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2002-03

12/13-15/02 G. Thomas here. Some snow on the north facing slopes and Mtn Hi West is open. Temps in the mid 40's and windy but no rain or snow from the several storms predicted here for this week. Saw the bobcat again. Mostly cloudy but did see what appeared to be a bolide headed due south over the mountain through the cloud cover. Not much observing.

12/23-24 G. Thomas here. Absolutely Beautiful night. Clear skies and good seeing. High 15 magnitudes. Considerable problem w/ dew and the Eyepiece heater I have had a broken wire. Got fixed for next visit. Did variable stars and watched Io & Europa pass next to each other so close they could not be split. Almost as bright as Callisto. By Midnight there was some minor seeing degradation due to moisture. Moon occasionally had a halo. Snow so deep I had to ski in. Maybe a while before vehicles can get up here again.

1-11-03 SCHROEDER & WEBB
42°F DAYTIME VISIT. DOME WAS DRY. NO
72% RH RAIN OR SNOW DAMAGE. I ATTEMPTED
REPAIR ON CD PLAYER WITHOUT SUCCESS.

1-18-03 J. SCHROEDER, J. STEPHENSON, W. WEBB
40° OBSERVED FUTILITY OF LIFE, WATCHED
70% MOONLIGHT ON SNOW. (DECOMPRESSION VISIT)

1-25-03 J. SCHROEDER, J. STEPHENSON, K. ISA, W. WEBB
38°F VERY GOOD SEEING, BRIGHT SKY. SATURN SUPERB.
71% COMET NEAT IN PICES, 6TH MAG. ROUND COMA.
WIND LIGHT & VAR. M 1, M 42, M 81, ESKIMO NEB.

1/31-2/1/03 G. Thomas here. Clouds cleared after 11. Unable to observe
 transit Jupiter & did visible stars. As expected @ Tan
 Europa occulting Io was too close to horizon to witness.
 J. Stevenson & Bill Webb here for evening. Found out
 the space shuttle Columbia had broken up at 200,000 ft
 during reentry & parts scattered over mid to east Texas
 at 6:30 am (just as I got up to check on Jupiter). All
 lives lost!

Clouds prevented observing while John & Bill were here but
 they again cleared up after 11pm. Windy westerly coming
 from SSW and has broken some tree tops & dead wood.
 Not a typical storm direction. Road apparently has been
 clear to drive all the way up for several weeks even
 though I saw snow on the east slopes from Hwy 132. Unusual.

2/7-9 G. Thomas here. Cloudy Friday night and no observing
 done. Saturday really clear & calm. Did visible stars.
 66% RH Very cold while in the 30ths but didn't seem as
 cold below 25. Strange.

2/10 Greg & Terri Thomas here for occultation & eclipse
 of Jupiter's Europa on Ganymede. No such luck
 due to clouds. Did get to see a glimpse of Jupiter
 during eclipse but no moons or detail on the planet.

2/17-18 G. Thomas here for occultation & eclipse of Jupiter's moon.
~~same~~ Same as last week except less clouds. Saw
 occultation but not eclipse

2/22-23 Stevenson & Thomas here. No observing due
 to clouds. Forecast say a big snow storm Monday.

3/1-2 G. Thomas skied in. Did visible stars until it started
 snowing. Sky cleared up about 1:30 am. Seams in
 roof getting worse due to no roof drainage & water freezing
 & thawing and progressively opening up seams
 104% RH
 (per gauge)

100

2003

- 3/7-9/03 G. Thomas here. Managed to drive in, with some difficulty, through the snow. Two great nights. Caught a glimpse of Mag 16.3 after moon went down. Got a lot of variables done, perhaps my best ~~single~~ single trip here at Ford.
34°F
80% RH
- 3/14-16 G. Thomas here. Sky looked great when I got here but clouds came in just before dark. Rain thru the night & day. Mopped up over 2 1/2 gallons leaking from shutter. Sat night it snowed about 6". News says 4 inches of rain in LA. Sunday morning sun is hoped to get my car thru the snow - along with chains.
26°F
100% RH
- 3/22-23 G. Thomas here. Beautiful night. Got down to Mag 14.9. Did variable stars. Cleaned water off roof.
3/27-30 G. Thomas here. Beautiful night again. Lots of wind below but almost none here at the dome. Got down to 15.9 mag. and had the most productive night here so far in doing variable stars. Only very minimal problems with clouds and then only in the south west near the horizon.
24°F
70% RH
- 4/4-6 G. Thomas here. Clouds & light snow Fricky night. A few openings in the clouds but not enough for any serious observing. By Saturday afternoon almost all snow melted. Saturday night - very good observing. Barely to Mag 15 in some places. Got a lot of variables done.
22°F
- 4/11-12 G. Thomas here. Clouds prevented much observation. Some wind damage to alien siding caused from wind. Weather report says to expect snow in mtas and rain below.
~40°F
- 4/18-19 G. Thomas here. Drove in w/ some difficulty & a shovel thru the snow. Mtn High open again. Picked up Roger's filters per his request. A little variable star work done but Mag 13.4 max and mainly under Mag 13 & the clouds prevented much work. Easter tomorrow means no viewing tonight.
24°F
100% RH

