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FEDERATION OF ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETIES

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Fund Raising—The West Yorkshire Way

The West Yorkshire Astronomical Society has had considerable success fund raising, and over the past four years have raised nearly £43,000. In this article Ken Willoughby tells us how they do it.



WYAS members awaiting the occultation of Saturn on Tuesday, April 16th, with some of the instruments bought through grants.

Our observatory houses an 18" reflector through which we have seen all there is to see over the years. Unfortunately we are not ideally situated for serious 'deep sky' work. To keep members happy we had to acquire portable telescopes. These cost money, lots of money. Portable telescopes serve various purposes;

- 1) Members can wander off to a dark site and do serious observing.
- 2) They can be used on open nights.
- 3) They can be taken to schools etc.

We started applying to grant giving bodies about 6 years ago. After 2 years and hundreds (that's right hundreds) of begging letters the result was NOTHING! All we got back was, 'sorry but' letters.

One day, one of our members was talking to the curator of the Pontefract Museum who mentioned 'Awards For All.' Nothing to lose, let's give it a go. We applied for £4750 to purchase a 10" Meade plus accessories. A few months later, a letter dropped through the letterbox. "We are pleased" - didn't read any more, too busy jumping up and down. We had finally been successful. We got the £4750 and that was just the beginning. A month later we were given another £1000. Shortly after a £500 cheque arrived.

Over the last 3 years we have been awarded grants totalling almost £17,000 for instruments. Where did this other money come from? Local Banks, Building Societies, D.I.Y stores. These are the places to approach. You may only get a few hundred or so but it all adds up and eventually you can buy the 'scope you want.

There is no 'secret' to applying, you just have to be patient and not get disheartened at the 'sorry but' letters. Remember the saying "if at first". We were unlucky when we applied to a bank in Pontefract but sent in another letter straight away after receiving the 's.b' reply. Two months later, we got £500 from them so stick at it. When applying for lots of money (a few thousand or so) ask if someone can come along and talk to your committee about what you are trying to do and why you want the grant. This personal contact works wonders.

Don't bother about filling in application forms 'expertly.' Tell them how much you want and why you want it as if you are telling someone in the pub. Anything on the form that doesn't seem to apply to you, or seems complicated, ring them and ask. If they like the sound of it, they will contact you for more details.

Try every bank etc. in your town and don't forget Supermarket's and D.I.Y. stores. Bombard the lot of them and don't stop. Even try the corner shop, you may get £10 or so just to shut you up.

Don't forget your local friendly Councillor for the area where your society/observatory is. Every year, all councils have money to give away. Thanks to ours, we have been given £1000 from Wakefield Community Chest and also had two signposts erected on the road.

For those of you who want even more than a few thousand in order to build an observatory, try the Waste Recycling Environmental Ltd. (WREN). You can get details of your nearest site at www.wren.org.uk, email to wren@wren.org.uk, or telephone 01953 717165.

WYAS Fundraising Successes

WREN.	£25,000	Towards new observatory.
Barclays Bank.	£ 8552	Televue 102 + solar filter.
Awards For All.	£ 4750	10" Meade + accessories.
Wakefield Millennium Chest	£ 1500	These grants were put toward an Astrovid
Abbey National	£ 1000	CCD/loop system &
Wakefield M.D.C.	£ 1000	loads of eyepieces
Yorkshire Bank.	£ 500	
Wickes D.I.Y.	£ 500	
Yorkshire Building Society.	£ 73.61	
Total	£42,875.61	

BOOK Reviews ...

Light Pollution, Responses and Remedies by Bob Mizon

A Review by Ian Coulson.

Tackling the subject of light pollution with local authorities has never been easy because, although we astronomers know its downside, most people involved in deciding our lighting policies do not, or maybe even don't care. Because there is no regulatory framework to build an argument on - it's not illegal to pollute the sky with light like it is a river with toxic chemicals - few lucid and constructive arguments ever get beyond the local council chambers and into the light fittings. Consequently it's become difficult for any of us to remember what a real dark sky is like.

Don't despair, here's help in the shape of Bob Mizon's new book, containing all the latest evidence for and against the subject in wonderfully understandable and reproducible detail. Even if you don't want to take up arms against your neighbourhood offenders, there is a lot of very interesting material in these pages to convince you that we are all entitled to pristine skies once more.

All the well-worn discussions about so-called 'security' lighting are given a fair hearing, and the judgement is left very much to the reader. I can't see how anyone, after reading a few chapters of this book, would dare to contaminate our view of the sky with unwanted photons ever again!

The author has done an extremely good job of matching the text with appropriate illustrations. One excellent chapter about 'Piercing the Veil' gives the very latest techniques on how to counteract light pollution using filters and CCD cameras, as well as changing observing routines. He gives complete and easily-read diagrams of bright targets throughout the year. The only thing he can't do is make the clouds go away!

If any of your fellow astronomers, or even someone in your neighbourhood, has wanted to voice their objections about inappropriate lighting, but has been lacking guidance or motivation, give them a copy of this book: herein lie some extremely cogent reasons, backed up with the weight of many years' experience of the subject. In my opinion, it's an object lesson in how to distil that amount of experience into a form even a layman can understand.

