

Its Founding and Early History

by
Kenneth G. Negus

When, as convener, I called the first meeting of A.S.P. to order (October 6, 1972; 8:20 P.M. E.D.S.T.), it was with a sigh of relief. For at least two years there had been considerable discussion among interested people in the area about forming an astrological society for Princeton and vicinity. There had even been an informal gathering of about ten persons at my home around April 1, 1971 to discuss the possibility of establishing such an organization, but nothing came of it. Somehow, the time was not ripe for our founding. When it *was* ripe, however, there appeared, as if out of nowhere, a group of vigorous, articulate, and dedicated people who possessed abundant talents for the undertaking.

At the time of writing this article, it has been six and a half years since A.S.P. was founded. I distinctly remember several hours of work over charts of possible founding times in the period in which the meeting was feasible and desirable, and feeling frustrated. In electional astrology it is one thing to find *theoretically* the most nearly perfect time for an inception chart; but an altogether different matter actually to "give birth" to the entity at a desirable time. (Just imagine the response from an engaged couple when told by an astrologer that their wedding should take place around 3:49 on a Tuesday morning!)

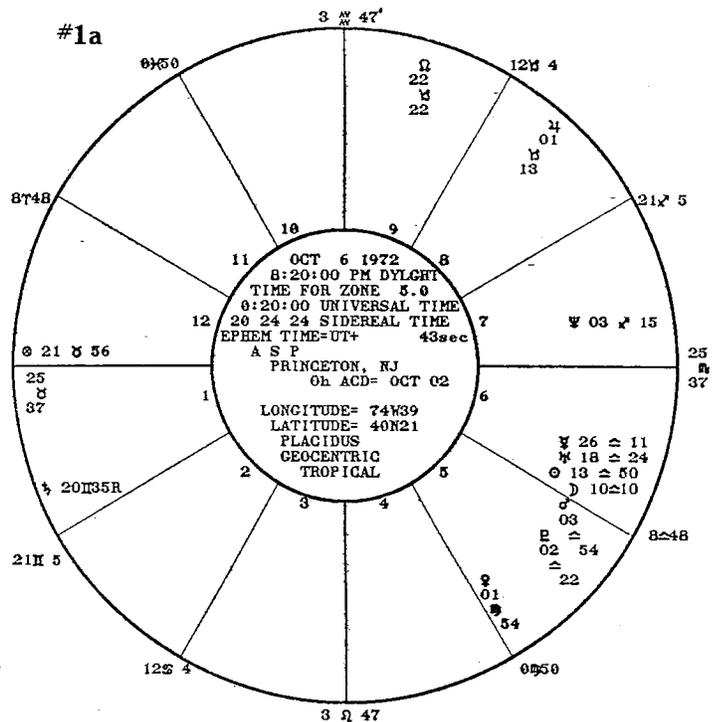
I finally settled on a convenient Friday evening, when I could expect maximum attendance, and when there appeared to be at least a few strong configurations in the sky that were appropriate for establishing a viable astrological organization (See Chart # 1a). These included a trine of Venus (ruling the Ascendant) to Jupiter; a Midheaven in early Aquarius (the sign of the zodiac most specifically related to astrology); the large Libra stellium (giving us other-oriented, considerate, give-and-take qualities), mostly in the sixth house (public service), which is also ruled by the aforementioned Venus.

Three points in the A.S.P. chart -- 25° Taurus, 18° Libra, 1° Capricorn -- form what might be called a soft, fifth-harmonic yod, with Ascendant biquintile both Jupiter and Uranus (the latter ruling the Midheaven), and Jupiter and Uranus quintile each other. (Another way of expressing it would be Asc. = Jupiter/Uranus.) One could easily put some appropriate keywords together here and come up with: a successful (Jupiter) astrological (Uranus) body (Asc.). *An unexpected bonus from our Ascendant is that pleasure-seeking Taurus (with its ruler Venus trining Jupiter) has manifested itself in an extremely pleasant sociability in our meetings. Our parties have been a success. Our social hour has always been graced by good food, beverage and conversation. This once led Henry Weingarten to designate

* There is strong evidence suggesting that these three points, as well as the remaining two points of the "pentagram" (7° Leo and 13° Pisces), indicate activity or interest in astrology.

us the "Best-Fed Astrological Organization." What more could we want?

