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FEDERATION OF ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETIES

ISSUE 75

<http://www.fedastro.org.uk>

THE 2004 FAS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND CONVENTION

Will Be Held On
2nd October 2004

At The Institute of Astronomy,
Madingley Road, Cambridge

Speakers

Prof. Douglas Gough

Director, Institute of Astronomy, Cambridge
Title to be advised

Dr. Paul Murdin

Senior Fellow at the Institute of Astronomy, Cambridge,
"The Reality of Black Holes"

Guy Hurst

Editor, The Astronomer, "Supernovae"

Dr. Cathie Clark

Institute of Astronomy, Cambridge
"Formation of stars and brown dwarfs"

Trade Stands and Society Displays

Andromeda Books, Aurora Books, Widescreen Centre,
Earth and Sky

Society for the History of Astronomy, Society for Popular
Astronomy, Planetary Society

Tickets prices are £7.00 in advance and £8.00 on the day.
Lecture theatre is limited to 180 seats so book early to avoid
disappointment.

Tickets available from Stan Waterman, 'Amadeus House',
Temple End, Charlton, Hitchin, Herts, SG4 7TE. 01462
433912

or email ticket.sales@fedastro.org.uk

There will be no meals provided this year and delegates are
advised to bring packed lunches or make use of a nearby
pub or MacDonalds.

Tea & coffee is available.

FAS Council

Without the willing enthusiasm of the members of the council of the FAS, there would be no FAS. It seems obvious, but every year we struggle to fill all of the places on Council. Over the last few years, there has always been one or two unfilled places. This means that jobs don't get done, or that other essential activities suffer.

I am writing to all of you now, because I know that several long-standing Council members wish to stand down from their posts. It is therefore essential to recruit some fresh faces onto Council. The two most critical posts that are or will be vacant shortly are Publications Officer and Newsletter Editor.

The various publications that we produce (e.g. Astrocalendar) are essential to the existence of the FAS - they provide our largest source of income after subscriptions. The Publications Officer does not produce the raw material (for example the Liverpool AS provide the Astrocalendar in camera ready format), but is responsible for getting the material printed and distributed. Malcolm Jones has performed this role for many years and he stood down from this at the last AGM, but the post is still vacant.

Callum Potter has been our Newsletter Editor for a number of years. Callum has said that he will stand-down at the AGM. This role is crucial to the FAS - it is the main link with the member societies. At present we produce 3 Newsletter a year. The Editor is completely responsible for its production. There is help with the packing and distribution. Callum will produce the next two Newsletters, so now is a good time to get involved and learn how it works.

This is another very important role that is vital to the FAS' continued existence. If you are interested in either of these roles, then please either contact Malcolm or Callum directly, or contact our Secretary, Clive Down. If you are serious about getting involved, you will be welcome to attend the next council meeting on July 3. E-mail links to Council members can be found on our web site www.fedastro.org.uk.

There are other vacant slots on Council, including several regions which have not appointed their Representatives. If you are serious about the development of amateur astronomy in this country, then this is your opportunity to get involved. If you have any questions, or would like to know more, please get in touch.

Thank you, Ron Kelley, FAS President.

Phapos Astronomical Society – Cyprus

By Dave Doc Sutton



My visit to Cyprus was unrelated to Astronomy, but a pre-season cricket tour of four matches over the Easter Holiday Period followed by a short holiday. We enjoyed the local weather very hot and sunny clear skies with the temperature in upper 30's. Our group of 38 cricketers all age fifty plus and my role as scorer on our pre-season tour of the main cricket season in the UK our cricket went well and our holiday was fully relaxing.

During my stay in Cyprus I had made previous contact with the Local Society Phapos, for the past 11 years I have been distributing the FAS-Newsletters on behalf of the FAS. Although Phapos AS are a young Society of a few years they do not receive the postal edition but our email edition, printing and email copies locally within Phapos as Society Members require.

The group are very active bunch of middle age average persons and I'm advised they have recently started a junior section, with member's nearly 20 persons in all. Their weather would cause many of us in UK envious of their clear skies, and for those in the UK who travelled that part of the Mediterranean will know of the many days and nights of black unpolluted clear skies.

I met up in the early evening and travelled from my hotel to Phapos about an hour on arrival at our viewing site we had a sit down meal, wine flowed, discussions took place. Phapos Society are very active, recently Mars was topic of interest to the locals and the secretary advised me that many locals came and viewed Mars with the public. They met regularly within a hotel monthly and cover many subjects with many dark sites to choose from viewing session's take place regularly.

Our evening viewing, approx 8-kilometres west of Phapos, commenced around 8.00pm (Local Time) with a portable battery driven telescope Goto-Netstar 6", I was advised they also have a 6"Newtonian Refractor, binoculars. Viewing from the comfort of chairs, no jets passing overhead as we have in the Sussex Coast just clear black very dark skies. With one's naked eye one could see many more stars clearly; through the telescope and binoculars we viewed (Venus, Jupiter, Orion, Virgo, Plough, M42, M31, M45, M31 and many constellations) we had during the viewing period no haze or light pollution.