Without a doubt, this is a book which should be read by every Astronomy Society's chairman and secretary and be in every Astronomy Society's library. If it was, those damn polluters wouldn't stand a chance!

Published by Springer-Verlag London Limited, 2002. Priced at £22.00. ISBN 1-85233-497-5 215 pages, 139 illustrations, 98 in colour.

USING THE MEADE ETX by Mike Weasner

A review by Clive Down



The Meade ETX has become one of the most popular small telescopes of all time. The reasons for this are its compactness (it can be easily carried in a small case) its incredible optics and its comparatively low cost. It's neither a reflector nor a refractor, but instead is based on a design invented by Maksutov and popularised by the legendary Questar which sadly was far too expensive for most amateurs to purchase considering it had a mere 3.5" aperture.

However, anyone who had the good fortune to look at the night sky through a Questar could see that this small telescope outperformed far larger telescopes due to its clever combination of mirrors and lenses. The ETX has all the qualities of the Questar but is much more affordable.

Many astronomy books provide information on the use of reflectors and refractors, but the Maksutov design is less well covered, and it remains an enigma to many. All that changed when Mike Weasner purchased one of the first Meade ETX's and set up a Website so that he could share his experiences with other owners. That Website has become the font of all knowledge for this remarkable telescope. It's called "Weasner's Mighty ETX Site" and can be found at <http://www.weasner.com/etx>

You saw the Website first, now comes the book. Much of the valuable information to be found at "Weasner's Mighty ETX Site" is contained in the book. The various models are discussed and detailed drawings of the optics are shown along with a discussion of the history and evolution of the telescope.

Because the ETX is unlike any other telescope you may have used, many buyers have experienced difficulties in getting the best out of it. Weasner has dedicated a whole chapter which reveals hints and tips on how to successfully set up your ETX, how to align it and how to choose accessories to use with it.

All the models are available with Meade's Autostar hand held computer which can locate thousands of various objects in the night sky, and position them in the centre of the eyepiece. Unfortunately the instructions contained in the manual supplied with the telescope can be more than a little daunting. Indeed, many important points are dealt with summarily and it's no wonder that some amateurs fail to get it to work correctly. If you are one of the many who have experienced difficulties you will find a much fuller explanation in this book.

Meade supply little information on how to maintain and repair these instruments, and Weasner guides the reader through tasks that can be undertaken by owners. More importantly, he warns you when you are likely to be out of your depth.

It is customary for astronomy books to list objects which can be observed and the subtitle of the book is "100 Objects You Can Really See with the Mighty ETX". But don't worry, this section takes up only one precious chapter. Most of the 200 pages form the most valuable work of reference you are ever likely to find for these telescopes.

Published by Springer-Verlag. Priced at £19.50; 2002; 208 pages; ISBN 1-85233-351-0



Nucleus; A Trip Into the Heart of Matter by Ray Mackintosh, Jim Al-Khalili, Björn Jonson and Teresa Peña

A Review by Ian Coulson.

Whenever we consider the cosmos, all or part of our understanding of the processes involved in its beginning and/or development depend on our understanding of the underlying physics. For those people without a good grounding in the subject, therefore, comprehension can be elusive, and they can lose interest in what is, after all, a fascinating subject.

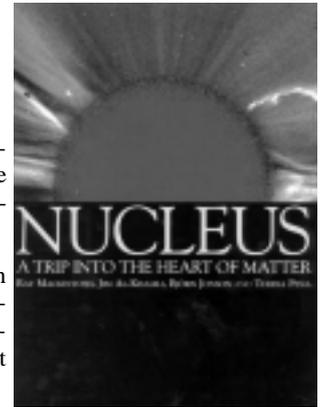
This book is aimed squarely at the non-specialist reader, and aims to fill in the gaps in what may be an incomplete knowledge of a very complicated and non-intuitive subject, i.e. particle physics. It's no accident that the major funding body for Astronomy in the UK is the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council - the two subjects are inextricably bound together. Without an understanding of what happens on the microscopic scale it is difficult to grasp what happens macroscopically.

Don't be fooled by this book; I was amazed at how much I learnt from the deceptively simple treatment of a very difficult subject. It's dealt with chronologically, each section devoted to a person or discovery, with easy-to-follow text and illustrations to make the point. In no time at all you become an expert, really believing you could take up a research post or make your own contribution to the science - such is the power of this book. Of course, since there is no mathematical content, one can't really discover anything new, but the great minds of the past hundred years or so are brought within easy reach.

This is a hardback volume, and the format allows for some glorious colour illustrations which have been very well reproduced. Even the 'stars-on-a-black-background' ones have come out well. Most of the period black-and-white pictures are large enough to convey the feeling of their time too.

Of course, the weakness of a book like this is its dependence upon the latest developments and hypotheses to explain the current and future positions of science regarding the universe; these have a habit of changing quite regularly, so revisions will probably be needed in future to stop some parts of the text becoming dated. That said, this is a marvellously readable book for anyone who knows nothing or virtually nothing about the nature of the physical universe and can't get to grips with 'normal' physics. If you're not curious about cosmology and just like looking at the sky, this isn't for you. For everyone else, it's an informative and eye-opening book which entertains right to the end.

