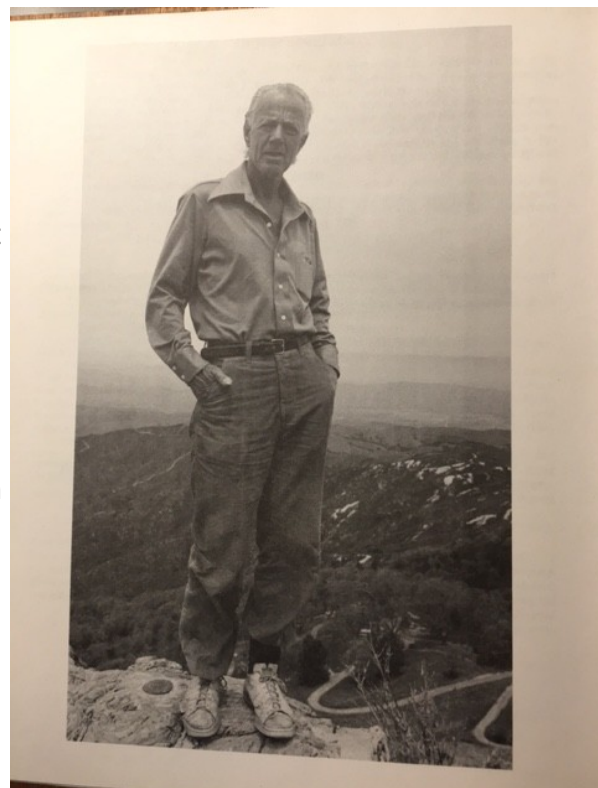


John Lowry Dobson has been called the "Pied Piper of Astronomy," the "Star Monk," and the "Mac Guyver of Astronomy." He is arguably one of the most influential personalities in amateur astronomy in the last 50 years. He has almost single-handedly revolutionized backyard astronomy and telescope making. He not only brought it out to the street, but made it accessible for anyone who has ever looked up in wonder, and asked "Why?" He challenged telescope manufacturers by mainstreaming telescope making and allowing amateurs to enjoy their own large aperture telescopes. He challenged amateur astronomers to include the public in the observing experience by going to public places. John's focus to get telescopes into the National Park System, was a priority because the night sky needed stewardship - where else better than conservation-minded rangers in the National Park System.



John Lowry Dobson
Sept 14, 1915 to Jan 14, 2014

SCOPES IN THE NATIONAL PARKS

John had pursued telescope making in the mid to late 60's in the monastery in Northern California by repurposing found objects. Once he left the Vedanta Center, John focused on getting



the telescopes in to the public besides just the neighborhood surrounding the monastery. His vision to get more people to view through an eyepiece, started on the corners of Broderick and Jackson Street but knew, *"To appreciate and understand it better, the people of this planet should have the opportunity to see the cosmos they live in - the way it really is,"* and that meant - National Parks for darker skies. John's mission developed organically on a road trip to Mexico to attend a solar

eclipse and a conference. It was this trip that John had the idea as how to work on getting telescopes in to the National Park System as they attended conferences! They would be mini side trips - but with a purpose of investigating these potential parks for allowing the, *"dark skies and public to collide."*



"In 1969, we were invited to go to Riverside, California, to attend an amateur telescope making conference. Sidewalk Astronomers seldom ever go out of their way to attend such conferences. My friend, Brian Rhodes, got the brilliant idea to go to Mexico to see the eclipse of the sun, even though we knew we could never afford to

pay for such a trip. We decided that we would travel south to Mexico via Riverside, but only if we could do public service sidewalk astronomy while traveling to the conference. And that became our mode of operation. We only attended amateur astronomy and telescope conferences if we do public service activities along the way. Usually we stop by National Parks and Monuments to do this."