The future, their secretary suggested if any astronomers from the UK on holiday in Cyprus would like to visit they were more than welcomed to join the group at their monthly meeting and if able to give a short talk of half an hour this would be appreciated by all. It's worth the effort just to see more of the heavens than in the UK and the wine.

Thanks to Carmen & David Brown for a pleasant evenings viewing and hospitality many thanks.

The Isle of Man AS

The Isle of Man Astronomical Society will be 15 years old at the end of May this year so some celebrations will be in order.

Our observatory is now fully functioning and houses a 16" Meade LX 200 GPS telescope.

We have just held an official reception, on Feb 19th at the observatory, to thank all those who helped the main building part of the project in any way with sponsorship and support. We had over 45 people in attendance; members provided an excellent buffet with wine and tea or coffee. Unfortunately it was cloudy, so we were restricted to showing the facilities to them and not views through the telescope. All other sponsors and members who helped in any way will be invited to an official opening ceremony at a later date.

We have reached a stage where we can be proud of our achievements. The observatory consists of a centrally heated clubroom which can take up to 60 people, attached is a store area, above which, is a 20ft. diameter dome. The telescope was installed in August and this has given some excellent views of the planets and nebulae. Some superb images have been obtained by David Storey using a web-cam and an imaging program. We are now in a position to start looking for a decent CCD camera.

Already we are swamped out by groups wishing to visit the observatory, we have already had visits from scouts, cubs, brownies, ladies groups, church groups, rotary clubs and wildlife trust groups. Once we get the CCD system running we intend to pipe images down to groups in the clubroom.

The society fields are a natural habitat for skylarks and various birds and wildlife. We also have wild orchids growing in the fields; these are eligible for protection under a section 30 agreement with our department of agriculture. It is hoped to further develop these natural amenities.

The IOM/AS is hosting the BAA out of town meeting this September, details of the program will be available from the BAA shortly. We are grateful to David Storey for co-ordinating the event in conjunction with the BAA.

As you can see the Isle of Man Astronomical Society has become very successful, largely due to the hard work, generosity and welcoming nature of its members.

Radio Leeds Astromind

This year it is the turn of the Hull & East Riding AS to host the Radio Leeds Astromind competition, and on behalf of the Society, I would to invite you to join HERAS for this years competition.

It will be held on Saturday October 9th and we shall be hosting it at the Blackburn Leisure Social Club in association with the Blackburn Leisure AS. Final details have yet to be finalised, but it is hoped to have trade exhibitors attending the event in addition to the competition.

There is ample space and car parking at the Social Club, plus refreshment facilities will be available on the day in the club itself. During the interval the Blackburn Leisure AS will only be too pleased to show interested parties their new observatory, which is situated in the Social Club grounds.

If you feel that your society cannot field a contestant, then you are still welcome to come and join us to enjoy the day.

For further information, please contact Rob Overfield, at astroport02@astroport02.karoo.co.uk or keep an eye on our website <http://uk.geocities.com/herasweb/>

Redshift 5

Review by John Parratt

At one of the FAS council meetings, I was given Redshift 5 to review. I still have a Redshift 3 on my computer, which I still run from time to time, so I thought I would give Redshift 5 ago, and see what's new.

I was quite impressed with the opening pages, and the programme telling you how to use it, the graphics I have found are very good, it seems fairly straightforward.



Space and Time: the programme allows you to go to any planet in the solar system and any body out side our system, you can look back at the earth and see its moon, you can even move back in time, in fact back to ancient Egypt, to see the night sky as it was in the time of the Pharaohs, plus the programme shows you star positions for the future too.

Celestial Objects: Redshift 5 has a vast object database, in fact 20,000,000 stars, Milky Way, 70,000 deep sky objects, around 50,000 minor planets, other objects include Comets, Star clusters, and Galaxies.

You can also go on line, the internet that is, so that you can update R5. You can import any object that you don't have, and new objects that have just been discovered, you can also make up your own catalogue to add data to.

You can also use information from Hipparcos and Tycho II stellar guide catalogue plus the Hubble star catalogue 2.2.

Taking Control: You take control of R5, by using the control panel, if you are observing with your telescope outside click the night vision switch to see the screen without adjusting your eyes.

One thing I liked about R5 was the fact that I could see the Earth and all the artificial satellites, which are known, and you can use it as your own mission control and watch all the satellites moving around the Earth, it's a bit of an eye opener.

If you are using your telescope, and are looking for information on a certain object, R5 will find it for you, then click on the reverse button and the image will change to the eyepiece view.

Redshift 5 gives you the opportunity to see past events, there is a navigation pad to fill in, just punch in the three questions (date of event, where you want to see the event from, and where to look), and then R5 shows you the event as a movie, but at different angles. A demonstration is given flying on the Cassini probe on its fly by of earth on its way to Saturn, its well worth seeing, as it will probably be the only time I'll get to fly by the Earth.

