

**Cape Cod Astronomical Society**  
Minutes of June 2, 2011 Meeting

**Attendance:** Total 18: Members 14 Guests 4

President Tom Leach opened the meeting at 7:32 P.M. Tom welcomed members and reviewed the latest newsletter.

Peter Kurtz, Treasurer, reminded members that Dues are payable on a July 1- June 30 annual cycle and requested all get on this annual timing cycle. Dues are \$30 for regular members (spouses “no dues”); \$15 for students after high school and members on Cape only in season. Please bring your check or cash to our next meeting or mail to CCAS, PO Box 207, Harwich Port MA 02646.

**Presentation**

Tom Leach introduced our speaker for the evening, Dr. Michael Hunter, past President and current Director of the Werner Schmidt Observatory. Mike gave a most interesting presentation on his first experiences using a new Canon Rebel EOS camera to take pictures both through a powerful Canon zoom lens or using either his own Meade 8” or the WSO’s Meade 16” telescopes as lenses in Prime Focus configuration (camera positioned at focal point at the back of the telescope.)

Mike got a good deal on the camera, (specifically, a Canon EOS Rebel xs, EOS 1000D,) bringing home the camera body, the standard EF-S 18-55mm zoom lens that comes with the camera, and an EF-S 55-250mm f/4-5.6 IS telephoto lens (image stabilized; auto focus) for a bit over \$600. Without any lens, the camera body weighs only about 1 pound so can be easily attached at the rear of most scopes without struggle with special counterbalances. The connector for most telescopes (bayonet connector on camera end) can be purchased easily from CNC Parts Supply (Florida).

Mike took an amazingly detailed and sharp (tolerated a lot of zoom on computer view) photo of a nearly full moon using the big telephoto lens.

Mike took impressive pictures with the camera connected to one or another telescopes of a variety of targets: Saturn (exposure a bit less than 1 second), the Horsehead Nebula (a spectacular photo after Photoshop processing) and M31, the Andromeda nebula, discussing each of these and other attempts in some detail. His picture of M31 was the greatest initial success: ISO 1600; 1/30<sup>th</sup> of a second: clearly visible dust lanes in the galaxy.

Mike was candid about being early on a long learning curve. The biggest challenge is achieving good focus when using the camera with a telescope.

Mike’s presentation was facilitated by providing images both off his computer using a

mid-size digital computer monitor supplemented by copies of most of the same photos stored on his iPad which circulated around the audience. A nice feature of the iPad is the ability for the viewer to zoom in/out at will to see just how much detail most of his photos contained.

### **Observatory Report**

Star parties will resume on June 16<sup>th</sup>. Please reference the CCAS website for up-date information regarding star parties and other events.

### **Business Meeting**

Tom Leach shared recent photos from NASA and other sources.

Member Larry Brookhart announced that an article appeared in the June 3 edition of the Harwich Oracle / Cape Codder (p 13) announcing that the new observatory at the Harwich Elementary School is up and operating. The first Star Party is scheduled for 8:30pm on Tuesday, June 21<sup>st</sup> at the facility. Please see their website at <https://sites.google.com/a/harwich.edu/the-harwich-observatory/> which includes a Star Party calendar. A formal ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new facility will be scheduled later this year. Larry thanked CCAS member, especially Tom Leach, for supporting the “birth” of this sister observatory.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted  
Peter Kurtz, Treasurer for Charles Burke, Secretary