- 4/25/03 Co. Thomas here again. Friday night Windy but clear. Everything
 -4/29/03 but planets twinkling. Seeing at horizon ~14.2 and
 390 ~15.3 at zenith. Did variable star work, productive
 night. Saturday, Jeff Schroeder, Katta, and John Stevenson
 here to look at planets. Clouds of cold discouraged that,
 Did variable starwork after they left when clouds cleared
 up a little
- 5/4-5 Co. Thomas here. Rain, Wind, & Snow and generally miserable
 320F weather. For a brief period it looked like I might get
 a chance for observing but it passed quickly.
- 5/9-10 Co. Thomas here again. Massive rocks in road but the
 260F snow that made it rough getting out of here last week
 is all gone - except for the mountains to the south. Although
 getting over a virus during the week, I had a productive
 night for variable stars. Some wind, but not bad,
 and very cold. The weather center thermometer showed 26°F,
 the hanging metal thermometer showed 32°F, and a plastic
 thermometer next to the computer showed 40°F. I suspect
 a thermometer outside would have showed less than 26°F.
- 5/15-16 KAREN ISA, JEFF SCHROEDER UP FOR LUNAR
 60°F ECLIPSE. LIGHT WIND, HAZE AND THIN CLOUD BAND
 72% ALONG HORIZON. NICE ECLIPSE, STRONG BRIGHTNESS
 GRADIENT ACROSS MOON, ORANGE NORTH LIMB MID
 TOTALITY SOUTH ALMOST BLACK.
- 5/17-18 Co. Thomas, Jeff Schroeder, & John Stevenson here. Clouds
 42-50°F finally withdrew, except for horizon about 10pm. Some
 minor winds. By 12 midnight all was clear & calm
 except for some thin clouds @ horizon. Productive
 night for variable stars.

5-23/24⁰³ J. Stephenson, L. Stephenson - Warm all Night
Dry, with No wind Very Pleasant.

5/31-6/1/03 G Thomas here. About 20 nuns in traditional black
& white came walking down from the Microwave side
as I was carrying in the water. Strange Sight!
Light wind at ground level & some severe twinkling
as observing started. Seeing got better & better as
the night went on. May have seen κ_3 & κ_4 near χ Leo - not
sure. Did see 144 & 149 very clearly near E. Poo & possibly 15.2
First time ever! Some starfields were confusing because they
were cluttered up with stars I haven't seen before. Milky
Way & dust lanes prominent & Mars could be mistaken
for Saturn it was so bright. No moon & smog seemed to
be hiding lights from Hesperia through LA. Lots of
wild flowers in bloom - predominately purple.

6/1/03 WGBS, JEFF, DENISE, KATA

A DAY VISIT WITH OBSERVATION OF
THE MOON, JUPITER, SATURN. SEEING
WAS FAIRLY GOOD

6/6-8 G. Thomas here. A little breezy at times and cloudy.
85°F Not much seen below but it's out behind the clouds
60% RH here. Moon & clouds prevented variables in Western
sky Friday night but over head was fine for variables even
if a bit of twinkling up high. Saturday night was
initially windy with almost no clouds. Seeing at
times was exceptional. Saw some features above the main
belts of Jupiter, I've never seen before. All the variables
missed on Friday were picked up on Saturday

6/20/03 G. Thomas here. Some drizzle & overcast below, sunny here @ Ford. Tom Cave's memorial service was today & I brought some of the wild flower seeds given out there up here. A bit of wind slowed variable star work but did not stop it. A night wore on it got better & better. When doing variables in Scorpius, I chanced on M80. It was spectacular - like spilt white sugar where you could see individual granules on top of the pile. Mars is visible on the horizon at midnight and could be high enough to view in the telescope by 1 am. Did not view but thought much of Tom.

6/21/03 Danny Thomas & Terri Thomas -

We came out of the gloom in the lower level into a wonderful light. The difference was amazing it was like a different world. Beautiful & clear up here at Ford. Dave Phelps, Kate, Jeff, Stephenson, Thomas, Tim Thompson, Web, Denise, & Pam Gonzales here for Excellence Monthly meeting. Reviewed recent astro developments presented by Phelps, set up video camera for future Mars viewing, viewed Mars & other sights & did more variable stars.

