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Abstract for an Invited Paper for the APR09 Meeting of the American Physical Society

Radio Telescopes - A Technological Saga Sparked by Serendipity

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This talk presents the history of radio telescopes beginning with the accidental discovery of radio signals from outer space by Karl Jansky in 1933. The design of radio telescopes and their receivers has been driven by the availability of new technology. Examples are presented of various types of radio telescopes and advances in sensitivity, angular resolution, and frequency coverage that have resulted from new technologies. The talk concludes with a look at some of the latest radio telescopes to be completed, in construction, or under design.