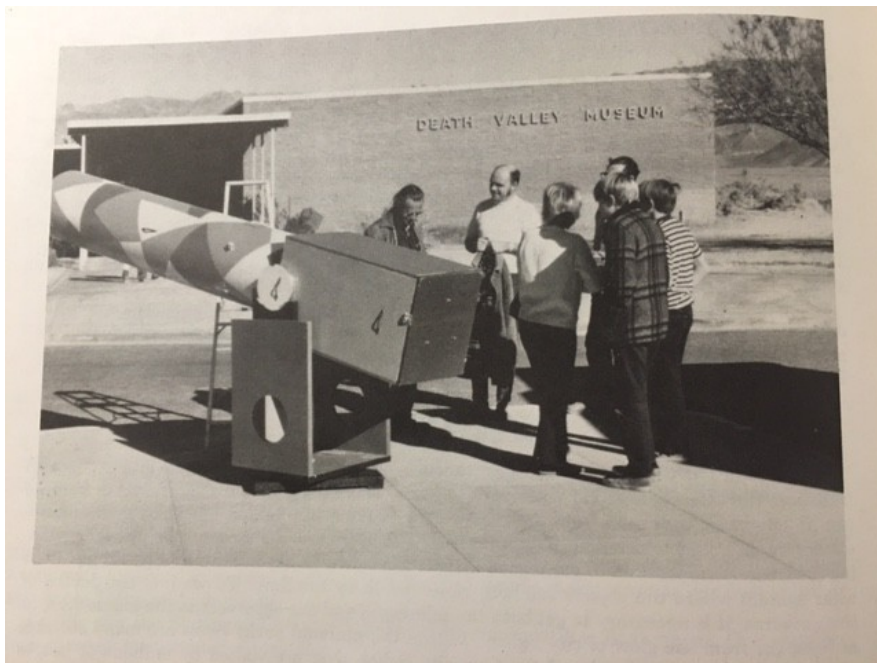
DEATH VALEY NATIONAL PARK

John started going to the National Parks in 1971 with a trip to Death Valley. He and his group of Sidewalk Astronomers would park their vans at the Furnace Creek Visitor Center and unload huge telescopes that resembled cannons. They would spend a week or two holding observing sessions and sharing the sky with the crowds. John would usually give a talk about astronomy and what was up in the night sky while waiting for the sun to set. John joked that the rangers had 51 weeks a year to talk about the rocks, trees in the park and they left him a week to talk about everything else in the Universe. This was how he viewed the partnership between the National Parks and the San Francisco Sidewalk Astronomers.

"National Parks are the only places where the seeing is good enough and the public numerous and curious enough to allow us to show off the wonders of the night sky using large telescopes like our home made twenty-four incher. Getting the 24-incher completed was all due to the tenacity and commitment of Brian Rhodes."



After introducing scopes into Death Valley National Park, John and the crew decided to look into the possibility of Yosemite, Crater Lake, Zion and other National Parks. It was difficult at first because often the rangers would initially allow them to set up in day use only areas and then they had to put the telescopes away at dark. It took a lot of talking and coaxing for the rangers to allow John to set up and hold night time observing sessions – but John was nothing if not persistent. As soon as the rangers saw the reaction of the crowds at the eyepiece, they became completely on board with sidewalk activities.



John had worked out a routine for the National Parks that seemed to work out well for everyone. With these huge pieces of equipment it was necessary to have some one with the scopes because it was just too tempting to have the public check out what they were. John would put a sign on the telescopes that read "for night use only." So the crew would take turns during

the week to guard the scopes while the rest of the Sidewalk Astronomers got familiar with the park and hiked. John was keenly aware of the type of rock, or terrain and surroundings in the park and then at the eyepiece at night, he would bridge the time frames of the cosmos with the formation of Earth.

John would bring Delphinium, the portable 24 inch Newtonian telescope with a focal length of over 13 feet. It required a 12 foot aluminum ladder to get to the eyepiece. He attempted to set up scopes at Dantes View several times on various trips but due to the ice, snow and road conditions it just didn't happen. One trip as they were making an attempt for Dantes View, their vehicle broke down so it was not possible to conduct the viewing from there. But in the summer months the Sidewalk Astronomers stayed at Dantes View for a couple of days and the visitors would bring up

food and water to them while they were there.

The telescopes were usually set up at Furnace Creek Visitors Center and would set up a 10 inch sun scope for visitors during the day and bring out two 8 inch, one 9 inch, one 11 inch, one 16 inch, one 18 inch along with Delphinium the 24 inch at night. John said, *"We need at least 2 more 24's, and a 16 inch and 18 inch scopes or "little ones."*



As the Death Valley Star Party grew from year to year, all the scopes would be swarmed with people before and after the talks and averaged 10 to 20 people in line behind each one. It was estimated that thousands of people came through during their 9 days and 9 night stay. Most of the crowd made sure they went from scope to scope which would take about two hours. Those who wanted more, would stay later into the night and early morning.