Well, frankly we could want more. The most harsh configuration that had to be accepted was the Pluto-Mars conjunction in early Libra -- suggesting that the placid Libran surface of the organization could be disrupted by upheavals. We have been spared such manifestations, with the exception of one meeting, when transiting Pluto was in close conjunction with the A.S.P. Moon.



The Astrological Society of Princeton, N.J.

Otherwise the Mars-Pluto conjunction has not been troublesome, and has even been a desirable indication, probably as a result of its close trine to the MC, and close square with Jupiter. The Society has been intensely active most of the time since its founding. Mars and Pluto are the co-rulers of the seventh house, thus we have actively cooperated with other organizations (A.F.A. and N.G.G.R.) and are even an affiliate of the former.

Neptune in the seventh house has so far exhibited very little of its potential negativity. Its most positive manifestation has been our associations with the clergy: Father Lawrence J. Cassidy, S.J., and Rabbi Joel Dobin, D.D., have been among our most well-received guest lecturers.

Now it is time for a confession. Returning to the first meeting: I had announced the meeting for 8:00 P.M., E.D.S.T. At the time of sending out the written an-

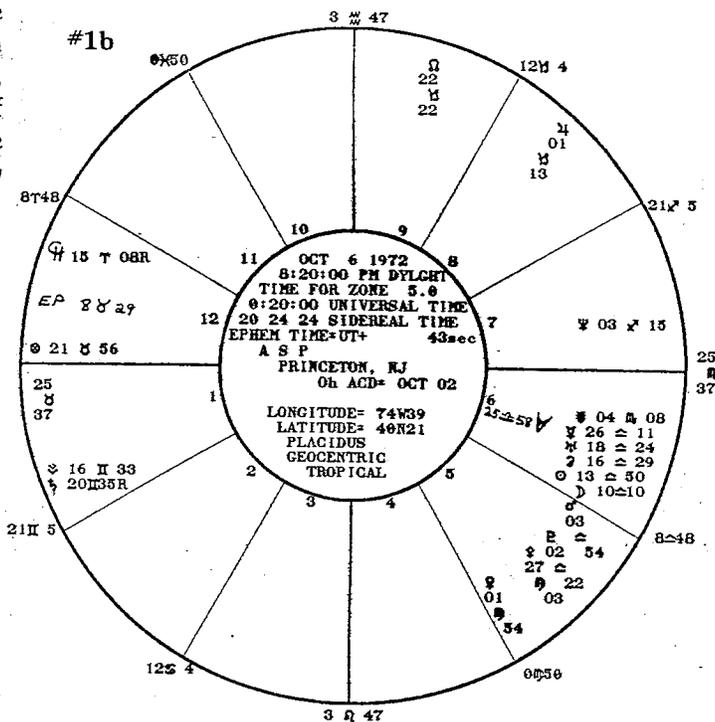
nouncements, my intention was actually to begin the meeting a few minutes after eight so that the Midheaven would be just entering Aquarius. At the last minute, however, I noticed that I could avoid the interception of Virgo (containing Venus) in the fifth house by calling the meeting to order at 8:20. I decided to do so, without any further examination of the chart.

Since then my ideas pertaining to house interception have changed to the extent that I would hardly let one influence my choice of a time for an electional chart. In any case, by this seemingly harmless change of plans, I succeeded in the double master-stroke of landing our Ascendant on the fixed star Algol, and Saturn on the cusp of our second house (although in the first house by one-half degree). The potential difficulty of these positions may have been slightly compensated for by the cuspal fifth-house Venus -- an indication of creativity.