Published by Canopus Publishing Limited, Bath. 2001; 140 pages, A4 format, fully illustrated; ISBN 0 9537868 3 8; Price £14.95



Nottingham Astronomical Society



Note the empty pole, where the wind turbine was housed. The "air-vent" structure housed the solar cell

Sometime between the May Day bank holiday and the spring bank holiday the Nottingham Astronomical Society suffered major thefts and attack upon its observing site. The wind generator (donated originally by Marlec Engineering) and the solar cell (donated to us by Siemens Engineering) were stolen from the annexe roof of the observatory. During their

removal the thieves gained access to the annexe through the roof and stole a small 1050's 3inch refractor, and a small 60mm scope used as a finder. The thieves had done their homework and there can be little doubt the items were "stolen to order", as both the solar cell and the wind turbine were fitted with a number of anti-tamper devices.

The thefts have proven to us that protecting such a remote site is almost impossible, and we have now had to divert considerable society assets to re-design, of our annexe roof to make it impossible to gain entry through that route. It has also proved that using natural energy sources such as wind and solar power is not "acceptable" on a remote site such as ours. This is a great shame as the solar cell has proved far better than any of us expected and we are very grateful to Siemens for the chance to try out this energy source. Even during winter the cell produced a regular trickle charge to our batteries. The Marlec Wind Turbine has proved its self over many years and we are grateful to that company for their support and ideas. However, we feel that to replace these items would only serve to encourage such an attack in the future.

It is pleasant to report that both Severn Trent (upon whose land the observatory site is situated), and West Bridgford Police (Nottinghamshire) have shown considerable attention to this incident, and helped us to forge very strong community links to both organisations.

Carl J. Brennan (Secretary, Nottingham Astronomical Society)

Sawtry/Papworth Inter Club Astronomical Quiz

Despite choosing the date for this years inter club quiz, Cambridge Astronomical Society were unable to attend. Once again both Bedford and Cambridge backed off at the eleventh hour. What a shame ! they missed a great contest between two smaller and friendlier societies.

In an exciting match reminiscent of the recent Boat Race the crew in the Sawtry Boat were Adam Titmus, Jerry Workman and Malcom McIlroy. Crewing Papworth's Boat were Ed Zanders, Janet Vialls and Gordon Carter.

Jerry won the toss and Sawtry set off but the crew in Papworth's boat made a dramatic start, with an impressive strike rate of 100%, they pulled away into an early lead, 12 points against 8.

Sawtry helped by Mac's knowledge of neutrinos, upped their rate in the second round and recovered a little but could not break Papworth's lead now 21 against 19.

In mid stream Papworth put on the pressure, with strong scoring by Janet, they increased their lead 32 to 28.

A storming comeback on bend four by Sawtry, aided by Adam's lense expertise inched them ahead at 38 to 39.

Then on the final and most difficult part of the course both teams sprinted for the finishing line. First Papworth went ahead with Gordon's spacewalks knowhow to the fore, then Sawtry assisted by Jerry's Martian geography. Ed's Chinese launcher propelled Papworth forward, only for Sawtry to gain and hold onto the lead by a canvas, 49 to 50.

In the hardest section both teams scored 11 points each, demonstrating an amazing range of knowledge on all aspects of astronomy.

An excellent match, the teams battling all the way against tough questions from a tough Question Master, "my decisions are final", Keith Tritton, also in the umpires boat, keeping an unbiased eye on the crews and the Question Master was scorer Lindsey Tritton.

Those of us watching from the towpath witnessed a brilliant contest, well done to all concerned.

Jim Rowlands, Sawtry Astronomical Society

FAS CONVENTION and AGM 2002

Celebrating 50 Years of the Leicester Astronomical Society

Saturday 19th October 2002

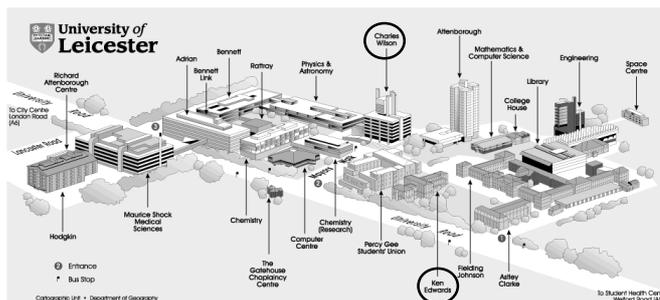
This years convention will take place at the University of Leicester on the 19th of October 2002. This event also celebrates 50 Years of the Leicester Astronomical Society.

Provisional Programme:

- 08.00 Doors Open for Traders
 - 09.00 Doors Open to Public, Campus coffee shop open.
 - 10.00 Welcome from FAS President - Malcolm Jones
 - 10.05 Talk by Professor Ken Pounds- head of Astronomy and Physics at the University of Leicester: 'Astronomy from Space in 2002'
 - 11.05 AGM
 - 12.00 Lunch
 - 13.45 'Fifty years and counting - the Leicester Astronomical Society' by Dr Ann Bonell, President.
 - 14.00 Talk by Dr Martin Barstow, University of Leicester: 'How to be a Rocket Scientist- Observing white-dwarf stars from space.'
 - 15.00 Coffee/tea break
 - 15.30 Talk by Dr Allan Mills: 'Early methods of measuring time: Sundials, Water Clocks and Sand Glasses'
 - 16.30 Break
 - 16.40 The Ken Marcus Memorial Lecture by Paul Money FRAS: '2MASS - A New View of the Universe '
 - 17.40 Closing address
 - 18.00 Conference ends
- (programme may change without notice)

Trade Displays from: Aurora Books, Stockport Binocular and Telescope Centre, The Widescreen Centre, and others.

