



The ALPO's Legacy...

Preserving Our Astronomical Heritage



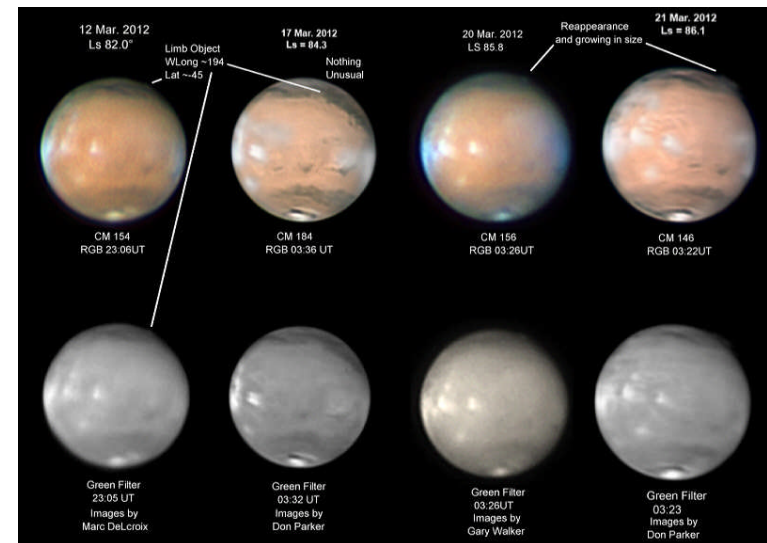
This is the ALPO...

- The Association of Lunar and Planetary Observers (ALPO) is an astronomical organization dedicated to the scientific study of Solar System.
- Scientific study includes the collection of observational data from astronomical instrumentation maintained by amateur astronomers.

This is the ALPO

- Amateur observations have regularly recorded transient phenomena such as:
 - the changing meteorology of the planets such as Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and the remote planets

Images of Mars by ALPO members Jim Melka, Marc Delcroix, Gary Walker, and Don Parker



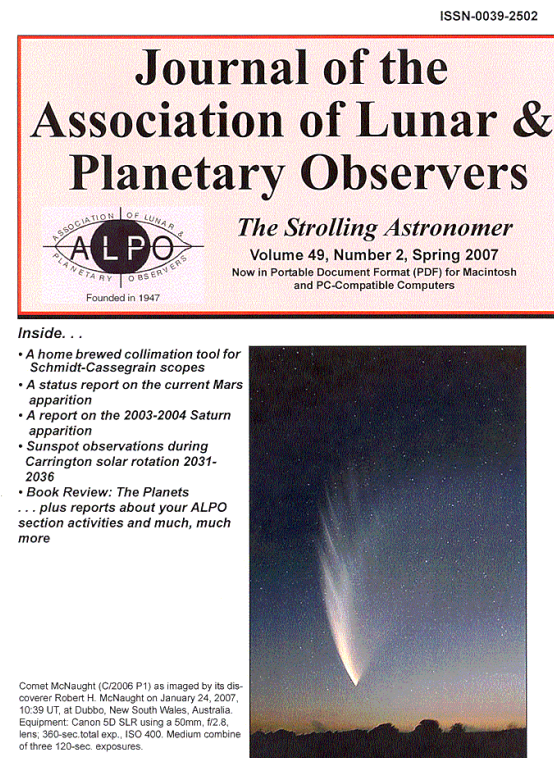


This is the ALPO

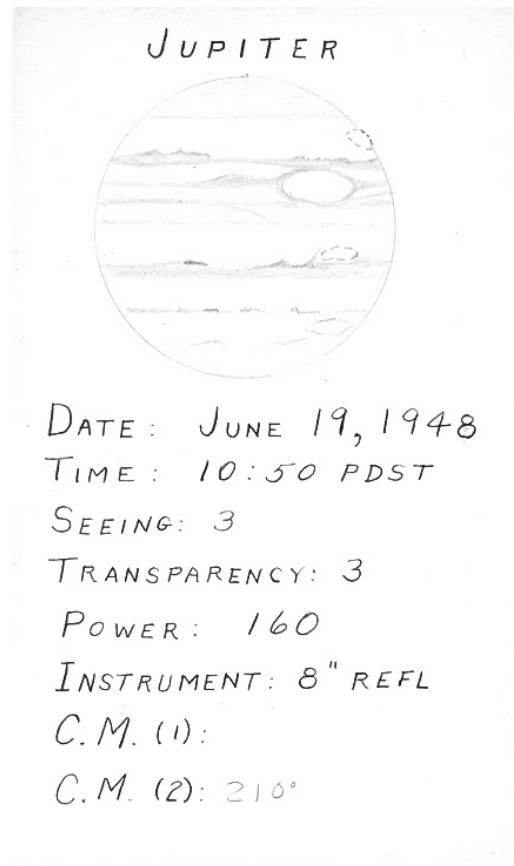
- the changing physical definition of comets and meteoroid clouds
- impacts of Solar System debris on the Moon and Jupiter
- and other phenomena elsewhere in the Solar System too numerous to mention in this presentation.