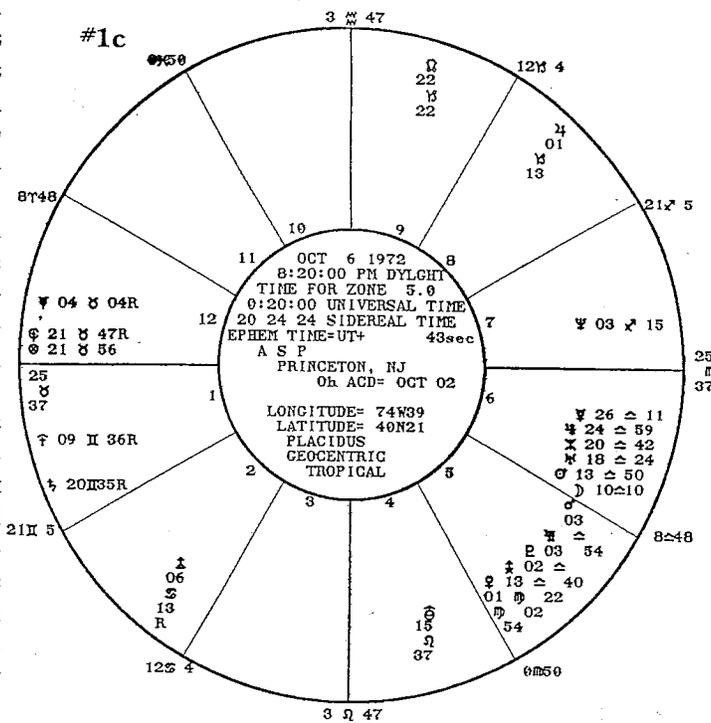
Algol is traditionally the most malefic of fixed stars -- a veritable chamber of horrors. And Saturn so placed could adversely affect our financial affairs. I am grateful to Michael Munkasey, who devised some of the most nearly complete lists of key words for just about everything in astrology, for the positive side of Algol. Apparently the fundamental reason for the negative potential of Algol is that it symbolizes *inexorable force*. It characterizes entities, in other words, that appear to move ahead by their own power and once started, are difficult or impossible to stop. This may often be experienced as "bad," but it need not be. Thus I have noted a quality of the Society that I have constantly experienced as desirable. Not that work is unnecessary for the Board members and myself; but usually what needs to be done is obvious, and most efforts lead directly (though sometimes slowly) to the desired results as if we were operators of a self-propelling device that merely needs tending. Probably this positive potential of the degree is enhanced by its above-mentioned aspects to Jupiter and Uranus.

As for the Saturn on the cusp of the second house, it is in quintile to Venus, and this apparently has brought out the better side of the placement. Saturn associated with the second house does not necessarily mean abject poverty is exemplified by such a placement. A second house Saturn can be found in the charts of both Jacqueline Onassis and J. Paul Getty! Furthermore, the other financial house, the eighth, is occupied by Jupiter -- its ruling planet. One positive manifestation of these positions for us has been that we get everything at a bargain -- such as meeting places and our overhead projector. It also meant that a dutiful and industrious Capricorn was immediately available to serve as our first treasurer, loyally carrying out her duties for six and a half years, in spite of considerable obstacles. The balance in our treasury has usually remained constant. Frequently when we plan to spend our surplus funds, somehow the expenditure is less than anticipated: our modest nest-egg seems to want to stick to the nest. One could have worse problems.

In addition to the second-house connection, Saturn is also in the first house, and is the rising planet of the chart (characterizing the personality of the organization). It is also a fanhandle, thus giving it focus and structural linkages to



A.S.P. (Asteroids, Chiron, Eastpoint, and Vertex added)



A.S.P. (Transneptunian Planets of the Uranian School added)

the chart as a whole. I suppose the double-Capricorn president, serving since the founding, is in on this part of it. Further traits of the organization connected herewith is its strong *teaching* function, the prevalent concern to carry out all business in an orderly and legal manner, and the irksomely slow (but steady) pace at which a few of our major projects have progressed (the establishment of a faculty, our incorporation, the publication of a journal).