Macro Players: For beginners like myself, you can get used to R5, by using the guided tours, these are very good, not only are you visually shown how to use the many functions, but you are talked through them as well. R5 will show you all about the events of the past, like the Solar eclipse of 585 B.C, which you can view at many angles. R5 will show you the famous conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn on a certain night over Jerusalem.

Sky Diary: The sky diary gives you interesting events for each month, and you can add to this when on line, if anything has been discovered.

I have written only a portion of what Redshift 5 can do, and I'm still getting used to the programme, but I can honestly say, that if you are a beginner or just starting out in astronomy, then it's a programme that's well worth looking at.

Practical Amateur Spectroscopy

Edited by Stephen F. Tonkin

Review by Ian Coulson

This book "does exactly what it says on the label", to quote a well-known advert. Practical it certainly is, and any reader expecting a good yarn to while away a rainy winter's evening had better think again. After an excellent 50-page introduction to spectroscopy fundamentals by the Editor, we are encouraged to 'get out there' with our unwanted CDs and check the spectrum of the nearest star (i.e. the Sun), or a street lamp if it's dark!

This chapter and the remainder of the book are contributions from different authors, six of them, concerning the building (oh yes!) and use of spectroscopes, including commercially available ones, and their integration with whatever telescopes/lenses/optical trains you happen to have access to. Comprehensive guidance is given on subjects such as: the sorts of targets which are suitable for different aperture telescopes; the use of fibre optics; construction materials and tolerances; data acquisition; what software you will need; and, most importantly, interpreting your results if and when you get any.

Numerous diagrams, illustrations and photographs appear in just the right place (no searching for the right picture in the 10-page block in the middle of the book), and interpretation of various spectra is given its due weight - lots of graphs with wiggly lines on! A section at the end lists suppliers, websites, a bibliography, short biographies of the authors and a comprehensive index.

What I noticed about the book was its complete absence of getting the reader to take up spectroscopy as an interest. The writers all treat this volume as a textbook on the subject, as opposed to an introductory work. That's all very well, but it means I can't recommend it as a casual read (as I said at the beginning) or as a book to start an astronomer off in a new direction. My impression is that you have to have been grabbed by the subject already, in which case you would use this book as an invaluable (very much so) reference manual.

Those of you who have little or no mathematical ability, don't panic! There's virtually no maths involved and very little physics. It's all as practical as anyone could wish it to be, and all of your efforts after reading this book will be directed towards getting results (after getting the right equipment of course). Neither is it necessary to have a small fortune to invest - not unless you want to, of course - because some very useful spectroscopy can be done with surprisingly little. If you already have a telescope with a camera body attached, a little ingenuity and a diffraction grating can get you a long way. It seems equally possible to build a research grade spectroscope if you have some engineering ability (or know someone who has), and use it to obtain very professional-looking results.

All-in-all, a straightforward coverage of what could be a daunting subject, in a highly readable format, but not for anyone looking to sit down with a drink and a good book in front of the fire!

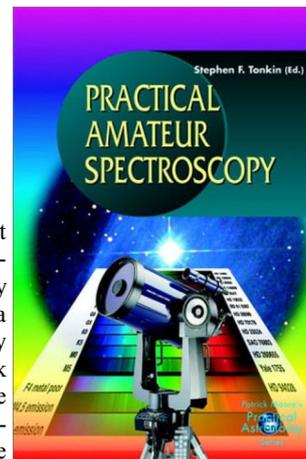
Another book in Patrick Moore's Practical Astronomy series.

Published by Springer-Verlag London Limited, 2002.

Priced at £24.00.

210 pages.

ISBN 1-85233-489-4



SPA Transit CD

The Society for Popular Astronomy has a Powerpoint CD about the transit of Venus. This will be suitable for use in society meetings and will consist of a live recording of the lecture by Dr Allan Chapman on this subject. The lecture tells the fascinating story of the previous observations of the transits, from Jeremiah Horrocks's historic first observation to Cook's famous voyage to Tahiti. There are some amazing tales of intrepid endeavour and in some cases plain bad luck, all told in Allan Chapman's very entertaining style.

The lecture lasts approximately 75 minutes and includes a number of illustrations. The CD will be available from 31 March, and requires a PC running Microsoft Powerpoint. Unfortunately, the presentation does not run satisfactorily on a Mac, though it should be possible to play the sound only on either PC or Mac. It will cost £5.95 (£4.95 to SPA members who should quote their membership number) from Venus CD, 36 Fairway, Keyworth, Nottingham NG12 5DU. Please make cheques payable to the SPA. You can also order the CD using your credit card via the SPA website, www.popastro.com.

Solar Viewers

Many societies have expressed an interest in the availability of Solar Viewers for observing the transit. Hazel Collett of York AS with the British Astronomical Association has organised the import of CE-certified black polymer solar viewers from Thousand Oaks, Inc. of California.

These may be purchased from the BAA office for £1.00 each inclusive of first class postage. Quantities of 5 or more are priced at 75p each. An information sheet about safe viewing will accompany the viewers. Please send your cheque with order to the British Astronomical Association, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0DU. Further contact details are available on the BAA website www.britastro.org

Note for BAA Members; a free viewer will be distributed with the June 2004 BAA Journal.