This is the ALPO...

- This data is submitted for analysis, performed by ALPO coordinating personnel.
- Our coordinators in turn produce reports concerning this observational data, in our Journal, the *Journal ALPO*, otherwise known as *The Strolling Astronomer*.



This is the ALPO...



- Although the collection and reporting of the data is performed by amateur astronomers, professional astronomers have utilized our observational databases for their own analyses going back decades.
- Some of these databases have observational data extending back over 60 years.

Jupiter observed in 1948 by the late Thomas Cragg

This is the ALPO...

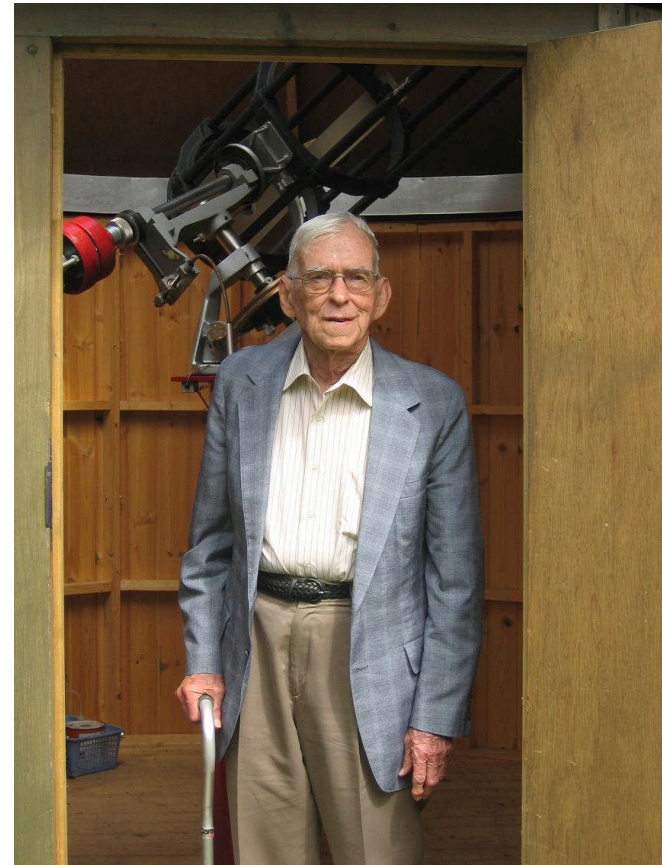
- The ALPO provides training and other support to its observers, most of whom are dues paying members in our organization.



About the ALPO...

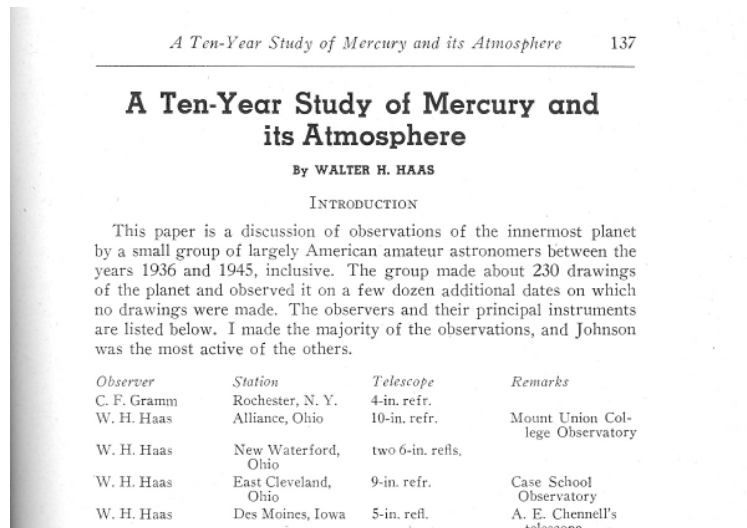
- The ALPO was founded in 1947 by Walter H. Haas. While Mr. Haas has been a professional mathematician and a computer programmer for much of his working life, amateur astronomy, particularly lunar and planetary astronomy, has been a lifelong pursuit.