The discussion at the first meeting was devoted primarily to the obvious concerns of a group founding a society: roles and activities of the organization, a governing board, dues, etc. Choosing our name took up some time. It was suggested that the first word be "astrology" or "astrological" for the convenience of those looking us up in listings such as telephone directories. From there it was easy to arrive at "Astrological Society of Princeton," or "A.S.P." ("shades of Cleopatra!" was immediately elicited). The N.J. was added at the end to make clear that our location is the *town* of Princeton, not the University.

The members of the first governing board, made up of pro-tem volunteers, were:

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|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Coordinator-Convener: | Kenneth G. Negus |
| Recording Secretary: | Anne Hinton |
| Corresponding Secretary: | Anita Kotaski |
| Treasurer: | Virginia Scanlan |
| Program Chairman: | Robert S. Hand |
| Hospitality Chairman: | Florence White |
| Member-At-Large: | Eleanor Strother Cooley |

The remaining Charter Members of the Society (i.e., those present at the first meeting, or interested but unable to attend) were:

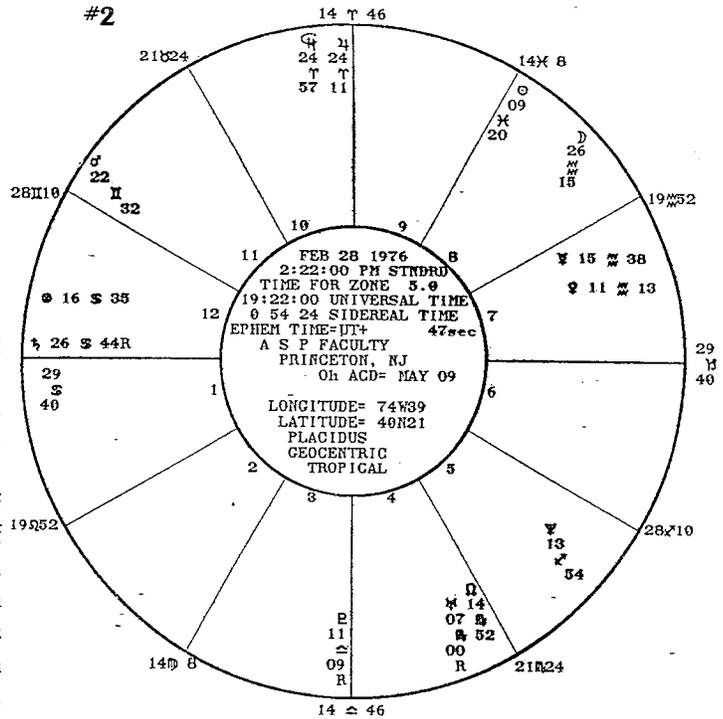
- Margie Adamson
- Bonnie Lee Benka
- Dorothea Coote
- Leonard Kean
- Joan Negus
- Zell Pattinson
- Bruce Scofield
- Suzanne Weaver

It was decided that we would normally meet on the first Sunday of every month, October through June. With few exceptions we have maintained this schedule since the beginning. We also decided to follow each meeting (consisting of guest lectures, chart interpretations, discussions, etc.) with a social hour: this, too, has been a regular part of every meeting, often enhanced by veritable banquets of culinary treats contributed by members. At first the main part of the meetings consisted of a chart interpretation by a non-member guest. This format was abandoned after the first year, because it made the meetings too lengthy. Main speakers the first year were: Eleanor Strother Cooley, Robert S. Hand, Charles Emerson, Eleanor Bach, John Addey, Henry Weingarten and Al. H. Morrison.

After the founding, the next major step taken by the

Society was the writing of a Constitution, then its ratification, which took place on October 7, 1973, 1650 E.D.S.T., Princeton. (It was amended on January 4, 1976, 1540 E.D.S.T., Princeton; and on November 5, 1978, 1505 E.S.T., Rocky Hill, N.J.) The ratification occurred almost exactly one year after the founding, therefore it was very close to the solar return time, the beginning of a new annual cycle. The transiting Moon was in our tenth house in Aquarius; transiting North Node conjoined A.S.P. Jupiter; Venus conjoined A.S.P. Descendant; Mars opposed Mars/Moon; Jupiter conjoined our Midheaven, as Saturn was quincunxing it; Jupiter was also trining the difficult A.S.P. Mars-Pluto conjunction, quincunxing Venus, and sextiling Neptune; Uranus was squaring our Moon's Nodes, but trining Saturn; Neptune and Pluto were, of course, only slightly past the natal positions. The great majority of these configurations are obviously easy and largely productive --especially those from Jupiter. The result is that our Constitution has remained essentially intact since its ratification. The few amendments were matters of detail, not of principle.

