

INTRODUCING THE FRENCH ASSOCIATION OF VARIABLE STAR OBSERVERS

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Abstract

The activities of the French Association of Variable Star Observers (Association Française des Observateurs d'Etoiles Variables - AFOEV) are briefly described.

The French Association Of Variable Stars Observers (AFOEV) was founded in 1921 by A. Brun. It has now collected more than a million observations, of which 90% are in machine readable form. The comparison magnitudes used are the same as those of the AAVSO, and all data are sent to that organization. The Centre de Données Stellaires of Strasbourg provides a lot of support, especially by archiving our data on mainframe computers and making them accessible in any part of the world.

Our observers are located not only in France, but also in many other countries; the Dutch and Hungarian groups are especially active. All observations kept after checking are published in printed form, which helps the observers in comparing their observations with those of others, and it may also make possible the recovery of data in the distant future, should present computer files become unreadable.

The Association limits the observed stars to those varying by at least one magnitude. We also want to be friendly, even to the casual observer, and so we do not follow stars for which a very systematic observing scheme is compulsory, like RR Lyraes, Cepheids, and eclipsing stars. These stars are followed by other groups using special visual methods or photoelectric photometry.

Our quarterly *Bulletin* includes all checked observations and various papers on variable stars. In addition, every two months, we issue an internal letter giving brief news on what is going on.