The organization and schedule of this year’s Symposium is well along. The schedule of speakers is shown on pages 2 and 3. This is of course always subject to last minute changes.

To give you a flavor of some of this year’s speakers:

Dr. Yeomans, this year’s Keynote address speaker is a Senior Research Scientist at JPL and member of the NEAR, Hayabusa, and Deep Impact science teams. His talk will be titled “Finding Near-Earth Objects Before They Find Us” and will include updates on the Deep Impact and Hayabusa missions as well as a look at the ongoing observations of Near-Earth Objects.

Dr. Mikko Kaasalainen – one of the leaders in the work of inverting asteroid lightcurves into shape models. Mikko is a strong supporter of amateur observers and has lots of work for us to do in support of the oncoming large surveys such as PanSTARRS.

Dr. Lance Benner – Lance will be giving another update on radar observations and how amateurs can help. Several recent papers in the Minor Planet Bulletin were the direct result of requests for lightcurve observations from Lance, Steve Ostro, Ellen Howell and others.

On Tuesday, May 23 we will hold a series of concurrent workshops designed to get the beginning photometrist started or the advanced researcher insights to some of the popular software tools being used by amateurs for research. For the three “advanced” workshops, the same workshop will be given in the morning and afternoon session, allowing you to attend another workshop and not miss anything.

Jerry Foote: The Essentials

In the three 60-90 minute sections of the Essentials workshop, Jerry Foote – SAS and CBA member – will cover the essentials to get you started in photometry. The first section will cover CCD camera basics; the second will cover turning a raw CCD image into a scientifically usable image; and the third will show you how to sleep while your robotic telescope takes those images. Each section is stand alone with handouts. All three count as one for registration purposes.

Tonny Vanmunster - PerAnSo

Cont. on page 4
Tentative Speakers for the 2006 Symposium on Telescope Science

Wednesday 5/24

**Coffee/Registration**  8:00  8:45

Welcome  8:45  9:00
Rick Fienberg  9:00  9:30 Pro-Am Collaboration: A New Paradigm
Jeff Hopkins / Robert Stencel  9:30  10:00 Single Channel UBV and JH Band Photometry of Epsilon Aurigae
Gene Lucas et al  10:00  10:30 Long-Period Eclipsing Binary Epsilon Aurigae Eclipse Campaign

**Coffee Break**  10:30  10:45  15 MINUTES

Dale Mais/Robert Stencel  10:45  11:15 Three Years of Mira Variable Photometry: What have we learned?
Christopher Watson  11:15  11:45 The International Star Index (VSX)

**Lunch**  11:45  13:00  75 MINUTES

**CBA Papers**

Joe Patterson  13:00  13:30 About CBA and CVs
Jennie McCormick  13:30  14:00 Trials and Tribulations of an Amateur Astronomer
Berto Monard  14:00  14:30 Faint CV Monitoring at CBA Pretoria

Tom Krajci  14:30  15:00 Cleaning up the GCVS Eclipsing Binary Listings -

**Coffee**  15:00  15:15  15 MINUTES

Matt Wood/Josh Dolence  15:15  16:00 FITDisk: A Cataclysmic Variable Demonstration Tool
Smith/Gennett/Heather  16:00  16:30 A Compact, Off-the-Shelf, Low-Cost Dual Channel Photometer
Sponsor Infomercials  16:30  17:15 Sponsors Infomercials
### Thursday 5/25

**Coffee** 8:30 8:45

Welcome 8:45 9:00
Aaron Wolf / OPEN 9:00 9:30 Searching for Exoplanets: The Amateur Connection
Jeff Hopkins/Philip Bennet 9:30 10:00 Single Channel UBV Photometry of LP Eclipsing Binary VV Cephei
Robert Stephens/Brian D. Warner 10:00 10:30 A Study of Two Eclipsing Binaries Found by Serendipity

**Coffee** 10:30 10:45 15 MINUTES

Lance Benner 10:45 11:15 Arecibo and Goldstone Radar Imaging of Near-Earth and Main-Belt Radar images and shape models of asteroids 10115 (1992 SK),
Michael Busch 11:15 11:45 23187 (2000 PN9), and 29075 (1950 DA).

**Group Photo** 11:45 12:00

**Lunch** 12:00 13:00 ONE HOUR

E.R Craine/RA Tucker/A.L. Kraus/ M.S. Giam-papa 13:00 13:30 Collaborative Research Opportunities with the Global Network of
Brian D. Warner 13:30 14:00 Asteroid Lightcurve Results from the Palmer Divide Observatory
Mikko Kaasalainen 14:00 14:45 Amateur Participation in Asteroid Shape Modelling

**Coffee** 14:45 15:00 15 MINUTES

Snyder/Lapham 15:00 15:30 Monitoring Changes in Eclipsing Binary Orbits
Thomas G. Kaye 15:30 16:00 Switching to Infrared! A New Methodology for Amateur Imaging in the Mid-IR
Wharton/Hoot 16:00 16:30 Ground Imaging for Solar Sail Orbit Determination: A Proof of Concept

**Dinner** 17:30

**Keynote Speaker**
Donald K. Yeomans 19:00 20:00 Finding Near-Earth Objects Before They Find Us

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Don't forget this years Riverside Telescope Makers Conference....immediately following the SAS Symposium
Membership Information

Membership in your new Society for Astronomical Sciences (SAS).