If your society would like to display at this years convention please get in touch with Stan Waterman or John Parratt



Campus map courtesy University of Leicester, Copyright University of Leicester.

Lecture talks and AGM will take place in Lecture Theatre 1 of the Ken Edwards Building. Tickets, exhibition display area and afternoon coffee/tea is in the Belvoir City Suite, of the nearby Charles Wilson Building.

Lunch can be taken on-campus, or at the National Space Centre which is a short drive away, or in the City Centre which is short walk (15 minutes).

There should be ample parking on the Campus.

The University of Leicester main campus is to the south east of the city centre. Directions and maps may be found on the University website at <http://www.le.ac.uk/maps/maps.html>

Tickets are £8 at the door, or £7 in advance. The ticket price includes coffee/tea in the afternoon.
Advance tickets are available from Alan Drummond, 27 York Road, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 5JS
Make cheques payable to 'The Federation of Astronomical Societies' and please send an SAE.

Your Federation Needs You ... Council elections will take place at the AGM. All Council positions are open for nomination. Currently the following positions are expected to be vacant; Minutes Secretary, Assistant Treasurer, Education Secretary, Slide Librarian, Publicity Officer, Web Site Organiser. If you would like to stand for any council position, further information can be obtained from the FAS Secretary Clive Down.

BAS has a Birthday, a Convention and a New Home

Bristol Astronomical Society has a busy autumn ahead. We are celebrating our Diamond Jubilee; the society was founded by Second World War fire watchers in 1942. Our longest standing member joined the society in 1947 and our treasurer, Clifford Martin, is looking forward to a long and happy retirement when he completes forty years in the post in 2003. Can an official of any other society beat that record?

The society hosts a biennial convention which will be held on October 5th this year. The theme is Imaging the Universe and our speakers will follow that theme throughout the ages, at different wavelengths and in both the amateur and professional fields. Our four speakers are the historian Dr Allan Chapman of Wadham College, Oxford, Observational Cosmologist Dr David Clements, Philip Perkins, Astrophotographer and Prof Peter Wilkinson of the Jodrell Bank Radio Observatory. The convention will be held at the Physics Department at the University of Bristol and starts at 10:00 am.

Over the past few years the society has held its lecture meetings at the University of Bristol and the less formal club nights at Westbury Park Methodist Church Hall. From October all our meetings, with the exception of the convention, will be held at Bristol Grammar School. This venue is a stone's throw away from the University and thus ideally situated in central Bristol. We are

very much looking forward to making this our new home.

As befits our 60th year we have an excellent programme lined up. Our speakers include old friends and some new faces. We have talks with such intriguing titles as 'Active Galaxies, Busy Blowing Bubbles', 'COASTing to a really large aperture' and 'Asteroid and Comet: Friend or Foe'. Full details of the line-up can be seen on our web site at <http://www.bristolastrofoc.freeserve.co.uk/index.htm>

The Exhibition meeting of the BAA

The British Astronomical Association is to hold its 2002 Exhibition meeting at the Cavendish Laboratories, Madingley Road, Cambridge on Saturday September 21st.

We would be pleased to welcome any astronomy societies to attend and encourage you to provide display stands highlighting your activities. We have a spacious area at the venue, and should have no problem accommodating you, but an early reply would be appreciated. There will be no charge.

Any early response from anyone wishing to display would be appreciated.

Dr. Nick Hewitt, Meetings Secretary, British Astronomical Association. Email to Nick_Hewitt@compuserve.com, or phone 01604 - 415458.

Shetland Astronomical Society

Professor Brown, Astronomer Royal for Scotland came to Shetland and officially opened the 18inch Dall-Kirkham telescope on Fetlar where we hope to have dark skies in the autumn. He is the honorary president of the Shetland Astronomical Society and gave talks in Lerwick and on Fetlar while he was here. We have been offered a site behind the local community hall for the telescope and hope to get this organised and move it there in the near future.

We have heard that some accommodation on Shetland was booked last year by people who are coming up for the annular eclipse in Shetland on 31st. May 2003. We have approached the RAF at Saxa Vord about possible sites on higher ground near them. They are happy that we use any one of three sites. The RAF will probably put up signs to show people where they can park, meet others with the same aim and get a good view. Anyone intending to visit Shetland at that time should contact us so that we can keep them up to date with any events we decide to organise. It seems a good idea to give visitors a contact here and suggest an appropriate spot from which to view.

Peter Kelly
Email: theglebe@zetnet.co.uk

Get ready for National Astronomy Week 2003! 23-30th August 2003

The week includes the date of the closest opposition of Mars ever in history. Although we know that Mars will actually be rather easier to observe by the public a little later in the year, media interest at the time of opposition will be intense. They will actually be beating a path to our door, so we all need to be ready for them! This will be the week for star parties, made easier by the fact that the schools are on holiday so more people will be able to stay up late.