The next step was the formation of a faculty by a small group of teachers of the Society. This took place on February 28, 1976, 1422 E.S.T., in Princeton. I actually had called the meeting for 2:00 P.M. sharp, anticipating a delay since Saturn was rising. Most of those attending were late, therefore I did not call the meeting to order until 2:22. Thus Saturn, having by then just entered the twelfth house, would be somewhat less restrictive than if in an angular house. It was still well within orb of a conjunction with the Ascendant. It immediately suggested that this conjunction could have a positive meaning since Saturn characterizes



Faculty of the Astrological Society of Princeton, N.J., Inc.

the orderliness and discipline that are necessary in the teaching process. Obstructions and agitations could be expected, however, since it is at the base of a wide T-Square, involving its conjunctions with Ascendant and Fortuna, all directly or indirectly squared by Midheaven, Jupiter and Chiron in the tenth house and with Pluto in the third. Probably the most helpful part of this configuration is tenth-house Jupiter's close conjunction with the recently discovered Chiron, which so far appears to be potentially positive when connected with teaching, astrology, and other mental disciplines and crafts. The cardinality of the T would indicate direct approaches to problems. On the other hand, the fixed T (Nodes, Uranus, Mercury, Venus) would stimulate striving toward more distant goals. Two grand trines -- one in air and one in water -- would soften some of the hardness of the T's.

And so it has been. Progress has been slow but steady. Classes have been small. Occasionally a course or workshop had to be cancelled because it failed to meet the teacher's minimum enrollment. On the whole, however, our Faculty's teaching program has been a success in that at least one course has been in progress every month, and sometimes three or four; there has been a great variety of levels and subject-matter; and many special workshops have been presented under its auspices -- some by non-member guests, some by our own Faculty members.

The Faculty has its own By-Laws, providing for two officers: a Dean and a Scribe. It further provides for various autonomous functionings, to avoid the possible complications that could arise if it were administered by the Society's Board. The original members of the Faculty were: Gary Christen, Robert Hand, Linda Lineaweaver, Toby Lipman, Trudy Finley Martino, Joan Negus (Scribe), Kenneth Negus (Dean) and Bruce Scofield. All but Toby Lipman are still members of the Faculty.