Jersey Astronomy Club

February 9th 2004 brought a fresh look to the Jersey Astronomy Club with the official name of the facility being revealed to the public. The club site in Jersey's Les Creux Millenium Park in the south west of the Island is now named the 'Sir Patrick Moore Astronomy Centre' and is the most southern observing area in the British Isles.

The purpose built centre covering a large area was a partnership between a States of Jersey Committee under the banner of Education, Sport and Culture, private sponsors, financial institutions, and club members.

Although the club has existed for around 12 years, it has never had a home it could call it's own. Planning for the new centre started in 2001 with the aim of finding a site and raising the necessary finance. Finally all problems were overcome and the clubroom came into being.

Apart from the main club telescope, facilities include projection of live images from the telescope onto screens with simultaneous capture of images onto video via underground vision lines, and slide and film projection for lecture purposes. The interior of the club measures 500 square feet and can accommodate up to 40 people in comfort. Club and members' telescopes are also used from solar observing and later it is planned that radio astronomy will be part of the complex.

Present membership is just over 60 and is drawn from a broad spectrum of the population. During the 12-month work up period prior to the official opening, over 900 people attended lectures and open days for special observing sessions.

The Jersey Astronomy Club is normally open on a Monday evening from about 8.00 pm. Tel. 01534 747506 to check.

Enquiries to Chairman - Marcel Le Masson (01534 865896) or Secretary—Eileen Besnard (01534 860802). Website is www.geocities.com/jerseyastronomyclub

Loughton Astronomical Society

Presents

The Equinox Sky Camp

Sponsored by Telescope House

**Friday 10th September to
Sunday 19th September 2004**

At the KELLING HEATH LEISURE PARK,
Weybourne, Holt, NORFOLK
ENGLAND NR25 7HW

One of the last dark sites in Mainland Britain

Cost:

£9 per night inc Electric Hook Up

To Book Tel: 01263 588181

Quote Ref KH1

See Websites www.kellingheath.co.uk and www.starparty.org for further details

Due to the overwhelming popularity of the Sky Camp you are strongly advised to pre-book pitches in advance to avoid disappointment.

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

Loughton Astronomical Society

The Equinox Sky Camp MAIN EVENT DAY

12.00 Saturday 11th Sep 2004
ON SITE BAR & RESTAURANT open all day

3 LECTURES WILL BE GIVEN IN THE AFTERNOON
ALL FOR £3.00 (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 FOR TOP PRIZES

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 FREE OF CHARGE.

Kielder Forest Star Camp Northumberland 14 - 17 October 2004

I'm delighted to be able to give you details of the 2004 Kielder Forest Star Camp. Last year's inaugural event organised by Sunderland Astronomical Society and the Forestry Commission was a great success, with a full campsite and three largely clear nights under the wonderful dark skies of Northumberland.

This time round star camp will be staged over four nights (rather than three) from Thursday 14 October to Sunday 17 October, inclusive. The venue remains Kielder Forest campsite in the remote Border region and the main day will be on Saturday 16 October at 18th century Kielder Castle.

Leading vendors already signed-up to attend include Green Witch, Widescreen Centre, Bray Imaging and our main sponsor this year, Pulsar (Optical). There will also be Starlab, barbeque, tours of the observing field and talks by two top speakers from the world of astronomy.

Campsite pitch fees are from £10 per night. Facilities include a laundrette, pay phone, electric hook-ups, showers with hot and cold water, toilet disposal point and children's play area.

During the day you will have the opportunity to explore one of Britain's great wilderness areas, which aside from its amazing wildlife, is also wonderful walking and biking country. You can even take a steam ship cruise on Kielder Water.

But the prime attraction will be the quality of the night sky – which a recent CPRE survey revealed to be one of the nation's darkest.

For more information please visit the star camp website at www.richarddarn.demon.co.uk/starcamp, which has a booking form to download. Alternatively call Richard Darn on 01226 246351 or e mail starcamp2004@richarddarn.demon.co.uk

Bookings can be made by telephone by contacting Margaret Hardon at the Forestry Commission on 01434 220242.

We hope to see you under Kielder's dark sky!

Gary Fildes
Sunderland Astronomical Society

Harrogate AS

Harrogate Astronomical Society are celebrating an 'Awards For All' National Lottery grant of £5,000 which was awarded in December 2003. The award will be used to buy a portable 'Go To' telescope, videocam and LCD projector to enable members to take astronomy to local schools and clubs. The Society aims to demonstrate astronomy at a fundamental level to local children and adults.

Harrogate Astronomical Society was formed in 1986 and currently has around 60 members. The society holds its meetings generally on the last Friday in the month at the Harlow Community Centre, Beckwith Avenue, Harrogate.

For more information go to http://mysite.freemove.com/harrogate_astro_soc or call 01937 531171.

