Upcoming Events
Like us and visit the website for late breaking news and events
May Calendar
Astronomy Thursday May 2 8:30p
Astronomy Friday May 3 8:30p
Stonelick Stargazing May 4 dusk
Topics with Dean Regas May 7 8p
Astronomy Thursday May 9 8:30p
Astronomy Friday May 10 8:30p
Late Night Date Night May 11 10:30p
History of the Observatory May 12 1-4p
FOTO 2nd Monday Meeting May 13 7:30p
*Behind the Scenes May 14 7p
Astronomy Thursday May 16 8:30p
Astronomy Friday May 17 8:30p
A2Z+ Astronomy Class May 19 7p
* From Attic to Basement May 20 7p
FOTO Planning Meeting May 23 7p
Astronomy Thursday May 23 8:30p
Astronomy Friday May 24 8:30p
*Binocular Astronomy May 29 7p
Astronomy Thursday May 30 8:30p
Astronomy Friday May 31 8:30p
Stonelick Stargazing June 1 dusk
Summer Camps June & July
*UC Communiversity
Complete Calendar & Late-Breaking Events is Online

Membership News
By Valerie Niemi, FOTO Chair

Greetings Fellow Stargazers,

Well, Craig and I just returned from a cruise of the San Juan Islands near Seattle, Washington.

Suffice it to say, there was no star-gazing on this trip. At times, the fog was so thick you could hardly see the trees, but it sure made for some beautiful mossy greens and huge ferns.

Lest you worry that there was no room for astronomy on our trip, let me put your minds at ease. Wednesday night was “Open Mic Night” on the boat and everyone was happy (read coerced by fellow passengers) to participate. We decided our best (only?) talent was “Ask the Astronomers”. We had lots of questions about the newly photographed black hole. Given that the age group was 60+, we had a lively discussion as to whether or not Pluto is actually a planet. While we were persuasive in our arguments for “no, it’s not”- planets must be spheroid, clear its own neighborhood and what’s with Pluto’s crazy inclined orbit, we’re not sure we made any new converts. My Very Exceptional Mother Just Served Us Nine Pizzas, was far more compelling than the new My Very Excellent Mother Just Served Us Nachos. We left them all laughing with the joke about Saturn and the bathtub (we upgraded it to a hot tub). If you don’t know the joke, be sure to ask me at the next FOTO meeting.

In the meantime, keep looking up—it’s bound to clear up someday!

Thanks for all you do for the Cincinnati Observatory.

Stargazing at Stonelick
Saturdays-May 4 & June 1st

Come Out and Enjoy the Spring Skies

Need help with your telescope? Get expert tips setting it up and exploring the night sky. Stargazing begins at dusk. Open to all ages. Stargazes are weather permitting.

“Like” Stonelick Stargazers on Facebook for weather and holiday schedule updates.
Astro Topics With Dean Regas

Scale of the Solar System
Tues. May 7th 8p
Spectacular Sun
Tues. June 18th 7p
Moon Landing
Tues. July 9th 8p
Moon Landing (repeats)
Tues. July 17th 8p

These fun and laid-back single topic classes for beginners focus on a variety of topics and will surely keep you looking up!

$15 per person $12 for members.
Sign Up Online or call 513-321-5186.

April 8th FOTO Meeting Highlights

By Michelle Lierl Gainey, FOTO secretary.

Craig Niemi announced that The Mitchel Dome work is nearly finished; the telescope is now available for use. Some additional renovations and repairs on the dome and roof are still underway.

Our speaker for the evening was Dr. Joseph Gallagher: “Super-Useful Supernovae”. Dr. Gallagher’s interesting and informative presentation explained the history of efforts to understand the distances to other galaxies, using various techniques. He showed how quantifying the apparent brightness and rate of decline in brightness of Type I supernovae can provide information on the distance to very distant galaxies, thus providing an estimate of the rate of expansion of the early universe.

Late Night Date Night

Saturday, May 11th
10:30pm-Midnight

Looking for a romantic Saturday night out under the stars? Come see what the Observatory is like after hours. You’ll get to use the oldest big telescope in the U.S. to view astronomical objects that are not visible until late at night (weather permitting). Get a sneak preview of the next season’s planets and stars a month or two ahead of everyone else.

If the weather does not permit viewing, we’ll have fun showing you around the universe at behind the scenes at the Observatory.

