

## Introduction

Dobsonian telescopes are the top seller across the globe, and for good reason, they provide good views, simple operation, and economical prices. For all of their virtues they hold many secrets that are not revealed though included instruction manuals or even though a few years' experience.

I have spent quite a few nights helping newcomers understand the basics and start to use their new telescope. There have also been a few who made purchasing mistakes and realized it too late to make a difference.

This all led to the desire to write this book and help people new to the hobby pick out their first Dobsonian, as well as to help the new purchaser get as much out of their telescope as possible.

While I have tried to cover as much information as is practical, this book could easily be three times as long and still not cover everything. Indeed, I am not sure any book of any length could ever cover everything. If someone can read this book and have it reduce their frustration and increase their enjoyment of this amazing hobby, then I consider my work a great success.

The book is designed in four main areas of which "What is a Dobsonian?" is the first. Here we will explore exactly what makes a telescope a Dobsonian, and why that matters. I will share a little of the history behind the instrument in the hopes you will gain a better understanding of why things are the way they are. We will then explore many of the major manufacturers and what they may bring to the table that others may not.

The next section is all about selecting a Dobsonian for you. I will discuss the majority of concerns most first time buyers may have such as size, quality, accessories and much more. If you are looking to buy your first one, here is the section you are interested in.

Now we come to the section on using your new telescope. What good is having a nice new toy if you don't know how to use it? All you have to do is point it up at the sky right? Well, yes and no. There is actually a little bit of setup and adjustment you need to do first and we will cover all of that to make sure you have fun as soon as you get it out under the night sky.

In this section we will also cover things such as tracking, astrophotography (yep, you will learn how to take pictures with your new telescope!) and accessories you may want to pick up to help you enjoy your new hobby even more.

The last area of the book will show you where you can go to get more information, and trust me, there is a lot more to be had, as well as providing a glossary and index.

I hope that this book will not only get you started but also stick with you long enough to help you many years down the road. Above all, I hope you enjoy your time under the stars.

Clear skies!

Allan Hall