RIVIERA ASTROCAMP 2004

(formerly AstroWest)

At Torquay Boys' Grammar School
(hosted by the Torbay Astronomical Society)

The 3rd summertime gathering of amateur astronomers from the south west of England and beyond.

Camping available on the school grounds from Thursday 12th to Saturday 14th August 2004

- Use of 50cm reflector in school observatory + other telescopes (weather permitting)
- Plenty of space to set up own equipment on level surfaces
- Guest speakers (tba) on the Saturday
- Barbecue on the Saturday evening (by prepaid ticket)
- Rocket launching competition (bring your own or watch others)
- Many other attractions in locality of South Devon (eg Dartmoor, beaches, Paignton Zoo, theatres, cinema, Living Coasts etc.)

e-mail for camping booking form

(£3 pppn, under 16s free):

grahame@veale.freemove.co.uk

Visit <http://torbayastro.org.uk/> and

<http://www.halien.com/SWAA/> for reports of previous events

COSMOS V

Saturday 18 September 2004

10.00 a.m. – 6.15 p.m.

at

University of Durham, Queen's Campus,
Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland

Featuring:

PROFESSOR MIKE EDMUNDS
"Sir Isaac Remembers"

DR. FRANCISCO DIEGO
"The Lives of Stars"

DR. PAULA CHADWICK
"Astronomy at the End of the Rainbow"

PETER REA
"Far Encounters"

PAUL MONEY
"Impact! Target Earth!"

Admission £8, by advance ticket only.

For tickets, send payment and s.a.e. to:
Mr. N. M. Haggath, 74 Queensferry Gardens, Shelton
Lock, Derby. DE24 9JS.

Make cheques payable to "Cosmos North-East".

Hosted by Cleveland and Darlington A.S

SOCIETY ROUND UP

ABERDEEN AND DISTRICT AS

Contact Rhona M. Paterson, Secretary, Tel: 01224 484074
rhona_paterson@tiscali.co.uk

ABINGDON AS

Meetings at 8.00 pm in the Methodist Church Hall, Dorchester Crescent, Abingdon. Details from Bob Dryden, 01491 201620, or Sebastian Linfoot, 01865 725094 www.abingdonastro.org.uk

14-Jun SETI - The Search for Extraterrestrial Life, Dr. Barry Jones

ASTRA

The Association in Scotland to Research into Astronautics, Airdrie branch meets every Friday in Airdrie Arts Centre, Anderson Street, Airdrie, Lanarkshire, 7.30-9.30 p.m. Access to Airdrie Public Observatory which we run for North Lanarkshire District Council.

Glasgow branch meets on the first Monday evening of each month at the Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector, 11 Queen's Crescent, St. George's Cross, Glasgow, 7.30 - 9.00 p.m., and at other times. Ongoing exhibitions, publications, book discussion projects, Waverider research project.

Details from Duncan Lunan, Flat 6/5, Dalriada House, 56 Blythswood Court, Glasgow G2 7PE, 0141-221-7658.

e-mail astra@dlunan.freemove.co.uk. Website www.astra.org.uk

AS OF HARINGEY

Meetings at Ashmole School, Southgate, London N14, at 7.30 pm
www.ashastro.org.uk.

24-Jun Making Stars and Planets, Dr. Helen Walker

15-Jul Are We In For A Flat Future, Roger O'Brien

16-Sep Is Anybody Out There, Bob Mizon

ASTRONOMY SECTION OF LA SOCIETE GUERNESE

Meetings at the Observatory, Rue du Lorier, St. Peters, Guernsey. Every Tuesday evening and Friday if clear for observing.

www.astronomy.org.gg

AYLESBURY AS

Meetings take place at the Scout Hut, Oakfield Road, Aylesbury.

Contact Simon Foster on 01844 216108

www.aylesbury-astronomy.org.uk

BEDFORD AS

Meets last Wednesday of every month at the Piazza Smyth Community Observatory, Bedford School, Pemberly Avenue

Contact: Paul Barton, 01234 309249

www.bedsastro.org.uk

BIRMINGHAM AS

Wednesday Evenings at Aston Uni. Club Night; Library, telescope construction, & if it is clear observing at the Priory Observatory.

www.birmingham-astronomy.co.uk

29-Jun Space sites of the south-west USA, Mat Irvine

28-Sep TBA

BRADFORD AS

Meetings held at Eccleshill Library, Bolton Road, Bradford at 7.30 pm

Contact Hilary on 01274 672570 or John on 01274 419142

www.bradford-astro.freemove.co.uk

07-Jun Time - The Ultimate Mystery, Dr. R. Keesing

21-Jun Skymap Pro 10, Chris Marriott

05-Jul Riding on Light, Neil Haggarth

19-Jul Different Telescopes for Different Applications, Norman Oldham

09-Aug Solar Observing and Members Night

23-Aug Video Night

13-Sep Observing the Caldwell Objects, David Ratledge

27-Sep The Leonid Meteors, Dennis Ashton

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

www.cardiff-astronomical-society.org

10-Jun Journey into Space, SQU Leader D. Clark

24-Jun Astronomical Holiday Destinations, Martin Chick

08-Jul Three Short Talks

CLACTON & DISTRICT ASTRONOMICAL AS

Meetings first thursday September to July, 7.30pm. at the Friend's Meeting House, Granville Road, Clacton-on-Sea. Contact David Pugh (Secretary) Tel.01255 429849. www.clactonastronomy.co.uk

06 May The club debate, "This Society believes that Man will never travel to the Stars"

03 Jun Supernovae Explosions, Dr. Stephen Smartt

01 Jul The European Southern Observatory / Is there life elsewhere?

CLEVELAND & DARLINGTON AS

Most monthly meetings held at Grindon Parish Hall.