The NAW committee, which includes representatives from all national UK societies and other interested parties, is aiming to give maximum publicity to the events that will be taking place during the week. We are hoping for TV and press stories, and are also planning an information sheet that will give some basic information on Mars and how to observe it. This time, the main source of information about NAW will be the WWW, and we will be putting most information on our website, rather than trying to distribute material by post.

The Society for Popular Astronomy will be helping by producing a professional-quality audiovisual presentation for free loan by any group that requests it. It will be created by a team that includes Prof Iwan Williams, a co-investigator on the Mars Express mission, and will be narrated by Heather Couper. The presentation will be available as both tape-slide and Powerpoint. We would like to know how many copies will be needed for circulation, so if you are interested in using this hour-long production please let us know what format you would prefer. We hope that it will be available as from the beginning of 2003, so you can start to plan your Mars meeting now!

We would like you to do is to nominate one person from your society to liaise with us by e-mail, so that we can communicate with you more effectively. Simply send me an e-mail giving the details. Also tell us if you would also like us to list your society name on our website as planning an event for the week itself.

Some basic information about the Week, and the other events that are taking place during 2003, is on our website,
www.astronomyweek.org.uk.

I look forward to hearing from your own NAW Liaison Officer in the near future with your own ideas for NAW 2003!
Robin Scagell
NAW 2003 Publicity Officer

Javea and District AS – Costa Blanca

This year has been a busy one in and out of the rainstorms that have caused the worst flooding for 40 years ! The venue for the group at present is the Campo de Tiro (shooting range) which is situated at the top of the Montgo mountain in the area known as the Montgo national park. It can get cold up there but the well stocked bar serves as a good watering hole as well as a good place to do some 'what your right arm is for astronomy'.

Membership fluctuated during the year and attendance at meetings was dictated by the number of people who went back to England for holidays or had visitors. The Summer months do not help meetings either since at almost 40 degrees latitude the Sun is around until very late making astronomy awkward !

The last few months have been taken up by Mike Glazier running a course on basic astronomy for beginners. The topics covered were the Sun and the electromagnetic spectrum, the planets, the Moon and the space shuttle from it's conception in 1969. Norma Bilsborough of the Caledonian society covered meteors and asteroids and presented her extensive private collection that included a very large meteorite which her husband had found in the desert. Mike has also been out doing talks to local English groups and in June he is to present a display to the Javea International Festival where upwards of 3000 people are expected. His display will lead the English contingent and his 8inch reflector will be used late at night for observations.

This year may well see a change of venue since not many people like driving up mountains. There will also be another course with more emphasis on practical astronomy. Public events are planned for next year for Mars with a number of talks to coincide with the close approach. Information will also be made available to cover the transit of Venus and the annular eclipse of the Sun which will be visible here in Valencia, and both events will be covered participation by the two active Spanish groups that operate locally. Mike is now the astronomy correspondent for the international English speaking newspaper Costa Blanca News and his articles cover items of general and topical interest.

A very busy time for the Javea group but it does prove one thing at least, astronomy is alive and kicking here on the Costa Blanca.

Mike Glazier.

Clacton & District AS - A Heated Debate

Over the past two years Clacton & District AS have very successfully held debates on the following proposals:

- 1) This Society believes that ET probably exists [ET being a sentient being].
- 2) This Society considers that manned space exploration should be discontinued.

In each case there was a proposer and opposer, each putting forward their case in a specified time, subsequent views of other members from the floor in support or opposition, summing up by the two protagonists, and finally a vote by the members present. As a small society the voting of the CDAA was for the first proposal by 9 votes to 4, but the second proposal was lost, surprisingly narrowly, by 6 votes for and 7 against.

We felt that these two debates made very entertaining meetings that other societies might wish to try and perhaps send in their results to the FAS to determine the national picture among member societies on these two controversial subjects.

David Pugh, Secretary, CDAA.

For Sale - Celestron NexStar 5 SC telescope. + extras.
Price £700 ono. Contact Alan Cahill on 01452 533815
or e-mail alancahill@blueyonder.co.uk

John Dobson Tour 2002

Renowned American astronomer John Dobson, *the Sidewalk Astronomer*, and 'inventor' of the Dobsonian Telescope will be touring the UK this autumn.

Many Societies are holding special events. Tour schedule is:

September 13th - 16th - BAA Horncastle Astronomy Weekend + Lincolnshire Groups. For more information contact Paul Money via e-mail: paul@astspace.demon.co.uk or via letter: Paul Money, 18 College Park, Horncastle, Lincolnshire, LN9 6RE

Sept 17th—North Norfolk Astronomers

Sept 19th—Cotswold Astronomical Society, 20th Anniversary lecture at Shurdington Village Hall, Shurdington, Cheltenham. For info contact Callum Potter on 01684 773256 or Duncan Wiloughby on 01452 416405, or <http://www.cotswoldas.org.uk>

September 20th - Liverpool Astronomical Society and Sidewalk Astronomers. For more details check out the Liverpool AS website: <http://www.liv.ac.uk/~ggastro/home.html>

September 27th - Mid Kent Astronomical Society. 8.00 pm at Bredhurst Village Hall, contact 01634 308035 for further details.

September 28th - West Yorkshire Astronomical Society. 'Yorkshire Astromind' 1.00pm to 5.00pm in the Carleton Grange Club, next to the 'Rosse Observatory' Pontefract. The trophy will be presented by John after which he will be talking.

