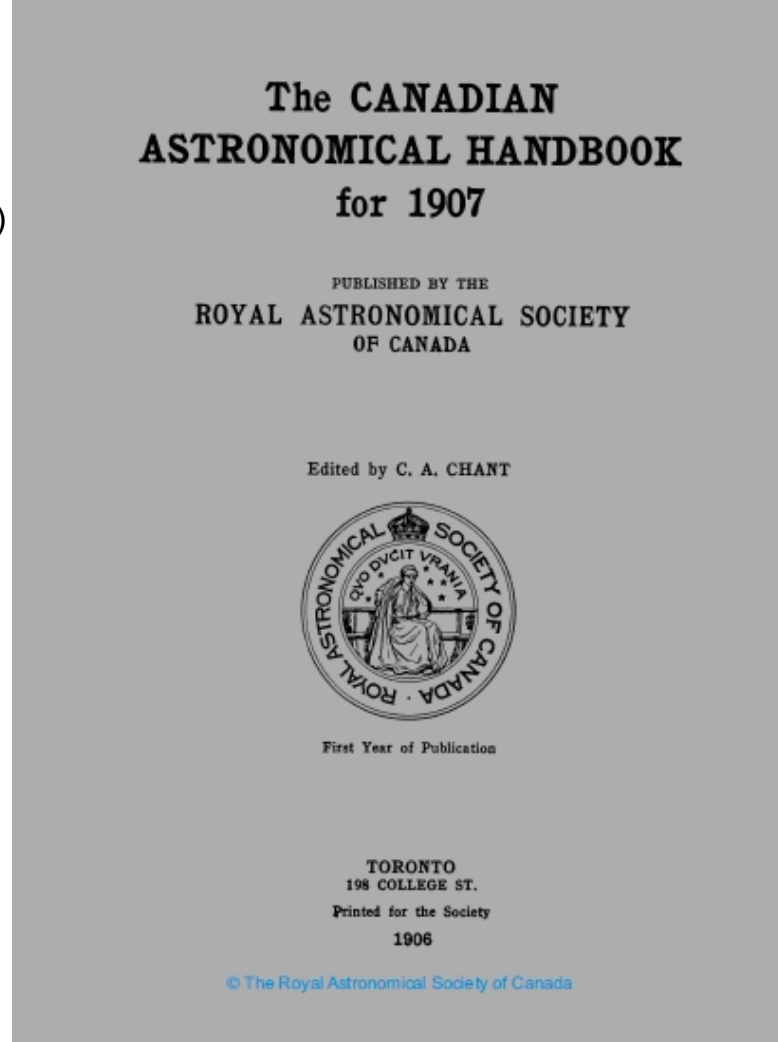
As an update to last month's *Bulletin* article, it came to our attention that the cover photo for *Looking Up* was taken by RASC member **Alan Dyer**. The photo was taken at one of the 1970s Starnights held annually in Coronation Park, Edmonton, outside the old Queen Elizabeth Planetarium.

The cover photo was previously uncredited, but we are happy that Alan will now receive full credit as the photo's author.

Historical First Edition of the *Observer's Handbook* Now Online

by **Randall Rosenfeld**, RASC Archivist The *Observer's Handbook* is one of our two chief publications. For many international observers, our Society is that publication. For some, the *Observer's Handbook* is the leading English-language "pocket" ephemeris, reigning among mid-level ephemera designed for field use, in the class below the grand national ephemera supported by cutting edge celestial dynamics and the latest astrometry produced by HM Nautical Almanac Office and the USNO, and the Bureau des Longitudes and the IMCCE. It is a proud, useful, and vigorous heritage. If you've ever wondered what the first RASC *Observer's Handbook* looked like, now you can satiate your curiosity, and own a facsimile copy. Thanks to an initiative of the History Committee and **Walter MacDonald's** hard work of scanning, creating the PDF version, and crafting the Web page, the *Canadian Astronomical Handbook for 1907* (its correct title) can be found [here](#) [7]. A specially commissioned introduction by History Committee member and former *Observer's Handbook* Editor and noted contributor, **Roy Bishop**, places our 1907 ephemeris

