

at ESO clearly represents the only available opportunity to address that kind of problem.

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The Rise of SN 1987A

It is now almost five years since SN 1987A exploded in the LMC. In the meantime, the visual brightness has decreased to about one millionth of what it was at the time of maximum. It is still being observed with large telescopes, also at La Silla, but the elusive pulsar has not yet been directly detected.

The four pictures were taken during amateur patrols in Australia at the time of the explosion by Robert H. McNaught (Plates 2, 3 and 7) and Frank B. Zoltowsky (Plate 5). They show the early rise in brightness of this famous object; the

intensity and the angular scale have been rescaled to allow direct comparison. A recent, careful remeasurement of the magnitudes of SN 1987A on these plates has shown that earlier published estimates are too faint by 0.2–0.8 magnitude (McNaught and West, to appear in *Astronomy and Astrophysics*). The new values are in better agreement with the theoretical lightcurves, but they do not by themselves permit to decide which of the two neutrino events that were observed in the morning of February 23, 1987, was the actual time-zero.