Walter H. Haas, courtesy of Richard McKim, B.A.A.



About the ALPO...

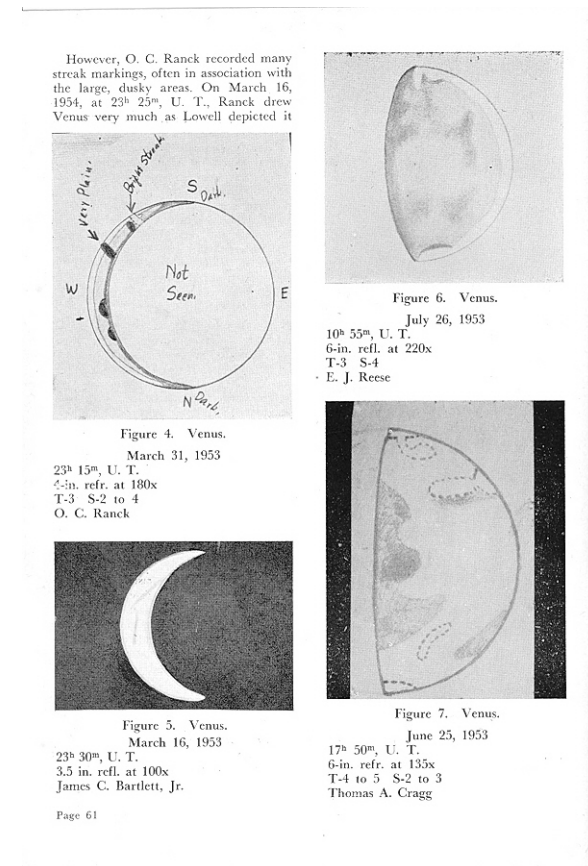
- Prior to 1947, Mr. Haas wrote many papers regarding amateur observations of the moon and planets appearing in the leading publications of that day such as *Popular Astronomy*.



About the ALPO...

- The purpose of the formation of the ALPO was to consolidate efforts by other amateur investigators, while invigorating amateur interest in lunar and planetary astronomy and channeling it toward these observational studies.

Drawings of Venus, from the *Journal ALPO*



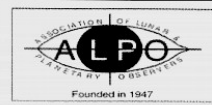


About the ALPO...

- The ALPO has some 28 observing programs and activities spread over 18 different topical sections, dedicated to some aspect of Solar System study.
- All observers, staff, officers, and board members contribute their services strictly on a voluntary basis and receive no monetary compensation.

About the ALPO...

- These sections also produce literature and web blogs to assist observers in understanding and enjoying what they observe.




THE LUNAR OBSERVER

RECENT BACK ISSUES: http://www.zone-vx.com/tlo_back.html

A PUBLICATION OF THE LUNAR SECTION OF THE A.L.P.O.
EDITED BY: William M. Dembowski, F.R.S. - dembowski@zone-vx.com
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FEATURE OF THE MONTH - JULY 2005