As was pointed out with the last issue, it was felt that a modest membership fee would greatly help SAS to produce a better product for its members. This fee will be $25.00 per year. What will this membership fee provide? Well for one thing it WILL NOT go to any committee members as part of their efforts within SAS. We volunteer our time for The Society.

Members will receive a discount for the registration fee each year for the Symposium at Big Bear. It will assure you that you will get a copy of the published proceedings each year, even if you do not attend the Symposium. It will help defray costs in bringing in outside speakers (professionals) to the symposium.

Membership is annual and runs from July to June of the following year. To become a member, send $25.00 to: Society for Astronomical Sciences, 8300 Utica Avenue, Suite 105, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730. You may also join online at the registration page of the web site. Membership dues are tax deductible.

We currently have 82 members with many renewals due in by June 1. The SAS is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

Important Future dates for 2006 Symposium

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Solar Eclipse Tours have become a growing part of the travel industry. With a total solar eclipse occurring once every couple years or so, more and more people are using it as an excuse to travel to the far corners of the world. Total solar eclipses are events rich in scientific tradition, although beyond studying the effects on wildlife, the creation of shadow bands, and the shape of the corona, very little scientific study is done these days. The real attraction is in seeing one of the most glorious events a human can witness, traveling to exotic locations, and keeping up with your eclipse traveling friends.

With this in mind, in November 2003, I journeyed to the Southern Hemisphere to attempt to see my seventh total solar eclipse. All of the others were land based trips but this one was unique because we were going to intercept it at 38,000 over the ice pack of Antarctica.

TravelQuest International and Sky & Telescope Magazine conducted our tour. While specifically tailored around our chartered flight out of Puenta Arenas, Chili, it had side trips to the observatories at Paranal, Cerro Tololo, and Gemini South, southern skies star gazing, a visit to Santiago, and a tour of the Patagonia region including Torres del Paine. I took advantage of all of the activities.

After being in Chili for almost two weeks, our day of climax, November 23, 2003 arrived. Our flight was a chartered on LanChili Airlines. Over 60 of us flew with a hand picked flight crew brought in from around the world that had trained for months to execute the complicated maneuver required to intercept a moving shadow. The initial part of the flight was uneventful, as clouds covered much of the coast of Antarctica. I was lucky enough to have a seat in business class that was behind the bulkhead, giving two of us 2-1/2 windows through which to view and photograph. Ours was a specially picked brand new aircraft with new and clear windows. Unfortunately, those in the back had their windows fog over despite the best efforts of the crew to turn up the cabin heat.

At the right moment, first contact occurred. As usual, we breathed a sigh of relief and I heard somebody running down the isle yelling, "I got the right day!" The moon quickly overtook the disk of the sun, covering up a large naked eye sunspot group. Then - magic time.

Second contact and a diamond ring appeared right on schedule. No major prominences were visible, but the pearly glow of the corona had more contrast than I would have believed. Long streamers reminiscent of a solar minimum eclipse were easily seen. Combined with the horizon effect, where objects near the horizon appear larger than they really are, this eclipse produced one of the most memorable naked eye views I can remember.

During totality, Venus and Mercury and a couple of stars could clearly be seen. Our flight path added more than 20 seconds to the duration of totality.

After a champagne toast at 38,000 feet, we headed on to the South Pole and the Amundsen-Scott Station. As we approached, we had to delay our arrival to allow a LC 130 Hercules to take off from the runway. Watching it lift off was like watching the space shuttle land. We had gained permission to fly low over the pole, and made two passes at about 2,500 feet. Both passes almost flew directly over it, and the plane had to bank to allow us a view. The pictures later showed people on the ground watching us.

During the flight, the captain had an open door policy, and many of us took the opportunity to go up and visit, sit in the jump seat, and take pictures. After visiting the pole, we turned our sights on Vinson Massif, Antarctica’s highest mountain range. Arriving at about 11:40 PM in full daylight, the plane was seemingly banking in and out of the canyons in the mountain range. Perhaps the plane was banking because of all the people crowded on the right side of the plane. In reality, we were flying a mere 2,000 feet above the mountain and the captain was trying to give us a good view.

In the end, we flew 7,070 miles in 14 hours and touched down at Punta Arenas just after 3 in the morning. Very few people got any sleep on this exciting trip.