Astronomical Observing through the Mount Wilson 100-inch Telescope

Background
This instrument was completed in 1917 and was the largest telescope in the world until 1948. It has been used in every kind of nighttime astronomical research, including studies of stars, nebulae, galaxies, planets and their satellites, and much more. The best-known among the many discoveries made with this telescope were those of Edwin Hubble and Milton Humason in the 1920s, proving that spiral nebulae are distant galaxies outside the Milky Way, and that the Universe is expanding. These discoveries laid the foundations of modern cosmology and led to the present Big Bang theory. Now retired from active scientific service, this historic telescope is the largest in the world made exclusively available to the public and offers an exceptional astronomical experience.

Requesting viewing through the 100-inch Telescope
- The Mount Wilson Institute (MWI) provides Session Directors and a Telescope Operator to assist with your visit.
- The number of persons is limited to 18 per group. No children under the age of 12 are permitted and we cannot make exceptions.
- We do not combine groups or arrange for individuals to join groups.
- Check date availability on the 100-inch Telescope “Calendar of Available Nights for 2015” and then contact Shelley Bonus at mtwilsontelescopes@gmail.com to make a reservation.
- After contacting Shelley, submit the completed “100-inch Telescope Time Request Agreement Form” by email to Shelley Bonus mtwilsontelescopes@gmail.com or mail to Mount Wilson Institute, P.O. Box 94146, Pasadena, CA 91109.
- The required form and payment in full must be received at least four (4) weeks prior to the event to avoid cancellation. If you wish to reserve an available date that is less than six (6) weeks away, please contact Shelley Bonus at (424) 289-0325 for special arrangements.
- Cancellation policy: See the separate “Cancellation Policy” document on this topic.

Viewing and other Fees for 2015
- During the 2015 season, a fee of $2,700 for a half-night session/$5,000 for a full-night for a group of 1 to 18 persons, with a minimum age limit of 12 years old. A half-night session begins around sunset (coordinated by you and the Session Director) and concludes at 1AM Pacific Daylight Time / 12AM Pacific Standard Time.
- Special tours of the Observatory grounds prior to the observing session are available for an additional fee.
- Checks should be made payable to “Mount Wilson Institute” and sent to Mount Wilson Institute, P.O. Box 94146, Pasadena, CA 91109. No observing session will be carried out without receipt of this fee four (4) weeks before the observing session.
- You may arrange to have an excellent box supper prepared by our Cosmic Café staff awaiting your arrival on the mountain. Please ask Shelley for details or go to www.mtwilson.edu/BoxedMeals.pdf.

Your Session Director will arrange your visit

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Meeting Time: Chosen or agreed to by the Session Director, typically around Sunset. For safety and other logistic considerations, planning multiple additional arrival time(s) cannot be accommodated.

Parking: We can accommodate up to 10 cars or up to a 30-passenger bus to park at or near the telescope dome. Any greater number of cars or larger size of passenger bus will require special logistics and must be discussed with the Session Director well in advance of the session.
   - National Forest Adventure Pass: Only needed if the Session Director determines that special logistics parking are required. Go to www.fs.fed.us/r5/angeles if passes are required.

Your session confirmation or cancellation the day of the session may be done only by the Session Director. Weather, telescope/observatory operations and/or external reasons are some factors that may require cancelling the session.

Dome logistics and accommodations

- Dome lights: Will be turned down to dim red for observing.
- No Handicapped Access: The dome was built in 1917 and is not ADA-compliant, offering no access for those who cannot climb stairs and ladders. Visiting is not suggested for those with respiratory or heart problems due to the stairs and the 5700-ft elevation.
- Chairs: Mount Wilson Observatory provides chairs. No other chairs, lounges, etc. can be accommodated due to dome interior size limitations in the attendee area.
- Refreshments: We provide hot water, hot chocolate, coffee, tea, cups, and stirrers/spoons. For safety and other reasons, eating and drinking during observing time will only be permitted in the refreshments room below the observing level.
- Smoking (including “vapors”) & Alcoholic Beverages are not permitted at Mount Wilson Observatory.
- Restrooms: Two restrooms are on a lower floor from the observing level.
- Photography: Non-flash photography through the eyepiece during the observing session will be permitted, with the approval of the Telescope Operator and Session Director. This means that no camera or other device will be permitted to be mounted to the telescope. Before the session starts, feel free to take photographs of the telescope and Observatory grounds.

What to bring with you for the observing session

- Clothing: Warm layers like sweater, coat, hat, etc. as the dome is not heated and the temperature in the dome can quickly drop. Sturdy closed-toed shoes/boots.
- Flashlights: White flashlight when leaving the dome; red flashlight during the observing time.
- Refreshments: You may bring your own snacks and non-alcoholic beverages, to be stored and consumed ONLY in the refreshments room below the observing level.
- Observing list: While the Telescope Operator has a list of appropriate objects for the 100-inch Telescope, please feel free to bring your own observing list. The Telescope Operator’s decision is final on whether a particular object can be observed at a particular time.