WOLF

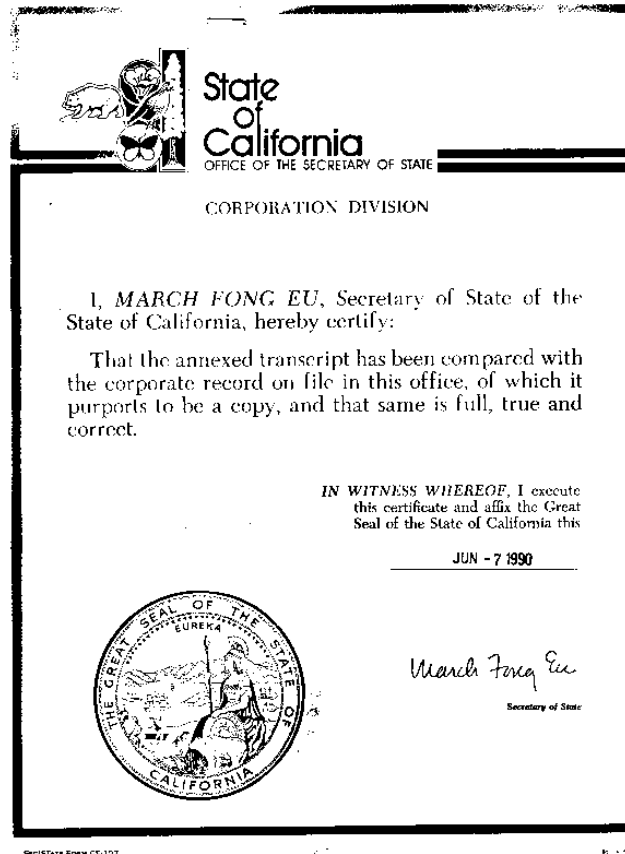
Sketch and text by Robert H. Hays, Jr. - Worth, Illinois, USA
February 19, 2005 - 00:01 to 00:22 UT
15cm Newtonian - 170x - Seeing 7-8/10

I sketched this feature on the evening of Feb. 18/19, 2005 while observing three occultations. This curious feature is located near the center of Mare Nubium and has a variety of detail nearby. The main object is a broken elongated crater that is actually the combination of Wolf and Wolf B, according to the I.Q. Maps. The tiny pit Wolf F is to the south, while the larger pit Wolf A is to the northwest. There are several narrow ridges to the north and east; one was attached to the largest intact portion of Wolf's north rim. A bright area is east of Wolf A. This feature must be an elevation due to some slight shadowing that was noticed. A scattering of low peaks and small ridges is near Wolf F, along with a bright, shadowless spot.

There is another bright area immediately adjacent to Wolf and Wolf B to the southeast. This area has several little bits of shadow within it. There are more low elevations farther to the east with a bright area within them. Some of them might be a partial ghost ring.

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About the ALPO...



- Since 1990, the ALPO has been a State of California nonprofit corporation and is recognized by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service as a 501 (c)(3) organization.

The ALPO's Quest...



ALPO gathering, courtesy of Phil Plante

- While the ALPO is an astronomical organization with real people that manage observational databases and the studies that result from it, the preservation and permanence of the ALPO and its observational databases rest upon the shoulders of these very same people.

The ALPO's Quest...

- Most observational data, particularly hard copy observations are housed by our coordinators in their private dwellings.
- But not in something like this!



Courtesy of National Park Service, US Department of the Interior

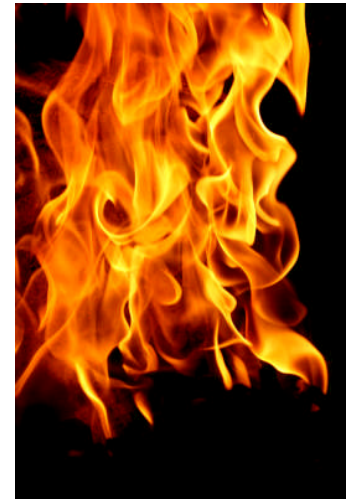


The ALPO's Quest...

- Historic hard copy depictions of lunar and planetary observations spanning decades along with newer electronically archived digital imagery are now maintained by our volunteer staff.
- However, circumstances and limitations that our staff are under pose some potential risk to these collections.

The ALPO's Quest...

- Such databases of the ALPO are vulnerable to lost from natural and manmade disasters or even neglect if these records become the custody of indifferent third parties.
- One-of-a-kind scientific observations can be at risk to such perils.



The ALPO's Quest...

- **Professional astronomers have put a high value on this data for research proposes.**
- **Since no professional monitoring of the Solar System is done in the complete manner that amateur astronomers have done over the years, these observational databases that the ALPO maintains have become invaluable.**





The ALPO's Quest...

- A centralized headquarters or office would help to protect and preserve such historical data.
- Preservation of amateur observations of Solar System bodies would be the finest tribute we could pay these men and women that have taken the time, energy, and talent to record the ever changing Solar System through the last 7 decades.



The ALPO's Quest...

- Other organizations such as the American Association of Variable Star Observers have successfully achieved this goal of maintaining a centralized headquarters to coordinate data preservation.
- The ALPO must do the same to guarantee its future.



