

The Society lost its headquarters, library, and virtually all its possessions in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire. But it persevered, and the Society continued its work (with various financial and membership ups and downs). In 1916 a gift from Adolfo Stahl funded two lecture series, which were later published. In 1925 the Society created the A.S.P. *Leaflets* with the help of Bernard Benfield, and over 500 of these had appeared by 1972 when they were discontinued as *Mercury* magazine was begun.

This paper will describe some of these events and accomplishments of the A.S.P. in its earlier years and some of the individuals whose efforts were instrumental in bringing the Society to where it is today.

---

#### A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE STANFORD PRESS: REMINISCENCES OF FIVE YEARS WITH THE PASP

WILLIAM P. BIDELMAN

Warner and Swasey Observatory

I served as editor of the *Publications* of the Society from 1956 to 1961. My talk will discuss a few memorable events (i.e., things I remember) that happened during those almost-forgotten days.

---

#### J. C. KAPTEYN'S RELATION TO THE MOUNT WILSON SOLAR OBSERVATORY

A. BLAAUW

Kapteyn Laboratory, Groningen

From September 1904, when he presented his discovery of the star streams at a Scientific Congress held at St. Louis, Missouri, Kapteyn built up close relations with American astronomy. He was motivated to do so by the need for worldwide cooperation in his Plan of Selected Areas and by a desire to become more acquainted with American observational astronomy. Close acquaintance with George Ellery Hale, who about that time left Yerkes Observatory to build up the Mount Wilson Solar Observatory, resulted in the arrangement by which during seven years, from 1908 to 1914, Kapteyn as a Research Associate spent three months per year on Mount Wilson. The Kapteyn Cottage, built in 1909 on Mount Wilson to allow him to be accompanied by his wife, may be seen as a token of Hale's appreciation of Kapteyn's inspiring presence. The outbreak of World War I in 1914 interrupted

these visits, and Kapteyn's failing health after its termination prevented their resumption.

A series of "Contributions of the Mount Wilson Observatory" reflects the research in which Kapteyn was engaged in relation to his Research Associateship: Mount Wilson Contribution Nos. 32, 42, 45, 82, 83, 147, 188, 229, and 230. They dealt principally with the possible existence of an interstellar absorption, the distances of the nearest B-type stars, and, in the last paper, Kapteyn's "First Attempt at a Theory of the Arrangement and Motion of the Sidereal System".

---

#### THE FUNDAMENTAL DISCOVERIES OF V. M. SLIPHER

JOHN S. HALL

Former Director, Lowell Observatory

V. M. Slipher retired as Director of the Lowell Observatory after serving there from 1901 until 1954. During the first quarter of this century in my judgment, he made more fundamental discoveries than any other astronomer. Yet most modern books, which cover his fields of interest, either fail to mention his discoveries or barely do so.

The main thrust of this centennial meeting is concerned with the evolution of galaxies, the interstellar medium, and planetary systems. Slipher was a pioneer in the study of galaxies, the interstellar medium, and made significant contributions to our knowledge of the planets. It therefore seems to be an appropriate time and place to set the record straight.

He discovered the high velocities and the rotation of nebulous objects later identified as galaxies. He measured the velocities of 41 of these objects. In 1929 Hubble derived his important velocity-distance relationship using, as he later wrote Slipher, "your velocities and my distances".

With regard to the interstellar medium it can be truly said that Slipher was the first astronomer to prove that one exists. He showed that the nebulosity in the Pleiades reflected the spectra of the stars embedded within it and therefore must consist of particulate matter. After Hartmann had reported stationary H and K lines of calcium in the spectra of  $\delta$  Orionis, Slipher observed a number of spectroscopic binaries in different regions of the sky and was able to prove that the calcium lines were of interstellar origin.

An attempt will be made in this presentation to explain why Slipher never seems to attract the recognition he deserves.