

STARS GO TO BED

Visits to London's Planetarium inspired an Essex boy to make one of his own, in the only available place (his bedroom) at home at Leigh-on-Sea. The 8-foot diameter dome, which doesn't leave much sleeping room, is of plywood. The boy is Peter Garrard, now 17. The projector can be electrically moved in three directions. Peter, though helped by his father, must be a budding genius to have accomplished all this since he was 14. To his proud mother the stars and planets are a mystery no longer. With a son like Peter to instruct her, learning is easy. If she asks what the night sky looked like - say, a thousand years ago, he can supply the answer. Round the dome the rooftop silhouette makes it quite realistic.

When it's dark enough, Peter can begin operating the planetarium. Two star-globes, one for each hemisphere, have been drilled with small holes, and when the light shines through them, they're projected on to the dome as a picture of the astral bodies. The night sky can be studied at leisure. Peter's to be congratulated.