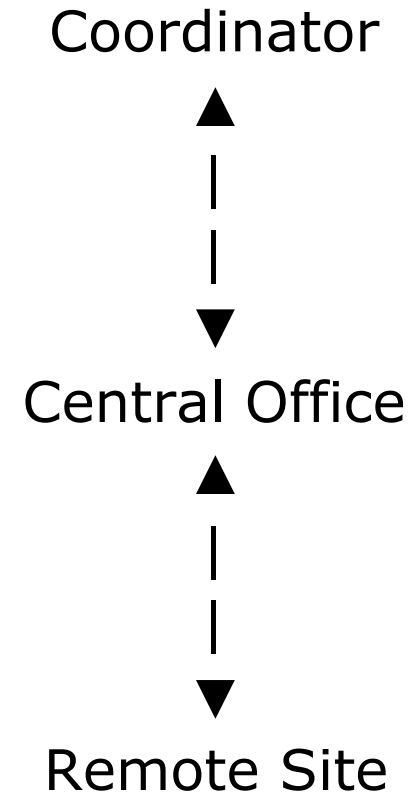
The Purpose...

- The purpose of a central office would actually be multi-fold.
- First and foremost, to preserve and duplicate observational databases so that they could not be lost as one-of-a-kind records maintained at one location.



The Purpose...

- Minimally, observational databases could be maintained at three locations: the central office, with the observing section coordinator, and possibly at a remote location separate from either two.



The Purpose...

- The usefulness of the central office would be that it could facilitate preservation through use of archiving techniques and equipment utilized and maintained on site, in addition to storing such data.





The Purpose

- A recent survey of ALPO Sections indicated that collectively, the amount of ALPO observational data is considerable.
- Observational data in electronic format may total more than 1 terabyte.
- Hard copy observational data going back to the 1940's could occupy 1000 or more sq. ft. of space.

The Purpose...

- Additionally, a central office could provide other support for maintaining and storing scientific equipment such as optical and electronic instrumentation for loan and distribution to ALPO coordinators and its membership.



The Purpose...



- A permanent home for the ALPO would be indispensable in maintaining a reference library of astronomy books and periodicals for staff and the public.



The Purpose...

- The ALPO maintains collections at a public storage facility that is currently not easily accessible.
- A central headquarters would not only promote the active use of such collections, it would encourage the growth of these collections through literature contributions by the ALPO members and the public at large.

The Purpose...

- Having a home base could also help as a staging or marshaling area for educational and public outreach.
- It could be a distribution and contact point for these efforts with the astronomical community and the public.



The Purpose...

- Having a physical business location with a telephone contact point would give the ALPO accessibility and definition as a real educational and research institution.





The Funding...

- The ALPO maintains and continues to seek out donations not only for organizational day-to-day operations, but for its future goal of housing its operations.
- In the past, the ALPO has been blessed with generous contributors that have kept the publication of our Journal at reduced cost to the general membership.

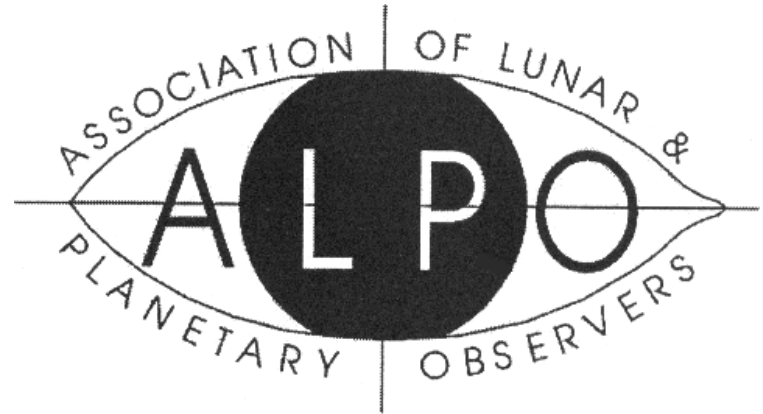


The Funding...

- Continued funding will be needed to help the vision of a central office become a reality.
- The ALPO Endowment has been set up specifically to receive funds for the specific propose of one day, meeting this goal of having a central office.

The ALPO Endowment

- Your giving through higher levels of memberships or your direct contributions to the ALPO Endowment are most appreciated and will bring the ALPO closer to its goal of preserving its legacy.



Thank you!