Admission is $25 per person Space is limited. Adults only. Sign Up Online or call 513-321-5186.

FOTO Planning Meeting

Thursday, May 23rd 7pm

Help plan programs and events for your fellow members. Open to all.

Save-the-Dates

June 16 Sunday Sun-day Sundae
July 6 & 13 Jupiter Nights
July 20 50th Anniv. of Apollo 11
August 3 & 10 Saturndays
Aug. 4 Sunday Sun-day Sundae
Sept. 14 ScopeOut Telescope Fest
Summer Camps 2019

This summer the Museum Center is offering more camps than ever before both at Union Terminal and at community partner locations around the Greater Cincinnati Area including the Observatory.

June 3-7 @ the Observatory
K-2: Future Astronauts
3-7: Rocket Science

June 10-14 @ the Observatory
K-2: Living in Space
3-7: Mission to Mars

For more information and to register call 513-287-7001 or sign up online.

May 13th FOTO Meeting

By Tom East

The Geomorphology of the Red Planet

Please join us at 7:30 PM on Monday, May 13, 2019 at the Observatory, for a discussion of the internal and external processes that have shaped the surface of Mars from the geologic past to the present. This presentation, by Dr. Terra Clarke, will place an emphasis on exogenic surface agents of change and the features created by gravity, water, wind, and ice on one of our nearest neighbors, the most distant terrestrial planet from the Sun.

Dr. Terra Clarke is a retired geologist and Professor Emerita of Geosciences at the University of Louisville where her research and teaching interests were in Geomorphology, Global Change, and Earth Systems Science, Mapping and Remote Sensing. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Geology (Honors) from the University of Redlands, and a Ph.D. in Earth Sciences with specialization in Geomorphology from the University of California at Riverside. She has worked extensively in desert environments and in both exploration and engineering geology as well as applied geophysics.

It’s Field Trip Season!

By Samantha Pepper

Spring is right around the corner and you know what that means. It’s field trip season!

The Cincinnati Observatory offers field trips to all ages which include an interactive classroom presentation, a tour of the historic telescopes, and safe solar viewing on clear days!

To learn more visit our website.

If you or a teacher you know would like to schedule a field trip email Samantha Pepper or call 513-321-5186. Available dates will fill up fast!

On Your PBS Station & Online.

Brought to you by Cincinnati Public Radio & WVXU

Star Gazers is the unique, bite-sized astronomy program that challenges you to get outside and experience the night sky.
Astronomy Nights

Thursday, May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
Friday, May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31
All 8:30pm-10:00pm
Free for Members!

In awe with the beauty of the night sky? Have questions about the Universe? This is where you can get the answers.

Astronomy Evenings include ever-changing short presentations on a wide variety of topics and plenty of time for your astro-questions. Tour this National Historic Landmark. And if clear, view the Moon, planets and deep space treasures through the historic 1904 telescope. (Program is held rain or shine)

The topics and the night sky change week-to-week/month-to-month so you can visit often to hear and see something new. Free for Members!

For the latest schedule visit the web calendar and sign up online.

Radio Astronomy!

Looking Up brings you the latest astronomical discoveries in a really fun, quick-paced conversation. We cover out-of-this-world topics about planets, stars, and the universe, science and technology, throw in a little pop-culture and bring it all down to Earth.

Looking Up releases new episodes twice a month, on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays. Subscribe on iTunes or Stitcher.

FOTO Committee Officers

Chair-Valerie Niemi
Vice Chair-Aaron Eiben
Secretary-Michelle Gainey
Treasurer-Al Scheide
Member Representatives to the COC Board:
Dave Bosse
JoAnne Pedersen
Terry Endres

To contact an Officer or Rep email craig@cincinnatiobservatory.org and I’ll forward your contact information on to them.

Mitchel Building Update

Since November the Mitchel Observatory has been undergoing extensive repair and rehabilitation to the roof, dome and exterior masonry. Work is virtually complete with some minor follow up work to be done. Later this spring or early summer the exteriors of the main dome and cone dome will be painted/sealed.

The 1845 Merz & Mahler telescope is back in use for programs and viewing!