October 2nd - SAGAS 20.00hrs, Assembly Rooms, Chichester. Tickets £5, available from Nick Quinn, 15 Newham Lane, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3LR, SAE required. E-mail nick@nquinn.demon.co.uk for more details, or SAGAS Website: <http://www.nightlife.demon.co.uk/>

October 4th-6th - Whirlpool Star Party, Birr, Ireland (see details on back page).

North West Group Welcomes Llandrillo AS

The North West Group of Astronomical Societies welcomed Llandrillo AS as the newest member of the group. Llandrillo is a recently formed society which is now a member of the FAS and thus eligible to join NWGAS. The meeting was hosted and chaired by Chester AS and Steve and Sue Reid represented Llandrillo. Other FAS member societies in the North West area that would like to be part of the NWGAS should contact me.

Ron Kelley
FAS NWGAS Representative.

East Sussex AS

Our current membership drive has taken ESAS membership up to 40, we have achieved this by exhibitions, regular press and being approachable. We also have a high number of female members approximately 25%.

This August we are holding a Bar-B-Q to coincide with the Perseid Meteor Shower, this is an annual event and always well attended.

ESAS currently has plans to build two 10" f/5 Truss dobsonians. ESAS ordered these mirrors from India and has just taken delivery. Our Telescope coordinator Lester Selmes can now get down to the task of making our first telescope, which we hope will see first light by the end of the year.

ESAS holds its AGM in September and will report that it has a healthy bank balance and has many projects under consideration which include seeking charity status, school talks and observing sessions, Observatory project, and a community Solar system walk.

Andy Lawes
Chairman East Sussex AS

 *Loughton Astronomical Society*
Presents:-
THE 8th EQUINOX SKYCAMP
Sponsored by
Broadhurst, Clarkson & Fuller. London

**Friday 6th September to
Sunday 15th September 2002**

Venue: DOWER HOUSE TOURING PARK,
EAST HARLING, THETFORD, NORFOLK.
ENGLAND NR16 2SE Tel: 01953 717 314

*The Dower House Touring Park is a well proven dark site for Astronomy
in the wilds of Norfolk, approximately 8 miles from Thetford.*

Main Event Day: Saturday 7th September

**Guest Speakers
Astro Boot Sale
Telescope Tours
Prize Raffle
Evening Bar-B-Q**

For full details send an A5 SAE to
MIKE COOK, 2 SUNSET DRIVE, BROXHILL ROAD,
HAVERING-ATTE-BOWER, ESSEX. ENGLAND. RM4 1QL
TEL:- 01708 375 146 or 07961 832 827
(All Enquiries must reach above address by last post 30th Aug 2002)

Cost Per Pitch per night: Prebook £7-75 On day £8-30
If prebook, minimum stay 2 nights, please quote reference number 002 when booking.
*Due to the overwhelming popularity of the Sky Camp. You are strongly advised
to pre-book pitches in advance to avoid disappointment.*
Loughton Astronomical Society or the Dower House cannot guarantee a pitch if visitors arrive on the day without pre-booking.

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

LOUGHTON ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

SKY CAMP MAIN EVENT DAY

12.00 SATURDAY 7th SEP 2002
ON SITE BAR & RESTAURANT OPEN ALL DAY

3 LECTURES WILL BE GIVEN IN
THE AFTERNOON
ALL FOR £2.50 (TICKETS AVAILABLE ON SITE)

TRADE STANDS , PLUS AN ASTRO BOOT SALE
TO PICK UP OR SELL A BARGAIN

GUIDED TOURS OF THE TELESCOPE FIELD
TO SEE THE MANY INSTRUMENTS BEING USED

TELESCOPE TUITION FOR BEGINNERS

IN THE EVE THE PRIZE RAFFLE & B.B.Q

SO IF YOU CANNOT STAY AT THE CAMP FOR
THE
WEEK OR WEEKEND, WHY NOT COME ALONG
AND BRING THE FAMILY JUST FOR THE MAIN
EVENT DAY

CHARGE £200 UNDER 16s FREE

FREE TO RESIDENTS OF THE CAMP

SOCIETY NEWS ROUND UP

BIRMINGHAM AS

We are putting the finishing touches to our Observatory build into a portacabin with an 8ft. dome on top. It has a 10inch Meade LX200 with CCD facilities so we look forward to the Autumn nights. Our Autumn lecture programme is fully booked (see website for details).

BRADFORD AS

Meetings are held at Eccleshill Library, Bradford at 7.30 pm. For further details please telephone 01274 583210 or 01274 672570.

Website www.bradford-astro.freereserve.co.uk

Aug 5 Practical Session Rod Hine

Aug 19 Lecture to be arranged

Sep 2 Naked eye observing Melvyn Taylor

Sept 23 To be confirmed Prof Tadhunter

CARDIFF AS

Meetings alternate Thursdays, September to July, 7.30 pm. at Dept of Physics and Astronomy, Univ. of Wales, 5 The Parade, Newport Road, Cardiff. Contact David Powell (secretary), 029 2055 1704. Email CAS@ilddat.demon.co.uk.

