



University of South Alabama
Presents Colloquium Speaker



Dr. Alan Binder

The Founder and Director of the Lunar Research Institute

Friday, October 8, 2010
3:45-4:45 P.M., ILB 250

Observations and Double Star Measurements with a 17th Century Telescope

As part of the evaluation of my long-focal, non-achromatic refractor of the type developed during the first century, i.e., the 17th century, of optical astronomy, I have observed 175 double and multiple stars. About a year ago, after having observed most of these binary stars visually, I decided to see if it would be possible to measure their position angles and separations. Thus, I built a micrometer and began a program to determine if - and how accurately - I could measure the characteristics of these binaries. To my great surprise, the average error of the measured position angles is only 2 degrees and that of the separations is only 1 arc-second - values that are almost as good as modern measurements. These results further indicate that these very early and relatively primitive telescopes were much better than modern astronomical historians believe.

All interested persons are invited to attend. Refreshments are served at 3:30 p.m. Host: Dr. R. Godang