John said at Badwater they tested the seeing conditions in hopes that it would be a good site for a public observatory. He told the rangers at the parks that if they built the shelters, *"We will supply telescopes for public observatories in the National Parks and Monuments. Mount Wilson, Palomar and Lick are professionally run – and they can't handle the public."* *"The public needs observatories on the mountain tops in the National Parks and Monuments above the smog and hundreds of miles from city lights. The people must see the deep sky universe beyond the environs of our little sun."*

Through the years the size of the public grew because many visitors would made it a point to come see John after Christmas every year. He had developed quite a following and they looked forward to John's talk on what to expect in the night sky when they would look through the telescopes. It was apparent to the rangers that John and the Sidewalk Astronomers was a big reason why people came every year to Furnace Creek during the holiday season. John loved to talk and tell stories even



reminisced with returnees about stories shared the year before.

Death Valley National Park has the Sidewalk Astronomers after Christmas for a week of solar and night observing in addition to their normal calendar of ranger talks, telescope nights and star walks. The Las Vegas Astro-

nomical Society hosts the yearly star party with sidewalk astronomy in December.

GLACIER POINT, YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

John and the Sidewalk Astronomers went to Glacier Point in Yosemite National Park in 1974 and visited on a regular basis. John said that, *"That Glacier Point may be one of the finest places on this planet for a public observatory."* He said the seeing conditions were fabulous and the location at the top of the cliff made it cozy and warm due to the air flow down from the cliff. The Sidewalk Astronomers would stay for 16 days and often times would encounter bad weather. One time the rain saturated the tubes of the home made telescopes and they had to be dried. A few times the snow made the trip impassable but on one particular trip John noted that, *"We saw the Aurora Borealis at midnight as it spread 45 degrees off the northeastern horizon."* He described it being streams of pink and green stripes that lasted about 30 minutes and then they disappeared to reveal the star filled sky.

On John's visit, he remembered how he and the Sidewalk Astronomers were made to feel so welcomed and also comfortable by the staff giving them T-Shirts. The rangers set up a screen for John's slide show which he felt it was to be their first actual presentation at Glacier Point. They would operate the telescopes starting at 10:00 am in the morning to midnight and said there were 500 people at the slide show presentations. He commented that after the talk they ran through about 2,000

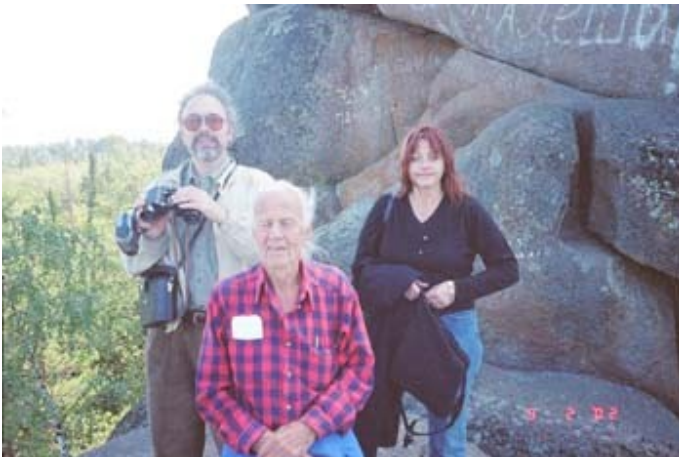


visitors through the eyepiece. Each evening a ranger gave a sunset talk after the slide shows down at the telescope that mostly covered the constellations. John admitted that the rangers did a fairly good job. John talked about his connection with,



"Dave Karraker in Yosemite, really understood how things should be done. He saw the value of the Sidewalk Astronomers and wanted to have us give our slide shows in an amphitheater that would eventually replace the location of the portable toilets at Glacier Point. He envisioned that we would have several telescopes arranged along pathway where the Old Glacier Point Hotel had been, and have people walk from telescope to telescope. A Sidewalk Astronomer volunteer would be at each telescope to make fine adjustments and tell the viewer what they were seeing. He once said that if the National Park Service were to have a formal night sky program, the Park Service would have to purchase the telescopes, house them, and then have to hire someone to maintain the telescopes."

But early on, John had mentioned that a security ranger told them that their telescopes would have to be put away by night! John had found that humorous and did share the mission of the Sidewalk Astronomers with him. John had mentioned at another park, a ranger remarked to the crew that the sky was not part of the park. John quickly countered,



"But the park is part of the sky. I feel that it is very important that the night sky above National Parks be treated as an important resource and that people who visit the parks be encouraged to stay out after dark. With telescopes, it's possible for them to see things they can't view under city lights. After all, at night we are introducing them to the other half of the park."

