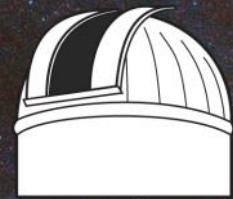


# Sheep Hill Observatory Visitor's Guide



The Sheep Hill Observatory, completed in 1973, features a 16 foot rotating dome with an 18 inch Newtonian Reflecting Telescope, which is among the largest in the state open to the public. The observatory is maintained by the Sheep Hill Astronomical Association, a gathering of like-minded people with an interest in astronomy.

## Availability

The observatory is 'staffed' by volunteers. We make every effort to accommodate group visits, but we cannot guarantee availability on any given day. Please schedule your visit in advance. Please have an accurate estimate of your group's size in advance so that we can plan accordingly.

The observatory will not open during poor weather. Please check the forecast on the day of your visit. If the forecast is poor, we will ask that you reschedule your visit. Be prepared that your visit may be cancelled as late as the day of due to weather. You may wish to arrange a "rain date" with us ahead of time.

There is no specific fee for visiting, however donations are greatly appreciated. We rely on donations from visitors to maintain the facility and equipment. A donation of \$5/adult \$2/child is recommended.

## Accessibility

The observatory is not handicapped accessible. There is a steep flight of stairs leading to the observing floor where the telescope is located. If you have any visitors in your group who will not be able to climb stairs, please let us know ahead of time so that we can try to arrange for a suitable ground based telescope.

Space is very limited inside the observatory. Groups larger than about 20 may need to be split and rotated between the observatory and outside telescopes.

There are no restrooms or running water on the premises. Please plan accordingly. The building not heated, please dress accordingly.

## Directions

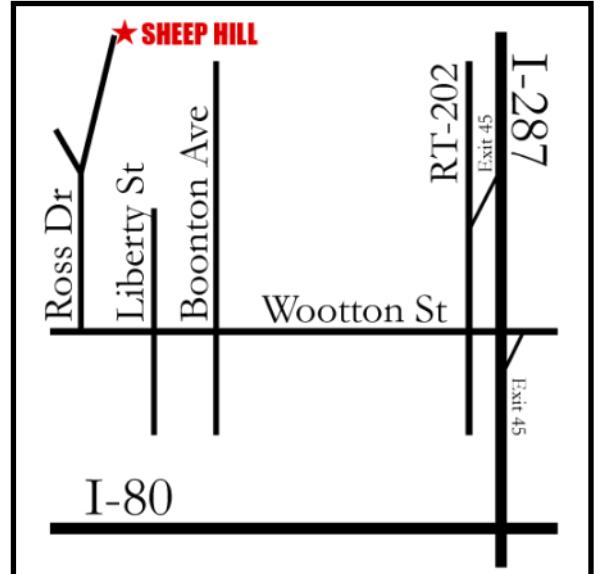
Sheep Hill Observatory is located at the end of Ross Drive, in Boonton NJ 07005. An address of "300 Ross Drive" works with most GPS devices.

**From I-287 South:** Take exit 45, make a left onto Myrtle Ave, then right onto Wootton St.

**From I-287 North:** Take exit 45, make a left onto Wootton St

**Continued:** Follow Wootton St past Boonton Ave and take the 2nd right onto Ross Dr. Keep right and follow to the end. At the first dirt parking lot, turn right into the upper parking lot.

There are 2 dirt parking lots. The upper parking lot is closest to the observatory. For larger groups, parking may become limited. Please park tightly and do not block other vehicles. Headlights in the upper lot will interfere with viewing. If you are arriving late, plan on leaving early, or have exceptionally bright headlights or headlights which cannot be turned off, we ask that you use the lower parking lot for the benefit of other visitors. Please drive slowly and with care while in the parking lots!



## Safety

There is no lighting on the grounds, please use caution. Please drive slowly in the parking lots. Keep children out of the parking lots and supervised. Do not touch any telescopes or equipment unless instructed to do so. Inside the observatory, be careful on the stairs and watch your head! The observing floor is kept dark, move around slowly and with care. Do not block the stairs. Keep all body parts away from the walls when the dome is rotating. Some people are mildly disoriented when the dome is rotating, looking down at the floor should help if you experience this.

## Policies

Follow the directions and commands of the observatory members at all times.

No food or drink on the observing floor.

Please be sure all children are adequately supervised, especially while inside the observatory or while near any telescope outside. The grounds are not lighted. Please keep children out of the parking area and within sight for their own safety.

Do not touch any equipment or telescope unless instructed to do so! Do not touch, pull on or bump the telescope while viewing. Do not lean on the telescope or mount while inside. If you can not comfortably reach the eyepiece, please ask for assistance, step ladders are available, or adjustments to the telescope position can be made.

While on the observing floor please keep all artificial lights off for the benefit of other people. This includes flashlights, cell phones, camera flashes and even lighted sneakers.

Questions are encouraged, ask at any time. However, the acoustics inside the dome amplify sound. Please speak quietly so that questions and directions can be heard.

If you are using a flashlight outside, please use it sparingly and be sure to keep it pointed down.

Pets are not recommended, and not permitted inside the observatory.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Should I take my glasses off?** - It is mostly a matter of preference, the telescope can be focused to correct for your vision. Try both with and without and see which works better for you.

**Why are all the lights red?** - Dim red light has the least impact on your vision in dark places. You can see much more through the telescope when your eyes are properly dark adapted.

**Wow! Is that real?** - Yes, yes it is.

**This is a cool place, how can I help out?** - The best way to help us is to become a member! Membership is open to anyone with an interest in astronomy. We always need help with events, maintenance on the observatory and telescope, and running the organization. Members can use the observatory any time they wish. For information on joining, please visit: <http://www.sheephillastro.org/membership.html>. If you are not interested in becoming a member, you can help us by simply enjoying the facility when we are open to the public. Donations are a big help too, we rely on them to keep the place running. Donations can be made at the observatory or on our website.

**We Hope You Enjoy Your Visit!**



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