Our thanks to the University of Cincinnati for all they do to help maintain this National Historic Landmark and support our mission.
New & Renewing Members!
Reza Abrishambaf
Lina Alkamhawi
Bill Anderson
Stephen E Ball
Susan Wheatley and Tony Becker
Nancy and Daniel Benight
Robert Witanowski and Mary Biehn
Jonathon Blickenstaff
Andrew Boehmer
Adam Brixey
Susan Brixey
Eric and Sarah Brophy
George and Linda Callard
Patrick Crowley
Alicia and Randy Culman
Billy Davis
Jean Davison
David and Susan Deye
Carl and Joanne Eastwood
Mark Farley
Reese Fausz
Sue Fausz
Tim Schirmang and Brianna Frappier-Schirmang
Matthew and Jessica Fry
Greg Gajus
Dr. Jack and Mrs. Beryl Hazen
Mark and Mary Hoover
Reda and Jeff Hutton
Bob Igel
Suzanne Jeffrey
Jessica Keller and Rory Johnson
Charles Kirkbride
Henry Kunkel
Kevin Langston
Kimberly and Jon Lenihan
Walter Mast
Minnie Mehuron
Philip Nebel and Pamela Nebel-Logsdon
Frank and Nancy Palmisano

Susan and Michael Schock
Michael and Marilyn Shore
Rob Skully
Dana Smith
Michael and Julia Spohr
Elizabeth Stone
David Vorbeck and Tammy Turner- Vorbeck

Thanks to all our terrific members, donors and volunteers! We hope you will visit often in 2019!

New Members Benefits

With your membership, you become a Friend of the Observatory (FOTO) and join our family of amateur astronomers, history buffs, donors and volunteers.

FOTO meets on the Second Monday of the month at 7:30 pm at the Observatory. All members and their guests are welcome to attend.

Your benefits include:
- Discounted or free admission to Friends of the Observatory (FOTO) programs
- Member’s only classes and programs
- Volunteer Training and Professional Development
- Loaner telescopes
- Free admission to Astro Thu/Fri/Saturdays
- Discounts in the Gift Shop
- Free admission to the historic landmark buildings and permanent collections.
- Use of the FOTO lending Library.

- One-year subscription to the monthly e-newsletter
- Members-Only Facebook Page

For more information, call the Observatory at 513-321-5186.

Community Rewards Number for the Observatory

After a quick and easy sign up online, every time you swipe your Kroger Plus Card a donation goes to support the Observatory’s mission. No cost to you; no loss of fuel points.

https://www.kroger.com/account/create
After a month off, the A2Z+ Astronomy class will meet once again, predictably on the third Sunday of May, May 19th at 7:00 PM in the West Wing of the Herget Building. In the May class we will hear from a world-renown cosmologist on the topic of Gravitational Waves and their detection. We will watch a video of a lecture “Dispatches from the Universe,” given by Lawrence Krause at the National Technical University of the Ukraine in November of 2018. LIGO and VIRGO, the Gravitational Wave detectors have been busy ever since the Fall of 2015 sensing ripples in space-time generated billions of years ago by the merger of Black Holes. Lawrence will tell us how all of that works.

Since the first image of a Black Hole is such a hot topic these days and Black Hole mergers are one of the sources of Gravitational waves, a brief discussion of Black Holes (and Black Hole images) will also be included.

The A2Z+ Astronomy class meets the third Sunday of each month at 7:00 P.M. in the West Wing of the Herget Building. Discussions cover contemporary Astronomical topics as well as those historic. No pre-requisite knowledge of Math or Astronomy necessary. The group meets for about an hour or so and is free to any member of the Observatory.

The Beehive Cluster

By Dave Bosse

The Beehive Cluster, also known as Praesepe, M44, NGC 2632, or Cr 189, is an open cluster in the constellation Cancer. It is one of the nearest open clusters to the Solar System, and it contains a larger star population than most other nearby clusters. Under dark skies the Beehive Cluster looks like a nebulous object to the naked eye; thus it has been known since ancient times. The classical astronomer Ptolemy called it “the nebulous mass in the breast of Cancer,” and it was among the first objects that Galileo studied with his telescope. The cluster's age and proper motion coincide with those of the Hyades open cluster, suggesting that both share a similar origin. Both clusters also contain red giants and white dwarfs, which represent later stages of stellar evolution, along with main sequence stars of spectral classes A, F, G, K, and M. The cluster's distance is often cited to lie between 160 to 187 parsecs. The 2009 catalog of revised Hipparcos parallaxes for Praesepe members and the latest iteration of color-magnitude diagram fitting in the infrared favor an analogous distance near 182 pc.