John was so taken in by Yosemite that he felt that their “master plan” should consider establishing a public astronomical observatory in the Glacier Point Area. It would be favorably situated on the brink of a cliff because the cold night air would flow downward from the surrounding mountains and not accumulate above it. John repeatedly brought the 24 inch to this area because of the excellent seeing conditions. He envisioned naturalist talks at Overhanging Rock and a slide show at the amphitheater that could go right into the night sky program.

“...Just as we feel the need to preserve for the people “windows” on the natural environment at the surface of our planet, just so we feel the need to preserve for the people “windows” on the Universe beyond. It seems every bit as much a part of the National Park effort to preserve our right to see the sky as it is to preserve our right to see a cliff, a lake, a stream, a mountain or a tree. All these surface details of our planet may be seen by day, yet by day most of the universe remains hidden from our gaze by our blinding proximity to the sun. Hence if the rest of the universe is to be seen at all, it must be seen by night. There is no other way, and it is far, far better seen through telescopes.”



But by partnering with the Sidewalk Astronomers, a night sky program could easily be conducted with minimum cost and effort. Glacier Point at Yosemite National Park is still hosting star parties and night sky viewing at the park with, Stargazing Saturdays in the months of June to August. The many events are supported by the San Francisco Astronomical Association, San Francisco Sidewalk Astronomers, Mount Diablo Astronomical Society, Sonoma County Astronomical Society, Central Valley Astronomers, Tri-Valley Stargazers, Santa Cruz Astronomy Club, San Jose Astronomical Association, Peninsula Astronomical Society, Sacramento Valley Astronomical Society and MIRA Astronomy Club.

GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK

John and the Sidewalk Astronomers would make their first trip to the Grand Canyon National Park in 1974. John who was a naturalist of sorts, noted his first impression

of coming into the Grand Canyon.

"But of course nothing, not even a gradual approach, can prepare one for the first real look at the Grand Canyon. Because all the explanations which one has been given for why the canyon looks the way it does, all of the reason for the depth of it, for the shape of its rocks, and their



colors, are not sufficient – the Grand Canyon appears lawless. It is just too vast, too fanciful for the mind to take in and assimilate properly. We turn away from its rim to go about our business and immediately turn back to check – just once more and assure ourselves that there is something on this planet that really does look like that."

With the 24 incher on a trailer, they arrived at the South Rim at Yavapai Museum with a the trailer desperately in need of repair. Along the way a weld on the rear beam had broke and if they could not get it fixed properly, John said, *"it would become a permanent guest of the park."* Once the report of their plight was shared with the rangers, they went above and beyond the call of duty to help. They secured a blacksmith who came and made a weld in the back while the rest of the Sidewalk crew used 2 x 4s and steel reinforcements. John was so very appreciative of the support, it was truly a warm welcome to the park.

John had noted that the puffy clouds were in the sky during the day and they continued to roll in and said that the crew stayed as the guests of the puffy white clouds. The next night they would set up scopes in the hopes of some of the clouds clearing out by night but that was not the case. So they would conduct their event through the few holes in the clouds. This particular night they had reinforcements from the Bay Area, a 12 inch and an 8 inch telescope.

The crew showed off the sun during the day but by the end of July, the sunspot activity had calmed down quite a bit. *"It became embarrassing to show them to the public through the sun scopes."* The Sidewalk Astronomers ran the scopes almost non

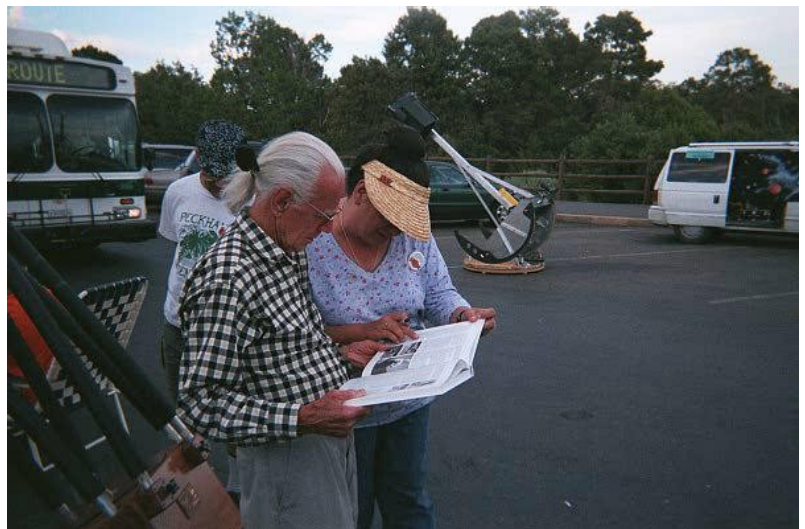
-stop all day and had over a thousand people come through to look. The crowd got to see and learn about the solar plage – the bright region around the sunspot found in the chromosphere, limb darkening – where the inner part of the sun is much brighter than the edge of the sun, and granulation - which is the plasma convection currents on the photosphere of the sun that looks like grains of rice or gravel.