6/28-28 Terri Thomas.

Wonderful beautiful weather - Skyscrapers clear & stars visible - great! A wonderful night in the world of stars!

6-28-03 JEFF SCHARDEBER, JOHN STEPHENSON, DAVE PHELPS.

61° 54% CLEAR, EARLY WIND ABATING BY 12:30 AM. SHOWED SUMMER SNOW OBJECTS TO WALK IN GUESTS. M8, 20, 11, 57, 13 VIDEO OF M4, 13. VISUAL ON MARS, POLAR HOOD, SYRTIS MAJOR PROMINENT.

7-4/5 Terri & Greg Thomas

Warm, clear & beautiful. Greg did variable stars.

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2003

JULY 5/6 62°F 54% JEFF SCHROEDER, JOHN STEPHENSON, KATA SCAMA. GARY & PAM OLIVER & FAMILY; GUESTS. SUMMER SKY TOUR: M¹³, S⁷, Z⁷, I⁷, & LYRA, ALBIRGO, JUPITER, MOON. DID NOT OBSERVE NGC 6992. NICE NIGHT, NO WIND.

JULY 12 73°F 52% JEFF, KATA, JOHN. RETRIEVE GARY'S CAMERA. FULL MOON, DID SEVERAL DOUBLES IN SCORPIUS. GOOD SEEING.

July 19 Jeff Schroeder, John Stephenson, Greg Thomas Dave Phelps, Pamela Gonzales, PJ Goldfinger Sky cleared up did a few variables Z Boo and Z Vir - last one was tough but we had a good time - closed early no chance to look at MARS from here

7/25/03 G. Thomas here for the evening. Did variable stars. Seeing in excess of 14.9

7/26/03 D. Phelps, J. S. Starn opened up, cloudy, no observing

8/2/03 Phelps - Stephenson. Worked bugs out of video cam. Collected 1/2 top of Mars in decl. Seeing ok from 11:00 to 1:00 when wind picked up.

8-10-03 75°F SCHROEDER - STEPHENSON. CLEAR NIGHT, OBSERVED MOON, TOO TURBULENT FOR MARS.

8/16 Phelps, Stephenson, Thomas, Web & Denise here for Mtg. Looked at Mars. Phelps & Thomas stayed overnight

8/17 Thomas here. Did variables. Nice sky, no wind. Did not look at Mars. Entertained 2 campers then did more variables.

- 8/22 Phelps + Thomas - Thomas did variables -
 Observed Mars visually and with camera. Mars very good
 seeing goal, Transparency goal. Cal off $\times 135^\circ$
 Solus Locus, Thaumasia Anguae, Mare Australe, Mare Sirenum
 Nix Olympica + poss. Tharis at Moments, Arcadia.
 Area around Solus very sharp
- 8/23-24 Thomas here. Started North roof work. Looked
 @ Mars & tested procto on tripod on Microwave tower.
 Bouncy in the wind but managed to split $\frac{3}{4}$ of E Lyra
 Several downpours from thunderstorms.
- 8/26 Phelps, Thomas, Kolakowski - Observed Mars through
 eRA. Recorded ≈ 4 hr Top in True color.
 Observed visually Solus locus v. large & complex and
 related features. Observed Nix Olympica recorded some
 depth. Noted in SRC. Closest Approach in 60K years
- 8/30/03 - Buchwald clan & other families here
 to view Mars. Stevenson, Fehrer, & Thomas
 also here. Thomas overhauled the RA
 setting circle, cutting leather belt for size &
 cleaning & oiling every bearing. Variable
 star work also done.
- 9/2 Phelps - Electronic Focusing. Lunar - Aristoteles
 Eudoxis, Mars - Appar 3 min using 2mm + red filter
 $em-27^\circ$, S Sabaeus + S. Menelike, M. Erythraeum,
 S. Mangard. feu, S. Aurora + Chryse. SRC small, hint
 of Mars Mitchell, SRC T. IT-1 towards south.
 M. Acidalia barely visible also to Philaeus.
 Equip problems, lost power to camera. (P. Supply?)

Sept. 6, '03 It has been 10+ years since my last visit here. What a flashback. I am ~~to~~ now an adult and truly appreciate my childhood and the memories from this place. Hopefully I'll visit again soon.

26 years old
Gosh!
(or my
im old.)

Jackie Bilodeau

Sept 6, 2003 See pages ... 8 (first visit), 22, 23 & 32. I've visited this place more than this but these were the most important times.!! I have fond memories of this place & the cabin that Clint Ford left to my Dad! ~~Wow~~ Not much has changed around here! Just a couple more high tech gadgets! Wow... A VCR - we were lucky to get a station on the TV w/o ~~show~~ show! Same furniture ... same fridge ... same blankets ... same dehydrated milk! Just kidding! Hopefully it won't be another 14 years until I'm back!