Web site: http://carina.astro.cf.ac.uk/cas/cas_home.html

CORNWALL AS

Meets 7.30 pm. 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at the Godolphin Club in Helston. Contact David Batt, 54 Treze Road, Porthleven, Helston, Cornwall TR13 9UQ. Tel 01326 573968. Visitors to Cornwall welcome.

20 Aug, "Vision"

24 Oct, "Sir Humphrey Davy"

COTSWOLD AS

Meetings at Shurdington Church Hall, Shurdington, Cheltenham. Contact Duncan Willoughby 01452 416405. Website www.cotswoldas.org.uk.

Aug 10th "Spaceflight Revolution", David Ashford, Bristol Spaceplanes

Sept 14th Members Night

Sept 19th 20th Anniversary Meeting - An Evening With John Dobson

Oct 12th Prof. John Parkinson, Solar Eclipses

AS of EDINBURGH

Meetings are held at 8pm in the City Dome of the City Observatory, Calton Hill, Edinburgh, usually on the first Friday of the month. The observatory is open to the public most other Friday evenings from 8 - 10pm. To confirm programme details, please see the ASE website at:

www.astronomyedinburgh.org

Aug 2nd, Members Night

Sept 6th, TBA

HANNEY & DISTRICT AS

Lectures held at 8.00pm, British Legion Hall, Hanney. Contact Sue Connell Secretary 01235 766688

26 Sept, Dark Matter, Dr Nigel Smith

31 Oct, Our Knowledge of the Moon: What Clementine and Lunar

Prospector Have Told Us, Dr Sarah Dunkin

AS OF HARINGEY

Meetings at White Hart Lane School, Wood Green, N22 at 7.30 pm

Website: www.garym.demon.co.uk.

Sept 18th, Indoor Astronomy, Dr. Lillian Hobbs

Oct 16th, AGM & Jerry Workman, Solar Lunar Eclipses and preview of the 2003 Annular Eclipse from Scotland.

HARROGATE AS

Website now www.harrogate-astro.freereserve.co.uk

HEBDEN BRIDGE AS

Meets at Hope Baptist Church, Hebdon Bridge, West Yorkshire, every 4th Wednesday from September to May, at 7-30pm. Contact: John Singleton, 01282 616294, email: j.hbas@argonet.co.uk Web site: www.hbas.org.uk

HULL & EAST RIDING AS

Public star party in the Skidby Mill Car Park on 11th October from 7.30 pm. Further details from Tony Scaife (President), 01482 668665, or website

[Http://uk.geocities.com/herasweb/index.htm](http://uk.geocities.com/herasweb/index.htm). Meetings on 9th Sept, Oct 7th.

ILKESTON & DISTRICT AS

Meetings take place at 7:30pm in the function room, Erewash Museum, Anchor Row, Ilkeston, Derbyshire. Further details from Mary McNulty, 01298 78234

Aug 13, Members night

Sept 10, West Coast Observatories, Alan Heath

Oct 8, Members night

ISLE OF MAN AS

The new observatory is progressing well, we started holding our meetings there in January and they have been well attended with close to 50 people turning up at each meeting. Membership is now over 100. There is still a lot of work to complete on the dome drives yet before we can put a permanent telescope in it. Fundraising is going quite well, we are about 1/2 way to getting a large scope.

LEEDS AS

Meetings held at Centenary House, North Street, Leeds, Doors open from 7pm. For Further Details please visit the Society's Website on

www.astro.leeds.co.uk

14th August - "Astronomical Symbols" - J Harper

11th September - "Observing the Caldwell Objects" - D Ratledge

09th October - "Solar Seismology" - Dr R New

30th Nov. LEEDS ASTROMEET

LIVERPOOL AS

Crypt Concert Room, RC Metropolitan Cathedral of Liverpool. Contact Ken Clarke, tel. 0151-638 3270, email clarklunar@aol.com.

Sept 20th, John Dobson, Watcher of the Skies / Telescope Making

Oct 18th, David Galvin, Presidential Address

LOUGHTON AS

Meeting every Thursday at 8.00 pm. in the Scout Hall, Loughton Lane,

Theydon Bois, Essex. evenings. Web site las-astro.org.uk

Jul 18th, Chemically Peculiar Stars, Dr. Mike Dworetzky

Aug 15th, Planetary Landers, Dr. Andrew Ball

Sept 19th, Recipe for a Solar System, Pam Spence

MID-KENT AS

Meet at 8.00 pm at Bredhurst Village Hall, contact 01634 308035

Sept 13th, Eclipses, Conrad Malin-Smyth

Sept 27th, John Dobson

Oct. 11th, AGM

Oct. 25th, Open Star Clusters, Alan Drummond.