in its historical context, and highlights changes between the first publication and the current *Handbook*. For fun, and to get a feel for observing through the eyes of the past in IYA 2009, you could pick an object, or class of objects, and view it (or them) based on the 1907 description and instructions and then switch to the 2009 version, or alternate between the two. The double stars mentioned by Roy would be a good starting point. Perhaps a half century from now a RASC member will use the *Observer's Handbook* produced in IYA 2009 as the starting point for a similar exercise. By then, most of us will be part of astronomical history.



► Across the RASC

Impact Crater Web Site Updated

by **Charles O'Dale**, Ottawa Centre My impact crater Web site has been updated to include the [St. Martin](#) [8] crater in Manitoba. The "possible crater file" was updated to include [Lake Charron](#) [9] in Manitoba.

Nova East ARISS Contact

by **Blair MacDonald**, Halifax Centre The [Nova East](#) [10] [ARISS](#) [11] contact is now a part of space history. It has been officially logged by NASA as the 466th successful ARISS contact and Dr. Bob Thirsk's 5th contact while on the ISS.

The event began with hardware setup on Friday, but the work in scheduling and question gathering started weeks in advance of Nova East. Signal acquisition was at 12:53 UTC and Dr. Thirsk replied after the 3rd call to the station. Signal quality from the station was excellent throughout the duration of the pass with very audible sound quality up until the last few seconds of the contact. Dr. Thirsk's answers were considered by all to be thoughtful and friendly, and were certainly appreciated by the participants and assembled audience of about 250. The questions ranged from "Do you see Iridium flares?" to "Do you see any sign of man's influence on the Earth?" Dr. Thirsk answered all in turn, until it was time for a group "goodbye" as the ISS sailed over the horizon and contact was lost. Nova East thanks the support and efforts of ARISS Operations, the Canadian Space Agency for promotional items, **Csaba Domokos** of Bell Aliant, Province of Nova Scotia Parks (DNR), **Shelley Emmerson** of Province of Nova Scotia EMO,



Barry Manual of the Halifax Regional Municipality EMO, members of the Halifax Amateur Radio Club: **Bill Elliott**, VE1MR; **Dave Nimmo**, VE1NN; **John Goodwin**, VE1CDD; **Doug LeBlanc**, VE1LDL; and sound technician **Eric Thibodeau**, the staff of Smileys Park, and Dr. Thirsk. For more images of

Nova East 2009 click [here](#) [12].

Deer Stargazer...

by **Ron Jerome**, Vancouver Centre As is our wont, my wife and I spend many summer days high on mountain slopes enjoying the flora and fauna and testing our stamina. **[Editor's Comment]** This is a great story. Read the entire article [here](#) [13].

► International Year of Astronomy 2009

Thirsk's IYA Message



by **David Lane**, RASC President **Bob Thirsk** recorded a nice [IYA message](#) [14] from ISS recently. This was "premiered" at the GA. We learned that the book *Mary Lou's New Telescope* was on-board ISS as well.

Victoria IYA Geocoins

by **Malcolm Scrimger**, Victoria Centre A Victoria, B.C., [coin design company](#) [15] has released the International Year of Astronomy 2009 geocoins to commemorate this special year. These coins feature two notable telescopes: the Anglo-Australian Telescope from the southern hemisphere, and Gemini North



from the northern hemisphere. The night sky scenes feature the southern constellation Crux, and the Big Dipper asterism. These coins are 42mm x 4.5mm and have a unique die under the translucent paint so that the official logo colour-fade could be accurately depicted.

► The Sky this Month

What's New in the Sky

Readers are encouraged to check out the [Northern Skies](#) ^[16] section of the RASC Web site. Thanks to **Gary Boyle** for keeping us all in the know!

