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FEDERATION OF ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETIES

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

News from the FAS President and Council

Those of you who were at the AGM will know that I presented a substantial report explaining what the FAS has been doing, some of the issues that we've had to deal with during the last year or so, and some ideas for going forward. It was obvious from some of the feedback that members provided that there was a feeling that we have not done enough to keep you up-to-date about what is going on. At first, this hurt, since we feel that we put a lot of effort into running the FAS and as a Council, we only meet 3 times a year and have to conduct most of our business remotely via e-mail.

However, a bit of reflection made us realise that we have not explained sufficiently widely what we are doing, why we are doing it, and importantly, what it all costs. The big difficulty is that the main event at which we explain everything is the AGM. Despite years of trying to take the AGM round the country, we have never succeeded in getting more than a few societies to turn up, despite a membership of over 170 societies.

The only solution is to make sure that our messages get across in other ways. To that end, a full copy of my report is available to read and download on the FAS web site (www.fedastro.org.uk). To supplement this, we will provide some substantial updates either in the Newsletter, like this, or by special mailings to society officers. So where are we?

I said at the AGM that the costs of running the FAS and the services that we provide have escalated dramatically in recent years. The main costs that we incur are about £800 per issue of the Newsletter, £600 in travelling costs for each Council meeting, and £1,500 printing and distribution costs for the Handbook. I outlined some ideas for how we might change what we do so that we can keep costs under control. Progress on some of these is detailed below.

We said at the AGM that the Handbook had proved extremely difficult to produce this year. No-one stood for the post of Publications Secretary at the 2003 or 2004 AGMs. The Publications Secre-



Guy Hurst receiving the Eric Zucker Award from FAS President Ron Kelley. Guy had just given an entertaining and enlightening talk at the Annual Convention on his work on the search for novae / supernovae (see Obituary on Page 4)

tary handles the physical production of our publications (except the Newsletter). When a post is vacant, we cannot be surprised if that causes difficulties. We promised that we would try to get the 2004-05 Handbook to you within a month or so of the AGM. As I write this, I have received an e-mail this morning saying that the Handbook is in the process of being e-mailed to the printers, so hopefully it will be in print by the time that you are reading this.

Going forward, we cannot afford the costs, or the difficulties, of continuing to produce the Handbook the way that we have done in the past. As suggested at the AGM, we are going to move to a new format. We have already put some of the static data, e.g. lists of equipment suppliers, onto the FAS web site. If you look under 'Handbook' you will see a series links to Portable Document Format (PDF) files. You can download and browse these at your leisure. The next Handbook will be in a new format. Each society will receive a binder. We will issue the contents of the Handbook as inserts for the binder. Periodically, we will issue revised inserts for the binder (e.g. lists of speakers, society details etc.). In this way, the Handbook will be kept up-to-date. Also, we will be able to issue various 'one-off' reference documents such as 'how to run a society', 'health and safety' etc. We have not finalised this yet, so look out for more details in future Newsletters.

Ideally, we would like to keep Council meetings in their existing format of all members attending the 3 Council meetings held each year. The problem is that transport costs have increased tremendously. It now costs us about £600 to cover the travelling costs for 1 Council meeting (e.g. my costs have gone up by 150% in the last 5 years). We are guilty of taking our eyes off the ball - we should have



Some of the delegates browsing the trade stands at the 2004 FAS Convention

(Continued on page 2)

EDITORIAL

First of all, welcome to my first effort as Editor, with your help I will improve over time. A word of thanks must be given to Callum Potter, the retiring editor, for his sterling efforts over recent years and for his co-operation and assistance to me personally during the handover.

I do not intend to make a habit of sticking my head above the parapet like this as I hope that you, the membership, will provide all the copy necessary to fill future newsletters. However there are a few initial comments I would like to make.

In the short time since I was appointed Editor, members of several societies have muttered '*why do you not mention our society?*'. Well the response is - '*give me the information in good time*'. I realise the difficulties of fixing programmes, finding speakers, etc., but in turn you must take into account the production schedule of the Newsletter. The copy dates are given on the back page. Furthermore, the information must be sent to me specifically, there is no use hoping that I may spot it on your website.

