

The Observer's Challenge Objects

Submitted by Larry McHenry, Pittsburgh, PA, USA. <http://stellar-journeys.org>

August: M56 – Globular Cluster – **Lyra**; Mag. V=8.3; Size 8'

RA: 19h 16m 36s Dec. +30° 11' 00"

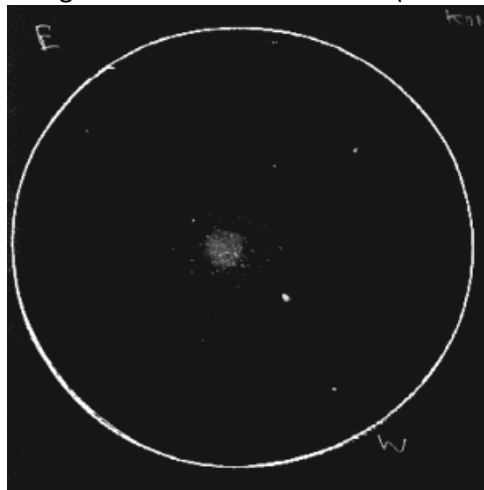
Globular Cluster M56 is located in the Summer constellation of **Lyra** - 'The Lyre (Harp)', and is about 32,900 light years distant, about 84 light-years in size, and about 13.7 billion years old.

M56 was discovered on the night of January 23rd, 1779 by Charles Messier at his Paris observatory, located on top of a tower at the Hôtel de Cluny which was originally a medieval town house built in 1334. The observatory was a pyramidal structure with large side windows that could be opened. Inside was kept the portable observatory telescopes that could be positioned to point out of whichever window the observer preferred. For the majority of his observing work, Messier used a small 100mm (4") refractor. Messier described the cluster as "*Nebula without star, having little light*".

Visual Sketch:

08/19/1987 suburban backyard in Louisville, Ky,

Using a 13.1" f4.5 Dob Reflector (Coulter blue-tube) 8mm eyepiece (143x).



Visually, the cluster was small and faint, only partly resolved. Could use a darker sky observation.

Video-Capture/EAA: 06/10/2023, from Cherry Springs State Park in Pennsylvania.

Using an 8" SCT optical tube @ f6.3 on a GEM mount, with a CMOS color camera and broadband filter, 15-second guided exposure, live-stacked for 5 minutes.