

numerals, all of a set size and with a particular spacing, hence the subtlety of your artistic expression is necessarily limited. In this case, it was impossible to place data points any closer together than 1/10 of an inch. For this reason, it was necessary to plot one-day, five-day, or ten-day means rather than the individual observations themselves.

Strazdas wrote a computer program to utilize the plotting units. The new plots do show the individual observations themselves, and therefore also provide a clear and direct representation of their density and scatter. See a plot of SS Cyg for 1976 done in the new style, Page 23 of this issue of JAAVSO. These plots are to be used for future AAVSO Reports. (Incidentally, they are also easier to edit than the old plots.)

The new computer programs constitute the second of the AAVSO technological revolutions, the first having been the original switch to computer processing. The essence of the latest change is a partial conversion from card-based to magnetic-tape-based data processing, and from line-printer graphics to plotter graphics.

Right now, August 1977, the monthly routine is as follows. First the observers' reports are keypunched, the cards are verified, and cards that have keypunching errors are corrected (no change here). Then the cards are read onto magnetic tape. The data, read from the tape, are run through VALID, then through BSORT. A listing of the sorted data is obtained. From this listing the hand plots are updated (no change here). The cards are stored in AAVSO Headquarters, and the tapes are stored at the computer center of the Center for Astrophysics.

For the next AAVSO Report, we shall combine and sort (using VALID, BSORT, and BMERGE as required) all the data from Julian Day 2442300 to 2443300. Preliminary plots will be obtained from the Versatec plotter and the final plots will be run on the Calcomp plotter.

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ASTEROID PHOTOMETRY AND THE ALPO MINOR PLANETS SECTION

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ABSTRACT

The ALPO Minor Planets Section is developing a program of asteroid photometry and invites interested observers to participate. The goal is to determine the periods of rotation, valuable in physical studies of these bodies. Photoelectric photometry is the most powerful method, but systematic visual observations can be valuable. Predictions of passages of minor planets through the AAVSO chart fields are published in the Section's Minor Planet Bulletin and additionally distributed to active observers. Suitable photometry report forms are available free of charge. In August of 1974, three members of the Section redetermined and corrected the period of 18 Melpomene. Other successes have included 41 Daphne, 270 Anahita, and 1580 Betulia.