In the evenings, the slide show was held at the Yavapai Museum to a packed out room but due to the weather, the time varied from night to night. If they were just waiting for dark the talk started at 8:00 and lasted till 9:00pm which would give time to get dark. A few nights John said they would go for another half an hour because they were waiting on the clouds to disappear. But no matter the length of the talk, it was a full fledged stampede to the telescopes with lines almost 100 people long. This would happen for the ten nights they were at the Grand Canyon.

For a break, John had gone down to the Colorado River and said by doing that, *"It presented the park more gently since you are walking down because you can see the layer by layer and rock by rock."* He was also taken in by the Tamarisk, Cottonwood Trees and the Jimson Weed as he walked. He did not forget the avian, Canyon Wrens, White Throated Swifts and the Ravens all of which enjoyed sweeping through the great depths as he hiked about.

"Our experiences with organizer Dean Ketelson, who has organized the annual Grand Canyon Star Party recognized me as the initial founder of star parties there. He has invited me back several times."

The star party originally started with John, was put on hold due to John answering a question that led to an answer on cosmology. One visitor was put out and created such an uncomfortable situation, the rangers opted to postpone the event for a few



years. But in 1990, Dean Ketelson from the University of Arizona's Steward Observatory passed through with his new wife on their honeymoon and a large pair of Japanese battleship binoculars. As he used them, visitors wanted a peak as well. Dean asked the staff to revive the Grand Canyon Star Party started by the San Francisco Sidewalk Astronomers. So in 1991, for one week in June, on the Ketelson's first anniversary, the south and north rims at the Grand Canyon hosted their now yearly star party. Supported by astronomy clubs in northern Arizona, it also welcomes the many Sidewalk Astronomers that come from many states every year.



CRATER LAKE NATIONAL PARK

John and the Sidewalk Astronomers would find their way to Crater Lake in Oregon in the early 70s which would sometimes be a stopping point for future trips up into Alberta Canada. Mt. Mazama is actually a caldera or collapsed volcano, that through the years has filled with rain and snow water that has no outlet. With weather similar to that of California, mostly dry with some rain and wispy clouds, and mostly clear skies at night that makes it great for observing. John commented about Crater Lake, *"I've often thought that Crater Lake in Oregon is the prettiest thing I've seen."* He wrote this on a sign in sheet at the lodge. *"Crater Lake is to the Cascades*

what Saturn is to the Solar System."



The first year, there was an article on John and the Sidewalk Astronomers in the Crater Lake newspaper called, *The Register Guard*. The article talked about how there would be an 18 and 24 inch Dobsonian telescope at the park. These scopes were not in the mainstream and were rare so that

alone sparked the interest of several amateur astronomers to come check out these scopes for themselves. One astronomer commented that when he saw that article, it peaked his interest so much he had to go. Once there, he was shocked when he saw a tiny man with giant telescopes. What was the most intriguing part, was how this man would simply get to the end of the scope and using the corner of the tube box that suspended the tube on the mount, John would eyeball the sky along the edge, move the scope, and Eureka there was a galaxy. Visitors were so thrilled to see galaxies in the eyepiece for the first time in their life. The 24 inch telescope, Delphinium not only delighted the hundreds of visitors, but John revealed that, *"At Crater Lake I used to sleep in my van or in my 24-incher. We've had as many as three people sleep in that, you know."*

When John first got the 24 inch telescope to Crater Lake, they encountered rain which saturated the telescopes making the cardboard tube way too heavy. John estimated about fifty pounds of rain water had soaked into the cardboard tube. Of course that made the telescope



unusable until Ranger Hank Tanski and John Salinas got them some heavy weights to hang on the tailgate to serve as a counter balance. This ensured that the overweight tube would not hit the ground but have enough weight to stay upright and they could continue with the star party as planned.