Neil M. Haggath, Tel. 01332 740977, E-mail: neil.haggath@ntlworld.com

25-Jun Transit of Venus Showcase, Members + Neil Haggath

CORNWALL AS

Meets second and fourth Tuesdays of the month 7.45 pm for 8.00 pm at the Godolphin Club, Wendron Street, Helston.

Contacts: Robert Beeman 01326 341164 www.CornwallAS.org.uk

e-mail info@CornwallAS.org.uk

COTSWOLD AS

Meets second Saturday of every month at Shurdington Social Centre, Shurdington, Cheltenham. 7.45 pm. Contact Callum Potter (01684-773256), coordinator@cotswoldas.org.uk, www.cotswoldas.org.uk

Jun 12 The State of the Universe, circa 2004, Dr. Pedro Ferreira, Oxford University

Jul 10 Observing Variable Stars, Roger Pickard, Director BAA Variable Star Section

Aug 14 Members Night

Sep 11 High and Far; the Romantic Story of Astronomical Expeditions, Peter Hingley, Royal Astronomical Society

COVENTRY AS

Meetings are at Earlsdon Methodist Church Hall, Earlsdon Rd South, Coventry, commencing at 7:15 PM.

Contact: Steve Payne 02476 474227

Jun 11 AGM

Jul 9 Karen Holland, "Dwarf Novae Made Simple"

Aug 13 Darren Baskill, "Research in X-ray Astronomy"

Sep 10 Chris Baddiley, "Galaxies and Active Galactic Nuclei"

EASTBOURNE AS

Meet on the first Saturday of the month from October to July, in the Willingdon Memorial Hall, Church Street, Willingdon. Meetings start at 7.30pm. Contact Peter Gill, tel. 01323 646853, email

pbj.gill@btinternet.com

05-Jun Trans Neptunian Objects and IAU CBAT, Dr. Brian Marsden

03-Jul Observing Deep Sky Objects, Dr. Nick Hewitt

THE AS OF EDINBURGH

Ordinary meetings take place at 8pm in the City Dome of the City Observatory, Calton Hill (usually on the first Friday of the month).

Any changes to our meeting arrangements will be put on our website www.astronomyedinburgh.org and on the answering machine at the observatory (556 4365).

May 7 Black Holes & Galaxy Formation, Prof Jim Dunlop - Royal Observatory, Edinburgh

Jun 4 From Tahiti to Tasmania: Transits of Venus and the Quest for the Astronomical Unit, Dr Wayne Orchiston - Anglo-Australian Observatory and Australia Telescope National Facility, Sydney

Jul 2 Social Evening

Aug 6 Members' Night

Sep 3 The South East Earth & Space Project - Helping Teachers with Astronomy, Dan Hillier - Royal Observatory, Edinburgh

EWELL AS

Meets 2nd Friday each month at St Mary's Church Hall, Ewell.

Secretary; Richard Gledhill, tel. 0208-393-1068

11-Jun Time and the Stars, Bob Mizon

09-Jul The Meteorology and Climate of Mars, Prof. Peter Read

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB AS

Meetings at 7.30 pm at the Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute, Central Square, London NW11 7BN, on the last Wednesday of the month during Institute term time. Speakers and observing evenings. Details from Dianne Fishman tel: 020 8458 4038 email: dianne@dfish.demon.co.uk or Andrew Glendinning tel: 020 8455 5501, email: aglendinning@btconnect.com.

HARROGATE AS

Meets last Friday of the month at the Harlow Community Centre, Beckwith Avenue, Harrogate. Meetings start 7.45 pm. Contact Lyn Smith, Tel: 01937 531171, E-mail: lynsmithbridgehouse@hotmail.com

30-Apr Mars - The Next Generation, Paul Money

21-May Cosmic Recycling, Dr Nick Hewitt

25-Jun TBA, Dr Allan Chapman

30-Jul Carl Sagan, Andy Lound

24-Sep Pluto - Planet or KBO, Dr John Davies

HUDDERSFIELD ASTRO. & PHIL. SOCIETY

Meetings at Observatory and Town Hall

www.huddersfieldastronomy.co.uk

ILKESTON & DISTRICT ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

All meetings take place at the Erewash Museum, Ilkeston, starting at 7-45p.m. Contact for further details, Mary McNulty 01298 78234.