► Bulletin Photo of the Month

Fireball from Halifax



Michael Boschat took this excellent photo of a fireball with a 3-second trail from Halifax on 2009 August 13.

Photo details: Canon Rebel 350D with lens set near 20mm, f/3.5, 400 ISO and a 20-second exposure.

► Dates to Remember

- **2009 September 15-20** - [Northern Prairie Starfest](#) [17], Black Nugget Lake, Alberta
- **2009 September 17-20** - [Huronian Star Party](#) [18], Duntroon, Ontario
- **2009 September 19-20** - [Alberta Star Party](#) [19], Starland Recreational Area, Alberta
- **2009 September 25-27** - [Fall 'N' Stars](#) [20], Vanderwater Conservation Area, Thomasburg, Ontario
- **2009 October 16-18** - [Astronomy Workshop](#) [21], Camp Maskepetoon, Alberta
- **2009 October 17** - [Torrance Barrens Dark Sky Reserve Dedication](#) [22], Muskoka, Ontario



The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada

203 – 4920 Dundas St W, Toronto ON M9A 1B7 CANADA

Tel: (416) 924-7973, Fax: (416) 924-2911

Member Service: nationaloffice@rasc.ca [23]

Visit Us at: www.rasc.ca [24]

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Deer Stargazer

Deer Stargazer...

by Ron Jerome, Vancouver Centre

As is our wont, my wife and I spend many summer days high on mountain slopes enjoying the flora and fauna and testing our stamina. It is far more satisfying to ascend an ever rising trail for three hours than to spend a mere 20 minutes on a Stairmaster at the local gym. We do admit to the latter, however, when the damp winter months are upon us and trail heads well nigh inaccessible.

We recently spent a week on the eastern side of the North Cascades in Washington State just beyond the west coast rain shadow. Our favourite guide book rates the trails we travel from "Wow" to "Don't Bother" and their recommendations have never disappointed us. Anne limits the choices to those with the wow factor. If the trail doesn't offer a view, she is not interested. "Might as well be at the gym" is her standard reply. She dutifully records the mileage and elevation gain of each hike and keeps a cumulative total. Over the twenty years of our adventuring, we have not quite accumulated enough altitude to escape earth's gravitation pull but we are working on it.

Should we get there, I am sure we will be treated to some magnificent glimpses of a truly dark sky.

In the evening, after a day's adventure, I often set up a telescope in whatever campground we call home, both for my benefit and to share some of the views with interested folks in the area. With this year's emphasis on IYA there has been an added incentive to promote the joys of the night sky.



On our most recent trip, after returning from a comparatively short hike, I set up my scope behind the picnic table at the back of our campsite. Our location in the foothills of the Cascades restricted the views to many of the targets that are circumpolar or seasonally high. Dinner and dishes were completed around dusk and I opened the door of our trailer, intending to move the equipment to a nearby vacant site with fewer trees.

Negotiating the edge of the adjoining forest was a deer, grazing its way in the direction of my telescope. I quickly retreated inside to retrieve my camera. The deer approached the telescope and sidled up close to the eyepiece. Discovering that the lens cover was still on, which spoiled any views, it contented itself with licking the salt off the hand controllers... a minor consolation.

Unfortunately, the low light yielded the less-than-crisp image, but it documents my efforts to take IYA to an audience that I had not foreseen. We may have to consider a new class of members in the RASC to accommodate ungulates. Then there was the bear that appeared on the mountain during the Mt. Kobau Star Party...

Leo Enright

Leo Enright (1943-2009)

by Ken Kingdon

I am very saddened to report that Leo Enright passed away early Tuesday, August 11th. He died quietly in his sleep.

I last spoke to Leo on Monday evening the 10th, and we eagerly looked forward to our next morning's visit to the proposed site of the O.M.I. scope north of his home in Sharbot Lake,

followed by lunch at a fine restaurant in Clarendon, then return to his lakefront home that evening for the annual spectacle of the Perseids under his superbly dark skies.