"At Crater Lake, Naturalist, Hank Tanski, made us Volunteers-in-Parks and got us a food allowance. When the treasurer of the Natural History Association at Zion heard that more than three thousand people had used our equipment in six days and nights, he wrote us a check for \$500.00 also."

John had commented how forever grateful he was to Hank Tanski, at Crater Lake since he would let John stay in his home at Park Headquarters and invite the crew to take showers. Hank arranged for subsidizing the groups meals, so they would get \$7.00 if eaten in, or \$12.00 at the restaurant. John's gratitude to Hank made for a marvelous experience for John and the crew at Crater Lake. The Sidewalk Astronomers would stay for about sixteen days and have several assistants assigned to them. John fully enjoyed giving a public slide show program at the Community House at Rim Village and then talk to those who were curious enough to stay out later and climb the 12 foot ladder to the eyepiece of the telescope.

"The rangers had us set up the telescopes on the road, and they put those yellow cones around them to keep the traffic away. The rangers also put out the National Park signs that was an indication to the public that this was an official park event. So we had the lake to our north and the building where the talks are given to our south. After a ranger had given a talk, we gave a slide show and then let the visitors look through the telescopes."

John would put people in lines and tell them that if they wanted to see more after reaching the eyepiece, to get back in line. *"One time a lady came to us, climbed the twelve foot ladder to the eyepiece and said, "I've seen them dumb stars," and it turned out it was the ranger!"* The group usually started with the moon and planets like Jupiter and Saturn. Those objects were very easy for families to enjoy. After awhile, the mothers with little kids would go to bed leaving the rest that were hooked, to hang around longer to be shown some of the clusters, galaxies and deep sky objects.

The Sidewalk Astronomers were so appreciated for their long hours and knowledge that, *"One year we had been in the park for some time. I noticed that the back of my van was filled with new supplies of food. I had no idea where this food came from, so I inquired around. I asked the ladies who worked at the Lodge. It turns out they were the girlfriends of the boys who worked on the boats. It was the boat crew who went out and purchased for us, a totally fresh supply of food. They had been to the grocery store and bought sandwiches, fruit, and all sorts of delicious stuff. They had put all of that food in the back of my van. It was wonderful. God bless them."*

Sidewalk Astronomy night events have continued at Crater Lake National Park that rangers host a few times a year.

The Sidewalk Astronomers had been to quite a few parks, Bryce Canyon National Park, Zion National Park, Death Valley National Park, Grand Canyon National Park, Craters of the Moon National Park, Rocky Mountain National Park, and many other places including Indian reservations in the local areas surrounding the parks.



It is encounters like these that make the presence of telescopes in the National Parks such a great pairing. John appreciated the public letting him know how much they appreciated him and the Sidewalk Astronomers for coming to the park to share the night sky with them. A few comments that stuck with John were,

"A twelve year-old once complimented our activities by saying, 'The programs conducted by the Sidewalk Astronomers are the only programs in the National Park not geared for children under the age of nine years!'

"We have been told by so many people who travel to many parks during their vacation that," 'Finding the Sidewalk Astronomers in the National Parks has been the highlight of our summer tour.' Another visitor added, *"It's not only the slides show, but the talks you give on relativity and quantum mechanics."*

Many generations of National Park visitors have had the pleasure of meeting and encountering the cosmos for the first time through large aperture telescopes thanks to John and the San Francisco Sidewalk Astronomers. Night sky events continue in the National Park System today particularly in the larger National Parks which are either hosted by park rangers and staff or with amateur astronomers. John did visit many parks on his way to speaking engagements in the US with many still hosting events that he inspired. In Maine, Acadia National Park has a fall observing program and festival that is hosted by the rangers and amateur astronomy volunteers. At Badlands National Park in South Dakota, they have solar and evening observing year round with a yearly Astronomy Festival that Celestron Telescopes helps to sponsor with the Badlands National History Association.

In Colorado, the Black Canyon Astronomical Society offers solar and evening viewing three times a week, year round at Black Canyon of the Gunnison. The astronomers and rangers worked together to get the park to be IDA designated. Bryce Canyon National Park in Utah was visited by John and he spoke there in 2007. It has continued the night sky programs to the extent it has become the standard which includes the designation of Dark Sky Park through the International Dark Sky Association. Another park in Utah that has a great ranger and amateur astronomer partnership is Capitol Reef National Park. They offer solar and evening programs on a regular basis. Also in Utah, is Cedar Breaks National Monument that offers star parties hosted by a team of rangers and volunteers.