Jun 8 Nebulae & their discoverers, John Brown
Jul 13 Albert Russell Norris, Anne Burnell
Aug 10 Space Planes & Lifting Bodies, James Ince
Sept 14 TBA

JERSEY ASTRONOMY CLUB

Club meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month at 8 p.m. at the Sir Patrick Moore Astronomy Centre, Les Creux Country Park, St Brelade. Also meets most Monday evenings from 8 p.m., telephone 01534 747506 to check at the center. Visitors are welcome.

LEEDS AS

Centenary House, North Street, Leeds between 7.00 pm and 9.30 pm leed-sastryonomy.org.uk

14-Jul Milestones in Astronomy, Rob Hine

11-Aug Genesis - The Birth of Stars, Paul Money

08-Sep Mining The Milky Way, Dr Melvyn Hoare

LIVERPOOL AS

Venue for monthly meetings is the Roman Catholic Cathedral's Crypt Concert Room, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool. Meetings commence at 7pm until 9pm.

Secretary: Tel 0151-638 3270 or email: clarklunar@aol.com

LOUGHTON AS

Meeting every Thursday at 8.00 pm. in the Scout Hall, Loughton Lane, Theydon Bois, Essex. Contact Andrew Robertson (01373-874175) or Charles Munton (020-8889-9253)

las-astro.org.uk

MILTON KEYNES AS

Meetings are held at Rectory Cottages, Church Green Road, Bletchley, Milton Keynes on alternate Fridays, 8 pm. Changes of venue, additional observing and social events will be announced at meetings. Annual membership is £20 for full members with a 50% reduction for concessions For further information, contact: David Mainwaring (Secretary and Librarian) tel. 01908 563051, Mike Leggett (Publicity Officer) tel. 01908 503692, E-mail: mike-pat-leggett@shenley9.fsnet.co.uk

Jun 11 Thomas Cooke of York, Telescope Maker, Martin Lunn

Jul 9 Venus Transits Review (past and present)

Aug 6 Copernican Evolution, Mike Leggett (MKAS)

Sep 3 Galaxies and AGNs, Dr Chris Baddiley

NORTH EAST LONDON AS

Meets normally on the third Sunday of each month (excluding August) between 3pm and 6pm, in the Park Room, Wanstead House, 21, The Green, Wanstead,

Contact Bernard Beeston, tel. 020 8363 5696

SCARBOROUGH & DISTRICT AS

Fourth Summer Star Festival, Friday August 13th to Monday August 16th . Adderstone Field, Dalby Forest, in the North York Moors National Park. There is a large and well-drained field for camping, (tents and caravans) with portable toilets. The cost for the weekend will be £15 per adult, £5 for 5-16 year-olds, with children under 5, free. Booking essential. Contact Jon Harper 01723 500389 E-mail jonvran@aol.com

Website <http://www.scarborough-as.org.uk>

SHROPSHIRE AS

Speaker meetings are generally held on the first Friday of the month in Shrewsbury with a monthly observing meeting at Rodington Village Hall Phone 01952 820082 for details.

www.shropshire-astro.com

SOCIETY FOR THE HISTORY OF ASTRONOMY

Contact Stuart Williams, secretary@shastro.org.uk

www.shastro.org.uk

SOLENT AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS

Meetings are in Room 8, Oaklands Centre, Lordshill, Southampton

Contact Ken Medway 02380 582204 or email

ken@medway1875.freemove.co.uk,

Website www.delscope,demon.co.uk

June 15 Cassini Mission Update Jerry Workman

July 20 Slide presentation Derek Haselden

Aug 17 Digital imaging Damian Peach

Sep 21 Light Pollution Bob Mizon

STAFFORD & DISTRICT AS

Meetings held at Weston Road High School, Stafford. 19.15

L Hodkinson, 01785 712065

17-Jun Members Night

STOUR AS

Meets first TUESDAY of every month. 7.30 p.m. The Jubilee Room, Cavendish Memorial Hall, Cavendish, Suffolk

www.stourastro.org.uk email :- secretary@stourastro.org.uk

Jun 1 "The Transit of Venus", Dr. Kevin Marshall.

Jul 6 "Star Clusters", Dr. Kevin Marshall

Aug 3 Members' Evening, + "How to Become an Astronomer", Dr. Kevin Marshall.

Sep 7 "The Astronomy of the Greeks", Dr. Kevin Marshall.

STRATFORD UPON AVON AS

All meetings begin 7.30pm at the Home Guard Club, Tiddington near Stratford upon Avon. Further details at www.astro.org.uk or from Mike Whitecross 01789 731784.

May12 "The Transit of Venus".

May 25 "Cosmology", by Dr. Alan Longstaff.

Jun 9 "Astronomical Computing".

Jun 22 "Meteors", by Neil Bone.

Jul 14 Barbecue.

Jul 27 "Astrobiology", by Dr. Mike Leggett.

TIVERTON AS

Meetings are held Fridays at 7.30 p.m. at St Aubyn's School, Blundells Road, Tiverton.