I arrived at his home Tuesday morning, got no answer, but found him in bed... he had passed away painlessly overnight.

Many RASC members will know of his many accomplishments and efforts to spread the thrill of astronomy. Most people will know him as the author of the RASC publication, "The Beginner's Observing Guide". Leo was a co-founder of the RASC - Kingston Centre. He had a long-term role at the National level of RASC. He and his wife Denise Sabatini have asteroid Ensab named after them (thank you, Peter). The list goes on extensively.

He often spoke fondly of his many fine astronomy friends across North America. His knowledge of the night sky was profound. He was a mentor to many, and I personally benefited greatly from our many discussions, visits, and observing sessions together.

Besides astronomy, there is another side of Leo that few knew, as he was a reserved and humble man. His knowledge of baseball, football, and hockey was absolutely enormous and what a pleasure he was to be with on our trips to see the Jays play; together, we never missed a Queen's home football game, and his knowledge of rules and strategy was unparalleled; during the NHL season, we discussed hockey almost daily. For the years that we had been in almost daily contact, astronomy was only 1/3rd of it... our favourite sports and life in general made up the other 2/3rds.

But here is the real shocker... Leo did not just talk sports; he played them. In his mid-life, he was a star baseball player, and a real slugger. As a high school English teacher, he also ran the weight-lifting program and a former student of his told me yesterday that no strapping youth nor any adult in the school could out-lift him, though they all tried - and gained inspiration. He loved water skiing, an expert at slalom; as a younger man, a photo of him in his life jacket shows a handsome, broad-shouldered water skier built like a small, strong bull; he was skilled at carving sharp turns just inches off the surface. He got into snowmobiling in the 1970's, and acquired a machine that, to this day, is still one of the hottest ever made, and he was still proud to show me that beauty recently. Who da thunkit?

In the last decade, Leo had been ravaged by a heart attack, and life was no longer so kind to him. He was forced to surrender his youth, and I was impressed that he did this gracefully. I watched and always learned more from a true mentor.

So, it was not just the astronomy; he was also a great sportsman and a quiet gentleman. He lived by the creed... if you do not play a sport, BE ONE.

Clear skies to you, on such a cloudy day.

by Walter MacDonald

For anyone who has not seen it, Leo's obituary can be found [here](#) ^[25]. Also, for those of you who have not already done so, be sure to go to [here](#) ^[26] and have a listen to the June 30th program in which Leo was the featured interviewee. It is so nice that David Levy was able to do this while Leo was still with us. I made it to the evening visitation in Belleville on Friday, August 14 and was quite pleased to see a good group of astro people there: Tom Dean, Peggy & John, Diane H., Ken Kingdon, and Bill Broderick. There was also a guy there in a wheelchair who was from the

Belleville Centre (I can't recall his name, unfortunately). A quick scan of the visitors' log showed that Ruth and Terry Hicks had attended the afternoon visitation. It was really good to see Tom and Bill again after so many years! Denise was there, of course, and it was good to see her again (after some 15 years or so) despite the circumstances. Afterwards, I headed up to the old MacDonald farm (near "Tommyburg" as Leo used to jokingly refer to it) for an overnight stay.

Saturday morning I headed down to Read. Guess I should have zoomed in a little more on Google maps! When I arrived at the intersection of Harmony and Read roads, Read was not there. So with a 50-50 chance, I turned south. After a couple of kilometres it was obvious that I had made the incorrect choice. :) Going north, I soon found myself in "downtown" Read. The old General Store was there (and appears to have been out of business for some time now), and a school, but no church.

At this point logic indicated to me that if the church was not in Read, then it would be either N, S, E, or W of Read. Since I had approached from the south, I knew it wasn't that way. I continued north but the lands became quickly uninhabited and I turned around just north of the big transmitter tower. Returning to Read, I started out east but could see no sign of a church down the road. I pulled in to a driveway to turn around -- the name on the box was "T Enright." Well, if nothing else, I could say that I found out where one of Leo's brothers lives!

