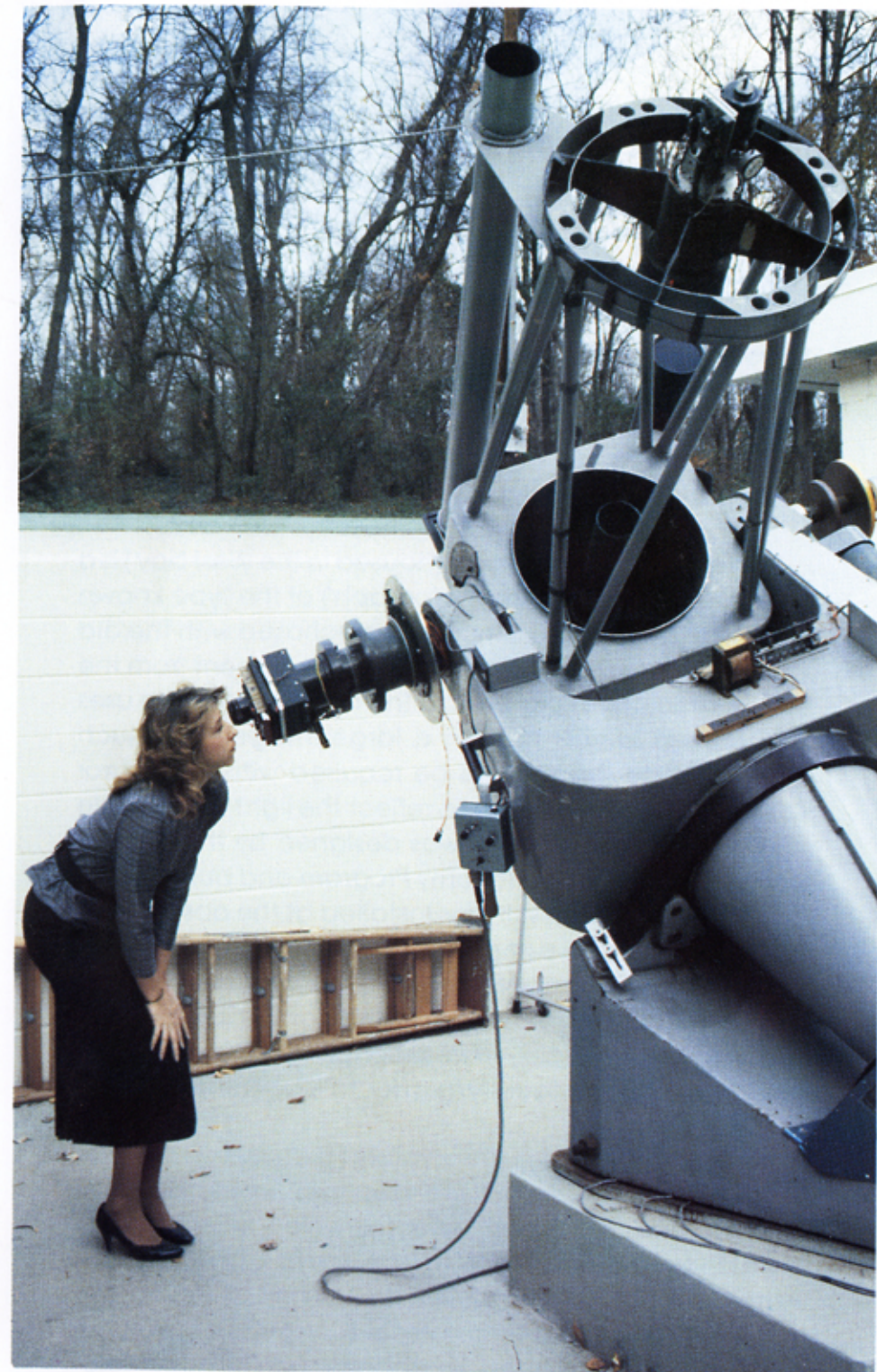


At present the observatory is used by many people. We have approximately 2000 students taking our introductory astronomy course each year, and although they are not required to use the observatory as part of their course, they are all provided an opportunity to do so and many of them do. Approximately 25 undergraduate majors use the observatory facilities as part of some of their courses, and astronomy graduate students occasionally use the observatory to become familiar with various types of astronomical equipment. Equipment designed by faculty members has been tested here, and in the past a few graduate students used the observatory to carry out their thesis research. Most research, however, is carried out at other observatories because the lights of Washington make the sky very bright here, and the prevalence of hazy and cloudy weather throughout the east coast makes observing rather difficult.



