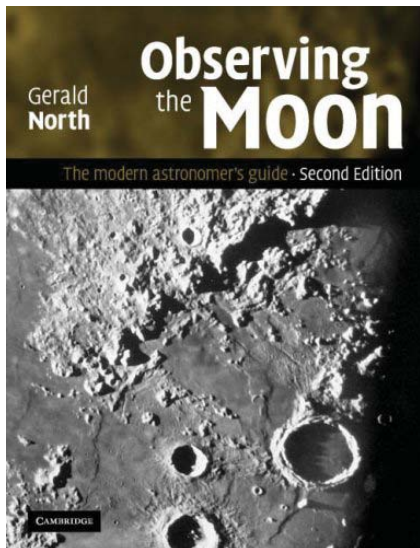


Observing the Moon (2nd edition)

by Gerald North

Cambridge University Press, 2007.
ISBN 0-521-87407-6. Pp xi + 408,
£25.00 (hbk)

This book is written for beginners in amateur lunar astronomy or those wishing to become more advanced. Gerald North is the author of several successful amateur astronomy books and the friendly and chatty style of *Observing the Moon* continues in this second edition. The author rightly points out that there is relatively little new science that can be done with amateur-sized telescopes, but despite this the Moon is still an awesome planetary surface to study for its scenic views and for educational purposes.



This second edition, like the first, has essentially the same nine chapter themes albeit with incremental changes. Chapters 4, 5, and 7 though have had major modifications to reflect the changes in the past seven years and cover subjects such as camera attachments to the telescope, modern CCD cameras, camcorders and webcams, image processing techniques for stacking images and sharpening, and finally online web resources and datasets. The lesser used technique of photography has now been largely removed, although how to sketch the Moon is still included as this is popular. As in the first edition, chapter 8 is a mammoth 200-page description of 48 selected features to study and contains a mixture of images from the ground, from orbit and many traditional sketches. The last chapter is a comprehen-

sive discussion of the enigmatic subject of Transient Lunar Phenomena – it details the author's own experience and has a couple of recent updates. As with most books, there are a few typographical errors, for example I found that 'Censorinus' was spelt 'Cencorinus' on pages 339–341. Also I would rather have seen the placing of dates and UT times of images in captions rather than intermixed with the text.

So to sum up, this book is a good friendly way to introduce amateurs to lunar observing and has some excellent examples of observations by well known observers to illustrate what can be done. For those who already have a first edition though, you might want to thumb through a copy in a bookstore before deciding to purchase, to make sure the changes are enough for you.

Tony Cook

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