

Telescope Enclosure or Small Observatory

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Historical Note

Nearly 10 years ago, Professor of Physics John Lindner and then Assistant Professor of Physics Jenn Goetz completed a funded study of an astronomical teaching observatory for the College, a copy of which is at at

<http://www3.wooster.edu/physics/Observatory/WoosterObservatory2001.pdf>

Former Wooster president Stan Hales was enthusiastic, but ultimately decided that it would not be part of the Independent Minds campaign. He asked us to hold on to the idea and try again next decade. Now, with the next decade upon us and both a new campaign and Wooster's sesquicentennial on the horizon, we hope the idea of a small observatory or telescope enclosure will be reconsidered.



Our two ~25-year-old 8-inch telescopes and one ~10-year-old 12-inch telescope are currently “stored” in our Arthur Compton Modern Physics Lab.

The 12-inch is heavy enough that we typically don't attempt to transport and use it.

Possible permanent sites



We observe here now

On ridge, but may want to replace a tree or two

Fairly good visibility in all directions next to the Inn's garden

Good southeast visibility looking downhill



Good permanent locations for our telescopes (or comparable modern telescopes) exist near the Wooster Inn



Deck could be a concrete slab or the earth itself



These inexpensive (< \$5 000?) enclosures can be completely removed from the telescope, providing an open sky experience



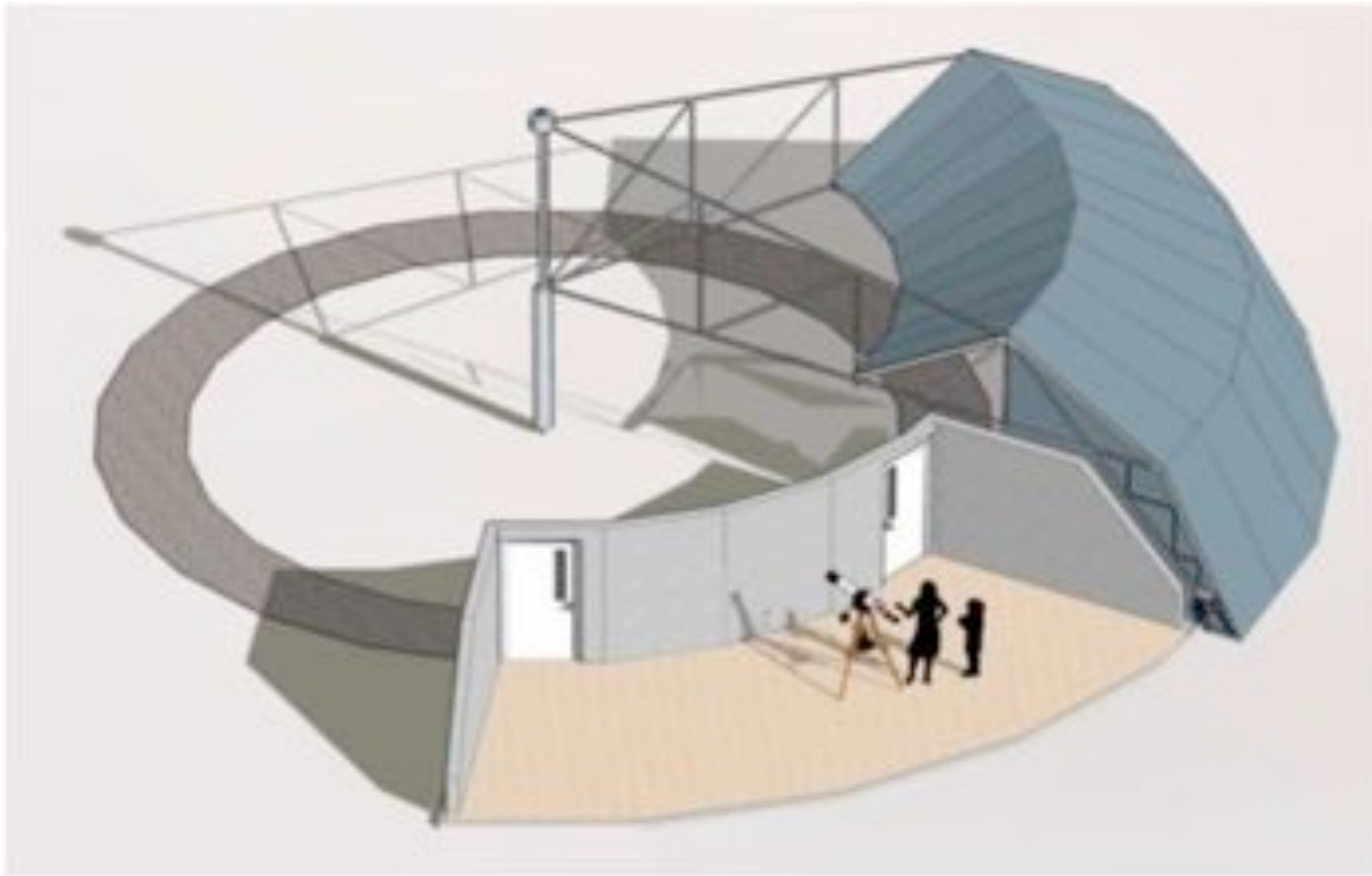
Folding down
north & south
triangles allows
low walls and
increased
visibility



CJE MAX 15'6" x 15'6"
version of Model CJE1
\$6 435.00 with deck option
<http://www.backyardobservatories.com/>

Note folding southern wall
for increased visibility

These roll-off roof observatories have room for one telescope and small to medium-size groups. They provide partial enclosure (for focus, wind, and cold) but also provide a partial open sky experience.



This slightly more ambitious design provides room for 1-3 telescopes and medium to large groups, with some wind break yet also a beautiful southern exposure and an open sky experience.

Courtesy Pacific Rim Architecture
cf. <http://www.okanaganobservatory.ca/structure.html>

Possible Uses

- 3 or so optional observing sessions per intro astronomy course per semester
- Advanced physics lab for Jr. I.S. (e.g. stellar photometry)
- Community outreach: observing + astronomy lecture at adjacent Wooster Inn
- Open for family weekend, homecoming, reunions, etc. (weather permitting)

Limitations

- Wooster weather
- Wooster city light pollution
- Not a research observatory