Photos by M. Briley
Brochure by Matanibogi Productions

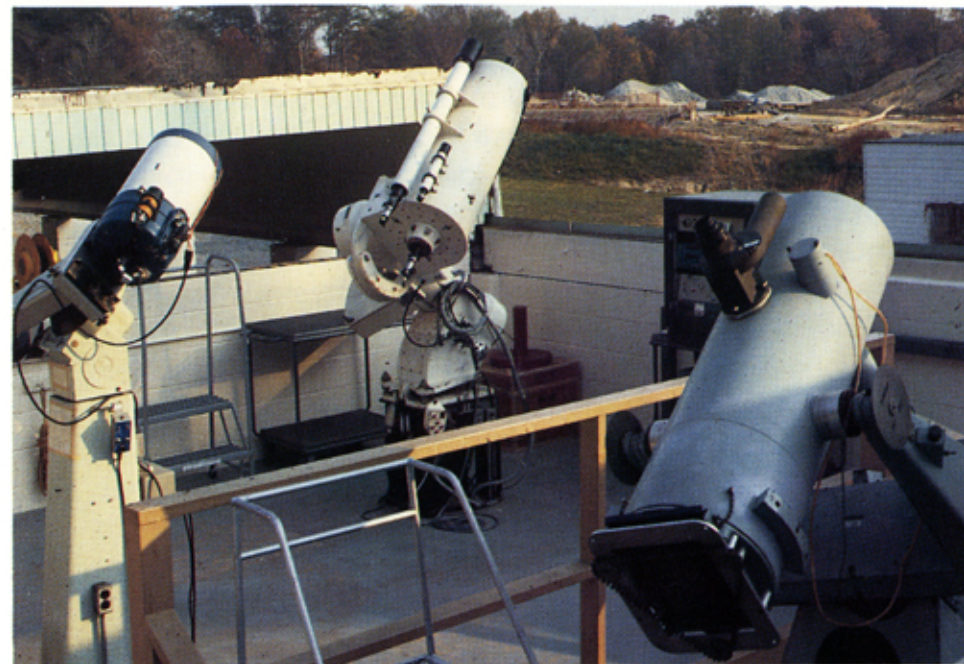


UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND OBSERVATORY

With the inception of the Astronomy Program as a part of the Department of Physics and Astronomy in 1962, the need arose for an observing facility near the campus to supplement the instructional and research activities of the program. The present observatory building was completed in 1963 at a cost of \$25,000. It was originally designed to house two telescopes, one in the East telescope bay and one in the West. In addition the observatory contains a central workroom for both laboratory and office work, darkroom facilities for photographic work, and a small kitchen for use by the observers in preparing their midnight meals.

The principal telescope (housed in the West bay) is a 20-inch reflector (cover photograph) of the type known as a bent Cassegrain which was purchased with the aid of a grant for instructional scientific equipment from the National Science Foundation. This type of telescope uses two curved mirrors to form a large image in a much shorter space than would be required with one mirror and then uses a flat mirror to reflect the light out the side for convenient viewing. It was designed by the late Dr. Uco van Wijk of the Astronomy Program and built by L. C. Eichner of New Jersey. It was installed at the observatory and aligned in the summer of 1964, and the observatory was dedicated on 16 November 1964. Since that time it has been used primarily for instructional purposes, including open houses, and secondarily for equipment development and faculty/graduate student research.

The East bay of the observatory (pictured on the next page) is used for a variety of telescopes. For several years it contained an 8-inch reflector which was used for instructional purposes. With the rapid growth of the Astronomy Program, however, it became clear that this was insufficient, and therefore, in the spring of 1968 the East bay was extended to accommodate more telescopes. With the aid of another National Science Foundation instructional equipment grant, two more



telescopes, a 10-inch Cassegrain and a 12-inch Cassegrain, were purchased. Both of these telescopes are quite similar in concept to the 20-inch. In the summer of 1970, the 8-inch reflector was replaced by an 8-inch refractor (donated by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration) to be used for the photographic determination of precise positions of asteroids, observations of comets, and wide field photography.

In 1977 the Observatory Lecture Building was completed at a cost of \$108,000. The lecture component of the bi-monthly open house and ASTR 111, our introductory observational lab class, are held in this building. To the East of the lecture building is a concrete pad with a series of pedestals on which small (8") telescopes can be mounted. These telescopes are used in ASTR 111 and for some special open house programs.