Speaking of lunar occultations, you won’t want to miss the remarkable event arriving May 10. The waxing crescent Moon then passes through the middle of the Beehive star cluster (M44) in Cancer. Observers in the eastern half of North America have the chance to see dozens of stars disappear behind the Moon’s advancing dark limb. Most of the action occurs between 10 and 11 p.m. EDT. A telescope allows viewers to watch individual occultations while binoculars nicely capture the overall scene.

Amazon “Smiles” On the Observatory

Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases to the Observatory whenever you shop on AmazonSmile. Next time you shop at Amazon start at http://smile.amazon.com/ch/31-1665954
Craig’s Corner
Craig Niemi, Executive Director

I’m as guilty as many of not taking advantage of all the programs and events the Observatory offers throughout the year. The one program I’m going to make sure I get to this year are the Stonelick Stargazes.

Begun over twenty years ago by long-time member Scott Naylor, Stonelick offers Observatory members, scouts, the Park’s campers and visitors a chance to view under a great dark sky.

If you’re a novice observer looking for help with your new telescope or finding your way around the night sky there are seasoned astronomers to lend a hand. If you’re a veteran observer Stonelick’s skies offer better views of all those wonderful faint fuzzies. Starting out in astrophotography? It’s another great opportunity to learn from each other. Take advantage of the Park’s great boating, swimming, hiking, camping and picnicking opportunities, and then stay after sunset for stargazing.

Stonelick stargazes are free to everyone. Held only if clear skies are in the forecast. You can find out more at the Observatory’s Stonelick State Park Star Gazers website page.

See you at Stonelick soon!
Craig

Observatory History

By John Ventre, COC Historian

Longworth’s Deed Finalized

At the May 2, 1845, Board of Control Meeting the Directors of the Cincinnati Astronomical Society recorded the following report.

Mr. Perkins, the Committee of one who was appointed at the April 21 meeting, reported that he has had another interview with Mr. Longworth who informed him that the papers relating to the deed for the Observatory’s grounds had been handed to Mr. Carneal, and by him placed in the hands of Mr. Worthington for examination. Mr. Perkins was informed by that gentleman that he had made the necessary examination and found that by the terms of the title-bond, a deed will only be made to a trustee or trustees for the use of the association and that Mr. Longworth would be ready to make a deed in conformity thereto, as soon as required by the Board.

It was then, on motion, Resolved that Mr. Perkins be considered a committee and instructed to inform Mr. Longworth that the Board is very willing to receive a deed made to a Trustee and that they request him to name a person whom he would approve for that office.

History Tours of the Observatory

2nd & 4th Sundays
May 12th (no tours May 26)
Drop in between 1-4pm

Stop by for the whole story or just the highlights. It’s all fascinating and connects our past with your today.

$5 per person. Free for members. Group tours by appointment.

Borrow a Telescope!

By Dean Regas

As a member of the Observatory, you can borrow a scope though the Telescope Loan Program. For more info please call Dean at 513-321-5186.
The Observatory by Day

The Cincinnati Observatory is hosting weekday tours of our National Historic Landmark. The tours are held at 1pm, 2pm and 3pm Monday through Friday.

Tours include both of the Observatories and telescopes, including the Mitchel telescope - the oldest public telescope still in use in this hemisphere.

$5 per person. Want to schedule a group up to 12? Sign Up Online. Call 513-321-5186 for more information.

Lifelong Learning

Enrich your life with UC Continuing Education’s exciting array of noncredit short, yet in-depth, courses and educational opportunities designed for diverse audiences of all ages.

Behind the Scenes
Tues. May 14th 7-9pm

From Attic to Cellar
Mon. May 20th 7-9pm

Binocular Astronomy

Wed. May 29th 7-9pm

How to Use Your Telescope
Tues. June 4th 7-9pm

$35 per person. To register call 513-556-6932 or select your course(s) online and click Register.

Follow Your Observatory on Facebook

We are almost to 10,000 “likes” and followers on Facebook. Join them to stay up-to-date with our fast changing programs and stargazing news! Share our events and invite your friends to follow us.

The Observatory is on Twitter and Instagram too!

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