Finally, I proceeded west (after encountering another lost car -- with someone from Toronto Centre behind the wheel) and left Read behind.

There was still no sign of a church, but I figured that at least I was headed back towards Thomasburg. A couple of minutes later I came upon the church, and I was only a few minutes late! Judging by the number of cars there and how far I had to park from the church, the turnout looked quite good, and it was.

The church was surprisingly large and beautiful, with the graveyard just a couple of doors over and the parish hall directly across the road from the graveyard. It was a nice ceremony, and at its conclusion we all proceeded to the graveyard. A slight breeze came up shortly after we arrived graveside which helped a little with the hot sun. Leo's resting place has nice low horizons all around and a rugged beauty typical of that part of the province.

The astronomical community was again well-represented. Susan G., Doug A., Dieter B., Ken K., and Joanne B. were there, and I thought I saw Judith Irwin briefly as well. The great surprise of this day was seeing David Stokes! Perhaps with a little cajoling we can get him active in the Centre again. The Toronto Centre member disappeared right after the interment so I didn't get a chance to find out his name. Susan noted in her message that there were 14 astro people present -- so if anyone can add any names I've missed here, please do so. As Susan noted, the reception at the hall was quite enjoyable. The only thing I can add to her report is that she and Doug almost had to be surgically separated from the desert trays! :)

Saturday night was clear once again, though the transparency was starting to slip a bit. The Milky Way arched overhead as beautiful as ever, cascading all the way down to Sagittarius, which was right on the meridian at the start of astronomical darkness. Scorpius was already sliding down towards the horizon in the southwest, and at its heart Antares was noticeably dimmer than usual -- perhaps an appropriate tribute to our loss.

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Links:

- [1] [mailto:bulletin@rasc.ca?subject=Bulletin Mail](mailto:bulletin@rasc.ca?subject=Bulletin%20Mail)
- [2] <https://www.rasc.ca/bulletin/2009-09/enright>
- [3] https://www.rasc.ca/system/files/private/ByLaw200908_0.pdf
- [4] <https://www.rasc.ca/governance/annualreports>
- [5] <https://www.rasc.ca/news/help-wanted-constitution-renewal-2010>
- [6] [mailto:opticks@sympatico.ca?subject=RASC Observatory Project](mailto:opticks@sympatico.ca?subject=RASC%20Observatory%20Project)
- [7] <https://www.rasc.ca/observers-handbook>
- [8] <http://ottawa-rasc.ca/wiki/index.php?title=Odale-Articles-StMartin>
- [9] http://ottawa-rasc.ca/wiki/index.php?title=Odale-Articles-Possible_Craters
- [10] <http://halifax.rasc.ca/ne/>
- [11] <http://www.arrl.org/ARISS/>
- [12] <http://www.pbase.com/astronut/novaeast2009>
- [13] <https://www.rasc.ca/bulletin/2009-09/jerome>
- [14] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CiJfyevRjj8>
- [15] <http://landsharkz.ca/>
- [16] <https://www.rasc.ca/news/northern-skies>
- [17] <http://edmontonrasc.com/northern-prairie-star-party/>
- [18] http://www.hsp-ssaa.ca/Welcome_To_The_HSP_and_SSAA_Website.html
- [19] <http://calgary.rasc.ca/asp2009.htm>
- [20] <http://rascbelleville.ca/fallinstars/>
- [21] <http://edmontonrasc.com/george-moores-astronomy-workshop/>
- [22] <http://muskokaconservancy.org/protected-properties/>
- [23] [mailto:nationaloffice@rasc.ca?subject=Request for Info](mailto:nationaloffice@rasc.ca?subject=Request%20for%20Info)
- [24] <http://www.rasc.ca>
- [25] <http://www.ebituaries.ca/Ebit.aspx?Dald=856859001>
- [26] http://www.letstalkstars.com/recent_2009.htm