

AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS ASSOCIATION OF
SERBIA - INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
OF ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETIES

D. RADMILOVIĆ¹ and J. ALEKSIĆ^{2,3}

¹*Amateur Astronomers Association of Serbia, Belgrade, Serbia*
E-mail: office@saasr.org

²*University of Belgrade, Faculty of Mathematics, Belgrade, Serbia*

³*Astronomical Society "Rudjer Bošković", Belgrade, Serbia*
E-mail: jovan.aleksic@gmail.com

Abstract. In this paper the activities of Amateur Astronomers Association of Serbia in international cooperation with different subjects in the region are presented.

1. INTRODUCTION

From its very founding the Amateur Astronomical Association of Serbia (AAAS) gives the high priority to the cooperation with other associations, in particular in the neighboring countries. The AAAS thus established contacts with the Hungarian Astronomical Association and the Croatian Astronomical Association, and with the individual societies from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia. The cooperation is realized through personal interactions, participation at astronomical gatherings, competitions (Messier marathon), lectures and astro-photo exhibitions.

2. CROATIA

The cooperation with Croatia went in both directions. Amateur astronomers from Croatia attended camps in Serbia a few years in a row (the Astronomical Camp Letenka, Fruška Gora). At these camps astronomical equipment was shown, lectures were held, observations were carried out during the night, and some of the participants also performed astrophotography. Serbian participants, in turn, attended Messier Marathons in Višnjan for a few years, as well as an education course on the Meteorological Network in 2010. We have also been visiting the camp and giving lectures at Petrova Gora for some years. Since 2011. we have established a connection with societies from Koprivnica and Daruvar. Together with the group from Koprivnica we are working on a joint project of photometric observations of stars and asteroids. For this purpose we lent our CCD camera to Croatian amateur astronomers.

3. BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Cooperation with societies from Bosnia and Herzegovina was established through contacts with AS "Plejade" from Tuzla and AS "Orion" from Sarajevo. Our Association participated in the manifestation "7 days of Astronomy in Tuzla", with our astro-photo exhibition together with the collection of astro-photos from the AS "Plejade". The president of the AAAS, Dragan Radmilović, held two lectures on telescopes and constellations. The collaboration with this organization is continuous. We give them advice on the principles of functioning of an association/society and some equipment for the society itself, as well as to some of the individual amateur astronomers. With AS "Orion" we exchanged letters, and a visit to Sarajevo has been arranged.

4. MACEDONIA

The collaboration with amateur astronomers from Macedonia is realized with the Astronomical Society in Skopje, which is the most active astronomical society in Macedonia. Three societies from Serbia took part in the astronomical camp in Macedonia on Mountain Vrteška (AS "Magelanov Oblak" from Prokuplje, AS "Novi Pazar" from Novi Pazar and AS "Rudjer Bošković" from Belgrade). The Astronomical Society in Skopje also participates at the camps in Serbia, the Astronomical Camp Letenka on Fruška Gora, the Astronomical Camp on Golija, the Belgrade Astronomical Weekend in Belgrade, the Summer Astronomical Meeting. Finally, some individual members developed a fruitful collaboration between themselves as well. The members of the Astronomical Society in Skopje gave their astro-photos to be exhibited together with our own astro-photos exhibition which is travelling across Serbia.

5. SLOVENIA

Members of the astronomical societies from Slovenia have attended camps in Serbia several times. Astrophotographers from Slovenia had their exhibition of astro-photos in 2009. in the premises of the Astronomical Society "Novi Sad". In 2011, they invited Serbian amateur astronomers to visit them in Slovenia.

6. BULGARIA

An intensive collaboration with Bulgarian amateur astronomers existed from 2003. to 2009. In this period, a series of summer schools was held alternately in Serbia and Bulgaria (odd years in Bulgaria, even years in Serbia). The parties involved were High School "Hristo Botev" (Belogradchik, Bulgaria) and Knjaževac High School (Knjaževac, Serbia) and the main organizer was Astronomical Society "Andromeda" from Knjaževac. There is the observatory in Belogradchik, so participants took the opportunity to visit it. Since 2010, these summer schools have no longer been held, but the plans for reestablishing cooperation are being made. The astronomical society "Andromeda" from Leskovac is willing to take part and we hope that Bulgarian side will be interested, too.

7. HUNGARY

The collaboration with the Hungarian Astronomical Association has been realized since 2010, a few months after the AAAS was founded. Members from Hungary visited the astro-photo exhibition at Palić in August 2010. The general secretary of the HAA, Attila Mizser, and the head of the Messier section of the "Meteor" magazine, Gabor Santa, visited the exhibition. During this visit the possibilities of bilateral collaboration were discussed for the first time. Mutual visits to astronomical camps and amateur astronomers gatherings in both countries were arranged, as well as meetings of astrophotographers. In January 2011, the president of AAAS visited the TWAN astro-photo exhibition and the Observatory in Szeged. We have reached an agreement that we will visit a Messier Marathon organized by the HAA. In the period from 1 to 3 April, the president of the AAAS has participated in their Messier Marathon held in Batorligeti. During this visit many contacts have been established and future visits to astronomical camps and collaboration in astrophotography have been agreed. At the same time, a delegation from Hungary visited the Messier Marathon held at Andrevlje, Serbia. A group of Hungarian astronomers also visited the Astronomical Camp at Letenka, Fruška Gora, Serbia in July 2011.



Figure 1: President of AAAS with Hungarian amateur astronomers.

8. CONCLUSION

With large number of contacts, both with individual amateur astronomers and with associations, new ways of collaboration emerge every day between the amateurs in the region. Maybe more could have been done, but the AAAS has performed its activities based on the private funding of the members of the AAAS, and has not received any additional support from the government. If we take into account that the AAAS has not even celebrated the second year of its existence, we can say that many things have been done in this short period.

References

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