

Title:

The Legacy of Solar Telescope Designer George A. Carroll

By: John W. Briggs**Abstract:**

Remembered among solar astronomers as a leading craftsman of modern instrumentation, George A. Carroll (1902-1987) was legendary in the Southern California telescope making community. In Texas at the age of sixteen, Carroll built and flew his own aircraft, becoming one of the youngest aviators in the United States. He eventually became an employee of Lockheed's "Skunk Works" in Burbank. His earliest known commercial telescopes were high-end amateur instruments built by R. R. Cook. As described in a brochure describing his later telescope work, he had "experience in so many branches of technology that it is unbelievable." By the time Carroll's designs were built by Thomas Tool & Die in Sun Valley, his telescopes were well known in the solar community and in use at National Solar Observatory, Caltech, and at many other research institutions. Among the most remarkable were large solar spars for Lockheed Solar Observatory in California and Ottawa River Solar Observatory in Canada. His instrumentation also equipped educational facilities including observatories at UCLA, Westmont College, Pasadena City College, Bevard Community College, and many others. A Carroll telescope boasting a particularly distinguished educational history was a small astrograph built in 1953 for Professor George Moyon of Hollywood and subsequently used for the long-running Summer Science Program in Ojai, California. Later solar instruments built by Carson Instruments were closely derivative of Carroll designs.