

ROYAL METEOROLOGICAL SOCIETY

ONE-DAY DISCUSSION MEETING AND EXHIBITION: INSTRUMENTS FOR AMATEUR OBSERVERS

On Saturday 6 May 1978 at University College, London, the amateur meteorological fraternity was treated to a feast of information and ideas, sufficient to provide inspiration and impetus to the majority for some time to come.

The meeting, and the fine exhibition of amateur and professionally built instruments was held under the auspices of the Royal Meteorological Society, and was most efficiently organised by *Mr C. K. Folland* (Meteorological Office) aided by *Dr G. T. Meaden*.

The first session, introduced and chaired by *Dr J. R. Milford* (University of Reading), was opened by *Dr J. S. Foot* (Meteorological Office) who provided some useful insight into the problems associated with instrument design, and highlighted some of the inherent shortcomings of instruments commonly in use.

The second speaker, *Mr G. J. Day* (Meteorological Office) stressed the importance of the representativeness of the observing site, and indicated a number of 'do's and don'ts' drawn from his professional experience, illustrating his talk with an interesting selection of slides, many graphically pointing out the 'don'ts'! His views on the exposure of rain-gauges produced some lively discussion.

After lunch, the second session was introduced by *Mr D. E. Pedgley* (Centre for Overseas Pest Research), and the opening speaker, *Dr G. T. Meaden* outlined his own research into ways of quantitatively measuring fog and rime deposition, illustrated by a selection of novel and original devices.

Mr K. Mortimore, convincingly stressed the need for a device to indicate when hail had fallen, and presented a simple and inexpensive hailgauge, a copy of which, I feel sure, will now be found at many station sites as a result. *Mr P. R. Jennings* then described and demonstrated to effect a tipping bucket rain-gauge and cup-counter anemometer designed and built by *Mr J. A. Edson*. Few could fail to be impressed by the excellent standard of craftsmanship shown by *Mr Edson*. The slides of his entirely home-built station served to demonstrate further the good use of his talents.

Next, *Mr D. Hatch* presented and described, with the aid of a model, a sunshine recorder of his own design and construction. The ingenuity he used to obtain comparable results to the standard, though inaccurate, Campbell-Stokes recorder must have been admired by all. *Mr S. D. Burt* talked about the Climatological Observers Link, of which he is secretary, and reminded us how the organisation has grown and thrived during the seven years since its instigation.

After tea, with *Dr Milford* once again in the chair, *Mr J. Warner* demonstrated that, without spending one's life savings, and with a little dedication, it is possible for the amateur to obtain radio-teleprinter and radio-facsimile data reasonably reliably.

Next, *Dr J. S. A. Green* (Imperial College) gave a lively and amusing talk on simple instruments, and demonstrated with slides how many everyday objects could be turned into a diverse range of devices for probing the lower atmosphere.

Finally, Mr D. E. Pedgley described several interesting results from his experiments in the mountains of north Wales, carried out almost exclusively with amateur observers using simple instruments.

Dr Milford closed the meeting at 6 pm, and all those assembled departed feeling that this had been a memorable and rewarding day.

EXHIBITION

The exhibition was opened an hour before the meeting started. This, together with the lunch and afternoon tea breaks, gave an opportunity for all to examine the many fine exhibits on display. Space does not permit comment on the individual exhibits. However, to refresh the memories of those present, a list of exhibits appears in Table 1. There was much there to gladden the heart of the amateur, and a vote of thanks must go to the organisers and exhibitors who devoted much time and effort to make the day so interesting and memorable.

B. J. BURTON

TABLE 1. List of exhibits

Exhibit	Exhibitor
Radiation, wind, temperature and sextant*	Dr J. S. A. Green and Dr K. J. Bignell
Data processing	Met. Office (Met O 3)
Sea temperatures	Capt R. Proud
Video tape recorder, wind and atmospheric electricity	J. Heighes
Radio-facsimile reception*	J. Warner and Muirhead Ltd
Rural/urban temperatures	J. Tate and C. K. Folland
General equipment	C. F. Casella and Co. Ltd
Lightning detector	P. Richards
Fog and rime gauges*	Dr G. T. Meaden
Spore trap	J. S. Powell
Observation techniques	Met. Office (Met O 1)
Rain-gauge and anemometer*	P. R. Jennings and J. A. Edson
Climatological Observers Link*	S. D. Burt
Butser Hill climatological station	Dr S. J. Harrison
Field courses	Royal Met. Society
General equipment	R. W. Munro Ltd
Pyrheliometer	A. Austin
Variety of instruments	Met. Office (Met O 16)
Wind and temperature	C. K. Folland
Solarimeter and wind direction	Dr J. Milford and P. Framingham
Car-borne temperature measurements	K. G. Ledson
Sunshine recorder*	D. Hatch
Hail-gauges*	K. Mortimore
General equipment	F. Darton and Co. Ltd

* Exhibits discussed or demonstrated at the meeting.

NOTICE

COLOUR GUIDE TO CLOUDS

The *Colour Guide to Clouds* by Scorer and Wexler is now back in stock at the Society's Headquarters. Price £2.00 including postage. Apply to: Executive Secretary, Royal Meteorological Society, James Glaisher House, Grenville Place, Bracknell, Berks. RG12 1BX.