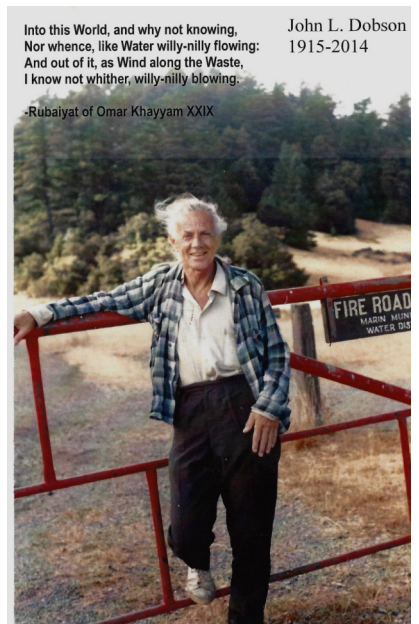
In the Gateway National Recreational Area, the Great Kills National Park in New York, has amateur astronomers hold monthly observing events. Montana's Glacier National Park has solar and evening programs that are hosted in tandem with rangers and volunteers. Great Basin National Park in Nevada has solar and evening observing three times a week at the park by volunteers. Also, Joshua Tree National Park in California, has a night sky program every Saturday where many Sidewalk Astronomers from southern California, make trips to host the viewing sessions.

In Great Basin National Park in Nevada, they host solar and evening observing three times a week hosted by volunteers. Washington State, Olympic National Park at Hurricane Ridge has rangers and amateur astronomer volunteers from the Olympic Astronomical Society hosting regular yearly events at the park. Near International Falls in Minnesota, at Voyageurs National Park, they conduct Night Explorer Series and events. Last but not least, on the US Virgin Islands, at St. John, they conduct a sky watch event on the beach.

Through the forty plus years, the rangers have become much more night sky aware and astronomy savvy with some personally owning their own telescope. Most often, rangers will set up along side Sidewalk Astronomers at their events, using their personal scope or those that belong to the park system. Most of the support to the park staff is found in the network of amateur astronomers who have a desire for public service, a passion of astronomy and a love of the night sky.

YOU GET TO DECIDE THE LEGACY YOU LEAVE

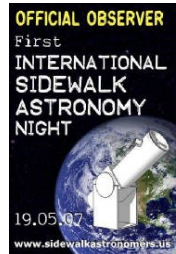
On January 15, 2014, John passed away at Saint Joseph's Hospital in Burbank, California at the age of 98 from a brief illness. At the time of his passing John was surrounded by his brothers from the Vedanta Center who prayed over him. Also in attendance were several of his friends from various astronomy communities.



Into this World, and why not knowing,
Nor whence, like Water willy-nilly flowing:
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not whither, willy-nilly blowing.

John L. Dobson
1915-2014

-Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam XXIX

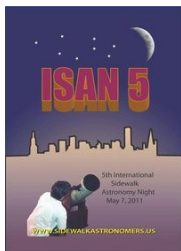
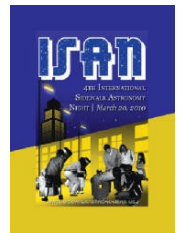


In 2005, the San Francisco Sidewalk Astronomers declared September 14th as John Dobson Day. John's legacy continued in 2007, when a Sidewalk Astronomer

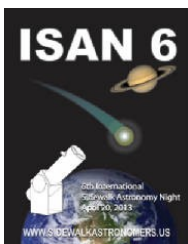
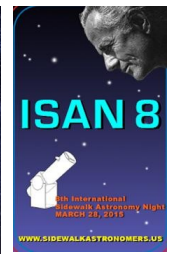
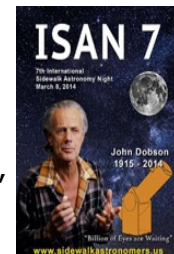
from Chile mentioned to Donna Smith that we should hold an event celebrating John world-wide. So they chose to celebrate John and his vision with a night called, International Sidewalk Astronomy Night or ISAN. Usually held in Spring or Fall, all the amateur astronomers who love outreach would be encouraged to take their scopes out to be "where the people are." In particular, amateur astronomers who made their own telescopes were encouraged to show them off in their communities.