SHEFFIELD AS

The society's greatest observational achievement during an exceptionally busy season has been a series of Messier Marathons where we obtained CCD pictures of 71 objects using a society LX200 10 inch. Our membership now stands at 90 and continues to rise. We normally meet at 19:30 on the 2nd and 4th Monday's of each month at the Mayfield Education Centre in Fulwood, on the western outskirts of Sheffield. For the season ahead we are introducing an extra meeting a month dedicated to practical aspects of the subject. For further details contact Darren on 0114-269-2291 or email sheffieldastro@hotmail.com or visit our website at www.sheffieldastro.org.uk

SOUTHAMPTON AS

Meetings are held in the Seminar Room, Floor 5, Physics and Astronomy Building 46, University of Southampton, at 7-30 pm, on the 2nd Thurs of the month. Contact: John Thompson, 023 8084 2531, e-mail: John.G.Thompson@tesco.net Website: <http://www.southampton-astronomical-society.org.uk>

11 July "Meteors" by Neil Bone

13 Sept AGM, and "Into Space" by Reg Turnill

10 Oct "Impacts from Space" by Dr Malcolm Coe

SOUTH EAST KENT AS

11th Aug: SE Kent Astronomical Society, Monkton Nature Reserve (A253/A299 junction) from 8pm BBQ + Perseid meteor watch (01227-265503)

STRATFORD UPON AVON AS

Meetings at the Home Guard Club, Tiddington, Nr Stratford upon Avon.

www.astro.org.uk, Mike Whitecross 01789 731784.

14th Aug "Astronomy Books Workshop".

27th Aug "Telescopic Astrophotography", by Ian Gray.

11th Sept "Binocular Observing Workshop".

24th Sept "Relativity", by Dr. Sathyaprakash.

9th Oct "Autumn Sky Workshop".

22nd Oct "Astronomical Complexities", by Prof. Sandra Chapman.

WESSEX AS

Meetings held 1st Tuesday in month at the Allendale Centre, Hanham Road, Wimborne, Dorset at 19.30. Contact Sec: John Hooker 01929 551530. Visit Web Site www.wessex-astro-society.freereserve.co.uk

YORK AS

Meetings are held in the Denham Room, The Priory Street Center, York, meetings start at 7.30 for 8pm. Members £1.00 Non-members £1.50. Tea, coffee, squash & biscuits are available at most meetings. Between September and April, weather permitting we have an observing session following the formal meeting. For more information contact Hazel on 07944 751277.

6th Sept, T Cooke & Astronomy in York, Dr Jim Mathews - York Uni.

20th Sept, Informal evening Astronomical photography competition

4th Oct AGM

18th Oct Thomas Wright Trophy, Question Master - Paul Money - 3

Astronomical societies pit their wits to find out which one knows the most on astronomical matters

Details should be confirmed before travelling to any meeting mentioned. All programmes may be subject to change with no notice. The FAS can accept no responsibility for any inaccuracies.

LIST OF OFFICERS 2001/2002

President: **Malcolm Jones**,
See front cover for details

Vice President: **Pam Spence**

tel: 01903 752834.

E-mail fas@astroscience.fsnet.co.uk

Secretary: **Clive Down**,
See front cover for details

Treasurer: **Peter Cooke**,
See front cover for details

Assistant Treasurer: **VACANT**

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See front cover for details

Handbook Editor: **VACANT**

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North West Group : **Ron Kelley**
See Minutes Secretary above.

West Midlands : **Andy Salmon**
Olympus Mons, 13, Jacmar Crescent, Smethwick, WAR-
LEY, West Midlands, B67 7LF
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Yorkshire Group : **Paul Harper**
45, Lydgate, Lepton, HUDDERSFIELD, West Yorkshire,
HD8 OLT Tel: 01484 606832

Devon Group : **John Parratt**
See Publicity Officer above

East Anglia Group : **VACANT**

SAGAS Rep: **VACANT**

FAS Publications

The FAS 'Astrocalendar 2002' is now available, along with a new layout/printing of 'Observational Astronomy', the ideal beginners guide to observing the heavens. Quantity pricing is available at:
http://www.fedastro.freemove.co.uk/publications/members_prices.html

Astrocalendar 2002	£1.40 + C5 SAE with 33p stamps
Observational Astronomy	£2.00 + C5 SAE with 33p stamps
Using a Telescope	£1.80 + C5 SAE with 33p stamps
Step by Step Astrophotography	£1.30 + C5 SAE with 27p stamps
Choosing a Telescope or Binoculars	£0.60 + C5 SAE with 27p stamps
FAS Handbook 2001 (Current issue)	£2.00 + C5 SAE with 44p stamps

Queries are usually easier via e-mail to the Publications Secretary:

publications@fedastro.org.uk

Deadline for submission for next newsletter, 30th September 2002

Please remember to send ALL articles to the Editor, Callum Potter. Regrettably material can only be returned if supplied with a SAE.

The Final 'Final Frontier'

It has become apparent that the BBC2 / Open University have no plans to commission another series of the excellent astronomy magazine programme Final Frontier. If you would like to see another series please let the BBC know. Either write to the BBC or email to the programme at: finalfrontier@bbc.co.uk. With a combined effort we may be able to get them to change their minds !

Whirlpool Star Party, 4th- 6th of October

Speakers to include:

Jack Newton, astrophotographer;
Danny Lennon, astronomer i/c of the Isaac Newton Group of telescopes in the Canary Islands;
Barrie Jones of the Open University;
John Joe McFadden, biologist, author of 'Quantum Evolution';
David Lunt, CEO of Coronado Filters;
Antony Hewish, Nobel laureate, discoverer of quasars;
John Dobson, San Francisco Sidewalk Astronomers

For more details visit <http://gofree.indigo.ie/~sdbell>

Membership Changes

Remember to send society contact changes to the Membership Secretary, Jack Climpson (see above).