New Book Maps Tucson's Path to the Planets

Spring 2016 Department News

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LPL and the city of Tucson are the subject of a new book titled *Under Desert Skies: How Tucson Mapped the Way to the Moon and Planets*. The book’s author is University of Arizona (UA) alumna Melissa Sevigny, who grew up in Tucson. As an undergraduate, Melissa studied creative writing and environmental sciences; she went on to complete a M.F.A. in Creative Writing and Environment from Iowa State University, and is currently a science and technology reporter for KNAU (Arizona Public Radio) in Flagstaff. As an undergraduate Arizona NASA Space Grant intern in 2006, Melissa and her mentor, Professor Michael J. Drake, began an oral history project with LPL as the topic. The
interviews and research continued beyond the Space Grant year, thanks to funding from Mike Drake, and were eventually transcribed into the text for the book, which has been published by The University of Arizona Press [6]. Melissa has donated the royalties to LPL for outreach activities.

On April 25, UA Library Special Collections [7], The University of Arizona Press, and LPL hosted a panel discussion and reception to introduce Under Desert Skies [2]. The panel discussion was moderated by Melissa Sevigny and featured William K. Hartmann [8], Peter Smith [9], and Ewen Whitaker, with opening remarks from Tim Swindle [10]. The event, available for viewing online [11], was a wonderful opportunity to honor those who pioneered planetary science and to inspire planetary scientists of the future.

To purchase a copy of Under Desert Skies, go to:


Images courtesy of University of Arizona Libraries