The reception was overwhelming and many communities around the world celebrated it in their unique and cultural styles. Some had garlanded elephants in a procession, others had camels carrying scopes out to their star party locations, while many in the cities had large banners and displays and party – like celebrations. The enormity could truly not be quantified as to actual numbers of countries and cities that participated world wide.



When all is said and done, amateur astronomers from all four corners of the globe; Africa, Asia, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, (Beijing, Caschen, Hanjun, Huyunti, Liuruizhe, Suhli, Xekai, Xueming), Colombia, Costa Rica, Cot d'Ivoire, Ecuador,



Egypt, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela, Singapore, Ukraine and United Kingdom, celebrate John and his life of public service to astronomy and the art of amateur telescope making.

"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

John as the Mac Guyver of Astronomy was a great study in: determination - he blasted through roadblocks, was resourceful - had a plan B and C, he thought unconventionally - he repurpose materials, innovator - of an easy to make and use solar telescope and he solved the problem of a non-functional telescope mount.



John as the Pied Piper of Astronomy was a great study because: he inspired the masses, equipped others for ATM success, led with a pay it forward mentality, generously shared experiences, resources and information, created star parties, related to the common man, made telescope making easy to understand - "for dummies" , included everybody and challenged amateur astronomers conduct outreach and spearheaded a movement.

John as a Star Monk showed us how: to love of the cosmos as a spiritual experience, to understand our place in the Universe, to live simply without the pressures and stress of society at large, to respect the night sky as the resource that it is, to be a good steward the Earth and

night sky, to trust the cosmos to take care of us, to respect people of all kinds, to never take life for granted, or too seriously that you forget the important things.



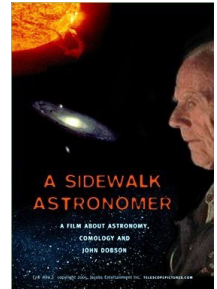
Ultimately John demonstrated by his life that - **life is always looking up.**

For information on John Dobson, telescope making, interviews, articles on John or written by John, and Sidewalk Astronomers calendar of events - please go to the Sidewalk Astronomers website at: sidewalkastronomers.us.

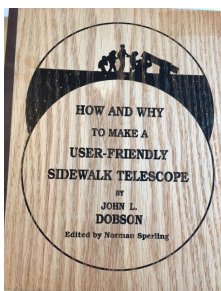
JOHN DOBSON IN THE MEDIA

In addition to many articles in print from various papers and magazines through the years, John was featured in two documentaries. In the first, "Universe - The Cosmology Quest", John appears along with Sir Fred Hoyle, Dr. Halton C. Arp, Dr. Margaret Burbidge, Dr. Geoffrey Burbidge, Dr. Jayant Narlikar and a host of other astronomers, cosmologist, and philosophers questioning the Big Bang Cosmology.

The second film, released in the summer of 2005, "A Sidewalk Astronomer" is an unscripted profile on John in tribute to his contribution to amateur astronomy. It provides a unique insight into the unique individual known as John Dobson. In addition, John was the only amateur astronomer highlighted in the PBS series, *The Astronomers*, and appeared twice on *The Tonight Show* *Starring Johnny Carson*. The Tonight Show appearances can be found at sidewalkastronomers.us website.

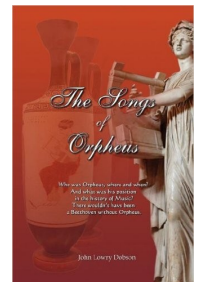


John wrote two booklets, *Advaita Vedanta and Modern Science* which he self published in 1979 and reprinted in 1983. It was slightly revamped and retitled, "Beyond Space & Time - Is there an uncaused cause behind the Deep Field?" in 2004. John took this information a bit further and gave it a more fiction-like theme and published it in 2008 as, "The Moon is New," a novel. John also penned, "Astronomy for Children Under 80," which explains his thoughts and philosophical take on astronomy.



In addition, John collaborated with Norman Sperling and together wrote a book with a wooden cover called, "How and Why to Make a User-Friendly Sidewalk Telescope" in 1991. Inside there is a brief biography with photos from the national park events and his travels and last half of the book is the step by step instructions on how to make a home made telescope.

In 2008 John published "The Songs of Orpheus," which talks about the ancient histories of Greece, Egypt, India, Rome, and Asia Minor and their interconnections.



John was even referenced in a book by, Timothy Ferris, called, *Seeing in the Dark*, where Timothy states, "The amateur astronomy revolution was incited by three technological innovations - the Dobsonian telescope, CCD light-sensing devices, and the Internet.