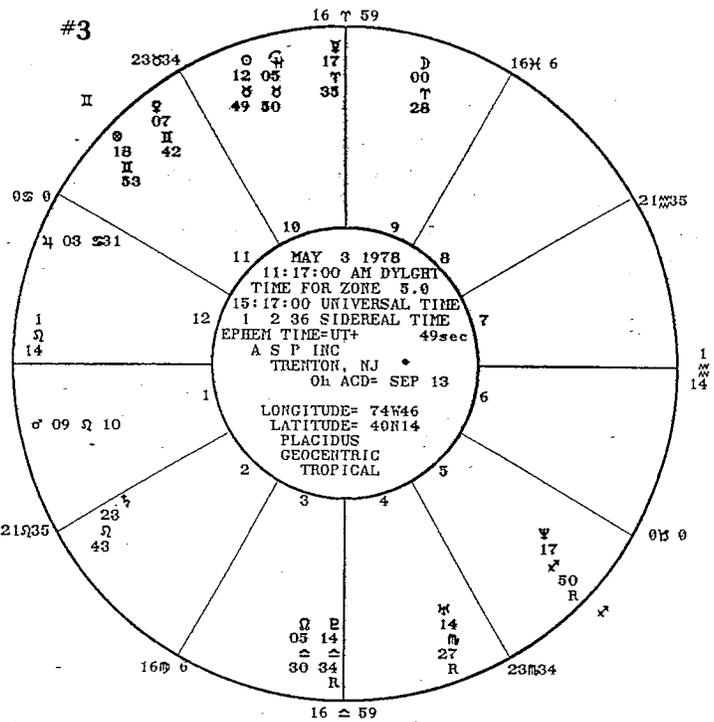


The question of legally incorporating A.S.P. as a non-profit organization had been discussed since its beginning. As with all other projects, there were numerous delays. It was finally accomplished on May 3, 1978; 11:17 A.M., E.D.S.T., Trenton, N.J. This period of time was chosen in order to do something positive with the transiting Pluto conjoining the A.S.P. natal Sun -- suggesting that the Society would undergo a "transformation of identity."

The timing could hardly have been more precisely recorded: the official stamp, making the incorporation effective, was applied to the Certificate of Incorporation with a machine clearly indicating "May 3 1117 AM '78" -- an astrologer's delight! I regard this chart as being secondary only to the foundation chart. This step, after all, added 'Inc.' to the name of the Society. (Numerologists take note!) It is well known how much symbolic importance has been attached to altering names since early Biblical times.

The character of the organization was indeed altered at the time of its incorporation, and in a manner clearly suggested by the incorporation chart as a whole. Its chief overall

quality is *dynamism*. My experience has shown that this quality is strongest when several hard and soft aspect-configurations are balanced and interconnected with each other. The incorporation chart has a grand trine in fire (Mercury-MC, Neptune, and Mars-Saturn), which also is part of a "cradle with a hood" -- that is, a string of sextiles also involving Pluto and Fortuna. There is also another cradle (without a hood) comprised of the Nodes, Mars and Venus. The "hard" part of this chart consists mainly of two T-squares: Moon, Nodes and Jupiter in the cardinals, and (widely) Sun-Chiron, Uranus and Mars-Saturn in the fixed mode. All of these points have soft "outlets" through sextiles, trines, quintiles or biquintiles. (The two T's incidentally, reiterate the cardinal-fixed emphasis of the A.S.P. natal chart.)



A.S.P. Incorporation.

The dynamic quality of this balance is repeated in the "locomotive" temperament pattern -- the most dynamic of the Marc Edmund Jones' seven configurations. The "leading planet" is the Moon (the general public); as is seen in Henry Ford's "locomotive." The Moon's relevance to the world at large is increased greatly by the Moon's position on the 0° Aries axis -- one of the angles of Earth's horoscope.

Add to this the Mars rising for more initiative and energy, and we have a sum total of an organization that will probably be more and more active in the public eye. Such qualities seem desirable as stimulus to a Society that originally was often a bit too placidly Libran and ploddingly Saturnian.

Further interesting details of the chart, linking it with the A.S.P. natal chart, is the Saturn on the cusp of the second house (we must continue to budget carefully!), just barely within range (76°) of a quintile with Venus (but an *applying* aspect). Saturn would, of course, be well within the effective orb of the more minor 75° aspect (a 15° multiple). The

Taurus Ascendant of the foundation chart is reinforced by the Taurus Sun of the incorporation. The fixed angles of natal A.S.P. are partially repeated in the incorporation chart with the Leo-Aquarius ascendant axis, but the MC axis here is cardinal (another cardinal-fixed combination, as mentioned above).

Since incorporation, increased energy and initiative among members have been noted in many small ways, but they were exhibited in a big way with three highly capable volunteers for an editorial committee for this journal. Unfortunately no chart can be erected for this project: the time of its origin is much too uncertain, even for a reasonable guess. As for the prospects of its success, I can mention a few astrological speculations. In the foundation chart, the Moon's North Node in the ninth house of publishing indicates the strong possibility of this being an outlet to others for the Society. The two signs occupying the house are Capricorn and Aquarius, and the two planetary rulers, Saturn and Uranus, are trine each other. The primary ruler, Saturn, is widely quintile Venus. During the initial discussions concerning the Journal in the fall of 1978, Jupiter was transiting the third house (communications), and Saturn, ruler of the ninth, was in conjunction with A.S.P. Venus and was trine A.S.P. Jupiter. The indications are there. The rest is up to us.

