

# Herman Heyn

## Retired Baltimore Street Corner Astronomer

Herman Heyn is a distinguished amateur astronomer known for his passion in sharing astronomy with the public. His interest in astronomy was inspired by his 8th grade Garrison Junior High School science teacher, Ms. Wicker, after completing an assignment to find the Big Dipper.

His first telescope, a 3" Mogy refractor, was purchased by his father just after World War II. Later, other interests as a young adult postponed his return to astronomical pursuits. Herman returned to the hobby with the arrival of the Leonids Meteor Shower in 1966 and purchased another 3" Refractor which he upgraded to an 8" Schmidt-Cassegrain Reflector in 1981.

Herman became widely known as Baltimore's Street Corner Astronomer after he began setting up his telescope in Fells Point to bring views of the night sky to the public in 1987. Three decades and 2,858 sessions later, he set up his telescope for the last time on October 20, 2018.

Many amateur astronomers, including current and former Howard Astronomical League members Steve Rifkin and Teresa Palomar, have been inspired by Herman to engage in the hobby in a serious fashion, and to share it with the public.

During one of his sidewalk sessions, Herman noticed while aligning his telescope mount with true north that Baltimore's street grid did not align exactly with true north. Following his curiosity, he discovered that the grid alignment was off by about three degrees, which was the difference between magnetic north and true north at the time that Baltimore's streets were laid out in 1730.

Herman's sidewalk astronomy was covered many times in Baltimore area newspaper articles, and he has been published several times in Sky & Telescope magazine.