BTW, I love the picture Nancy Pasant took of ~~the~~ the comet! I hope you got that published! Very nice!

Brigitte Calahate
AKA Brigitte Bilodeau

9/9/03 DP Phelps - Typed Mars from 2100 to 0300.
Seeing variable mostly 7/10, Transparency variable high clouds
clearing. Lost seeing at 0300.

CU 240° ending 0° - Mars Mitchell separate visually
Heller very bright - maybe dust is starting. NPC small
enough to see around top. Features (partial) Syrtis Major,
iapigia, Hellas (island) NPC, Mare Mitchell, M. Cassini,
Aeolis, S. Sublimis, S. Superba, Aesopetus, S. meridiana,
Visual - large and NPhood, large on following limb.

9/12-14/03 G. Thomas here doing variable stars. Stevenson &
Schroeder here Saturday along w/about 20 guests
of Thomas. Looked at Elyra, Ring Nebula,
Mars, & the moon.

9/19-21 G. Thomas here. Did Variables Fri & Sat. Stevenson,
Phelps, Webb & Devine, Jeff & Katla, and PJG 1 & 2 ^{here} ^{here}
here for Excellent Mtg - mostly about Mars.
View Mars w/Group

9/24-25 G. Thomas, D. Phelps, & L. Kolaczek, here imaging
Mars. Also checked out Saturn around 2:30am

9/27 Pamela Gonzales finally did a
drawing of the eye of Mars.

John Stephenson changed push
buttons in control box for cage

rotation. Dec. circle was 3° off

due to impact with mount. Greg readjusted
and put on a safety cable.



The eye of Mars is
looking back tonight.

readjusted

10/3-5 G. Thomas here doing variables on Friday. PJG 1 & 2 here
doing variables Sat. Both nights very clear although a few
clouds early Sat. Saturn outstanding w/Brown orange ring and
clear A & B rings

- 10/10-12/03 G. Thomas, PGT 1 & 2. Thomas did variables Friday & Sat. PJ & Pam on Sat. Nice weather
- 10/16-20/03 G. Thomas did variable stars Thure. PGT 1 & 2 did variables Friday night. Thomas & Phelps here Sat. night. Caulked loose roofing seams & 2 windows.
- 11/5/03
38°F G. Thomas here. Forest closed due to recent fires. Got special permit to enter. Forecast is after rains this coming weekend forest will open again to public. Some snow on the ground. Poyer was right! Tried observing but clouds closed out every opening I tried.
- 11/14/03 G. Thomas here by car but had to use chains to get through the snow. Friday night beautiful to do variables - Mag 16.3 fairly easy before moon came up. Sat. night it snowed & observing was out. Sunday night looks good but too bad I can't stay. Fixed thermostat on main room heater. Moved snow off roof twice
- 11/21-23
~26°F G. Thomas did variables Friday & Saturday. Seeing very bad Friday but much better Saturday. Excellence Club mtg on Saturday w/ Jeff, Webb & Denise, Stevenson, ? & girlfriend, & Phelps in attendance
- 12/12-14
~22°F G. Thomas here. Some snow on the road but roof clear. Light clouds Friday but very clear skies most of Sat. Did variables & Saturn clear when ~55°. Very light snow Sunday

12/26/03 G. Thomas here. Very Cold & Windy Friday night.
 8°F Shutter wouldn't close. Found bird nest up by
 upper shutter motor. Limit switch at that position
 was stuck. Didn't realize that one controls closing!
 Did variable star work. Royer called &
 said he got some work done Friday. Snow
 not melting due to cold, even in the day. Forecast
 for a big storm on Monday night.

1/24/04 Greg & Danny Thomas here. Did variable star
 30°F work between 8p & 12a which bracked when
 100% RH the sky was clear of clouds. Easily got
 to Mag 15.3 but could not find 15.9 stars

3/23 G. Thomas here, for perhaps last time, to pick up
 some files. No observing

3/5+6/04 Greg, Teri & Danny here - we skied in lots of snow.
 Beautiful, clear sky. Greg did variable stars.

4/16-18 G. Thomas here. Did variable stars Friday night,
 28°F fairly good seeing after heating up the eyepieces.
 95% RH Light snow Saturday and mostly cloudy Sat
 night. Shutter is leaking badly due to loss of
 weatherstripping on one side.

4/23 G. Thomas here. Clear Skies. Did
 Variable star work, Peaceful.

5/1 Pam Gougeon & G. Thomas here doing
 variable stars

5-2 JEFF SCHROEDER & JOHN STEPHENSON LOOKING
 UNSUCCESSFULLY FOR COMET NEAT Q4.
 CALM AND CLEAR.