04-Jun AGM & Mapping the Sky, David Tucker

WEST DIDSBURY AS

Meets 7.00 - 9.00 pm on usually 2nd Monday in the month (except July and August) at City College Manchester, Fielden Campus, 141 Barlow Moor Rd, West Didsbury, Manchester M290 2PQ. Contact Phil Brocklebank (0161 973 5323) or Lionel Cox (07850 426234).

<http://groups.msn.com/westdidsburyastronomicalsociety>

10-May Our Active Sun, Philippa Browning from UMIST

14-June Planetary Nebulae, Myfanwy Bryce from Jodrell Bank

28-June AGM

WOLVERHAMPTON AS

Meets alternate Mondays, at 7.30pm, between September and April, with additional meetings in May and June, at Beckminster Methodist Church Hall. Contact Mr Sydney Crump (tel 01299 871606), email secretary@wolvas.org.uk www.wolvas.org.uk

14-Jun Observing Jupiters Satellites, Malcolm Astley

YORK AS

Meetings are held in the Denham Room, The Priory Street Centre, York, Meetings start at 7.30 for 8pm. Members £1.00 Non-members £2. Children under 16 are free. Contact Hazel on 07944 751277

04-Jun Tom Boles, The Galaxy Unveiled

18-Jun Informal Evening, Everyone welcome - a chance to the results of the Transit of Venus

02-Jul Dr Nick Hewitt, Globular Clusters

16-Jul Dr Alan Chapman, Subject to be confirmed

03-Sep T Cooke & Sons (deceased) Optics in Pantomime III

19-Sep Dr John Baruch, Journey to the Planets

Details of meetings mentioned in the Society Roundup should be confirmed before travelling. All programmes may be subject to change with no notice. The FAS can accept no responsibility for any inaccuracies.

FAS Website

As you may have noticed the FAS website looks different these days. Over the past 6 months or so we have changed the look, location and accessibility of the site.

The location of the website has moved from our old provider FreeServe to Force9. The Force9 service allows us to host both our static and new dynamic pages on one provider. Force9 also give us more email addresses to use, so all council members now have a dedicated FAS email address each.

The static pages have been updated & revamped. Our dynamic pages are generated from a database and allow member societies to submit diary & event items to the FAS for publication on the website. These dynamic pages also make the administration of society data easier.

When submitting information for events please include the post-code of the event location as this can make finding the event easier for your visitors.

All the pages on the website have been checked against the HTML standards and registered with ICRA and SurfSafe, 2 of the internet rating organisations

LIST OF OFFICERS 2003/2004

President: **Ron Kelley**

See front cover for details

Vice President: **Malcolm Jones**

The Willows, Hawkes Lane, Bracon Ash, Norwich,
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E-mail: vicepresident@fedastro.org.uk

Secretary: **Clive Down,**

See front cover for details

Treasurer: **Peter Cooke,**

See front cover for details

PLI Secretary: **Eric Hutton,**

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See front cover for details

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Education Secretary: **VACANT**

Publications Secretary: **VACANT**

Contact Malcolm Jones (see Vice President above) in the
meantime for information about publications.

Meetings Organiser : **Stan Waterman**

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45, Lydgate, Lepton, HUDDERSFIELD, West Yorkshire,
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Devon Group : **John Parratt**

See Handbook Editor above

East Anglia Group : **VACANT**

SAGAS Rep: **VACANT**

FAS Publications

The FAS 'Astrocalendar 2003-2004' is now available.

Discounts for quantity purchases, pricing details are available
at:

http://www.fedastro.org.uk/publications/members_prices.html

Members Prices:

| | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Astrocalendar 2003/4 | £1.60 + A5 SAE with 34p stamps |
| Observational Astronomy | £2.00 + A5 SAE with 34p stamps |
| Using a Telescope | £1.80 + A5 SAE with 34p stamps |
| Step by Step | £1.30 + A5 SAE with 28p stamps |
| Astrophotography | |
| Choosing a Telescope or | £0.60 + A5 SAE with 28p stamps |
| Binoculars | |
| FAS Handbook 2002/3 | £3.50 + A5 SAE with 69p stamps |
| (published Dec. 2002 - Every paid-up FAS Member Society gets a copy free) | |

Queries are usually easier via e-mail to the Publications Secretary:
publications@fedastro.org.uk

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Update to FAS Public Liability Insurance terms

The current FAS Public Liability Insurance now has a
£500 excess on 3rd party property claims not the £250
mentioned to societies on the verification of insurance
letter sent out to member societies.

Eric Hutton, PLI Secretary.

New Newsletter Editor Sought

Callum Potter will be standing down as Newsletter
Editor at the Annual General Meeting. If you are inter-
ested in this post and would like further information,
please do not hesitate to get in touch with Callum who
will be able to explain what is involved. Callum's final
edition will be the Autumn 2004 edition, so please con-
tinue to send items to him and for subsequent editions
until you are advised of the new editors details.

Deadline for submission for next newsletter (Autumn 2004) is 15th August 2004

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