To sum up, the motto is: 'You no provide—I no include'.

Do not, however, think that all I want is Society programmes. It is important that this Newsletter reflects some of the personality of our chosen interest. News of the activities of both societies and individuals is welcomed and I would be happy if we could strike up a lively correspondence section. So get writing (or emailing). By the way photographs enliven any publication and I look forward to receiving them - on any loosely related subject - although I can't guarantee inclusion.

Talking of pictures, you will note that I have included a couple of my own in this edition. Again I would have preferred to use someone else's but I felt this astronomical event needed coverage and these were all I had.

Well, that's enough lecturing - I hope 2005 brings good fortune to all and clearer skies than I experienced in 2004. Ed

increased subscriptions more substantially in the late 90s. Instead we allowed other income (such as publications) to subsidise our running costs. This is why we revised the subscription structure last year. The three-tier structure means that on a 'per capita' membership basis, all societies are paying about the same rate. This is basically represented by the fact that we send more Newsletters to larger societies. The majority of your subscription is to cover the cost of Newsletters.

We are proposing to change the way that we run Council meetings. It is likely that we will continue to hold them in London (it's the only place that everyone can get to with the least inconvenience). However, only a core membership will attend all meetings, with others attend on an 'as required' basis. The Council will meet in full once every year. This proposal, together with reducing the expenses for the AGM, will save about £1,000 p.a. in travelling expenses.

One issue is the funding of the Regional Representatives. Each formally recognised Region of the FAS is entitled to nominate one person to attend Council meetings on their behalf. The Representatives are not allowed to vote, but do contribute to the meetings. At present, the FAS Council pays for their travelling expenses in full. This amounts to nearly half of the total travelling expenses for Council. We believe that the Regions should consider financing some of this themselves. One way of reducing the costs is to have the Representatives only attend the proposed annual 'full' Council meeting. This is not ideal, but provides a way forward. More thought is required on this point.

The alternative to the above proposals is that societies accept that the costs of running the FAS are increasing and meet the bill through increased subscriptions.

It's hard for most people to get excited about an organisation whose primary function is administrative. I get asked what do we do? It's a bit like 'What did the Romans ever do....?' The FAS provides links and representation into organisations such as National Astronomy Week and PATTAG (who will be responsible for allocating telescope time for amateurs on professional instruments (such as the 'Liverpool' 2m telescope on La Palma)). We run the PLI scheme (this alone saves each and every society probably about £500 - £1,000 p.a.). We maintain lists of speakers. We provide support and information packs for societies from how to set-up a new society, model constitutions, how to become a registered charity, health and safety issues, and so on. We run a web site with space set aside for you to publicise your own events and activities (under utilised at the moment). We run a major annual convention with about 4 major speakers with lots of trade stands and exhibitors. We produce a range of publications, such as the annual Astrocalendar, so that you can buy them and sell them on to your members and the public, possibly as a means of fund-raising for your society. We maintain a library of general astronomical slides to help people who want to put slide shows and talks together, but lack their own material. We produce 3 major Newsletters a year (each edition now runs to over 4,000 copies) plus the Handbook (each year!). On top of this, we provide a general sup-

port service for societies who have questions, queries and problems. We help where we can, and try to point people in the right direction when we can't. We also get a lot of contact from outside organisations wanting to contact local societies. Recently that has included Channel 4 and the BBC wanting to make television programmes.

All together, I think we should be proud of the work that the Federation does on behalf of its member societies. What we do is not glamorous, it's not usually very exciting, but we like to think that it helps to improve the quality of the amateur astronomy scene in Britain.

If you have any comments to make on this, or on the AGM report, then please send us your feedback using the special e-mail address, details on the web site.

Best wishes - Ron Kelley, FAS President.

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The Night Sky Observer's Guide, by George Robert Kepple and Glen W. Sanner

Volume 1, Autumn & Winter \$35 ISBN: 0-943396-58-1 & Volume 2 Spring and Summer \$35 ISBN: 0-943396-60-3

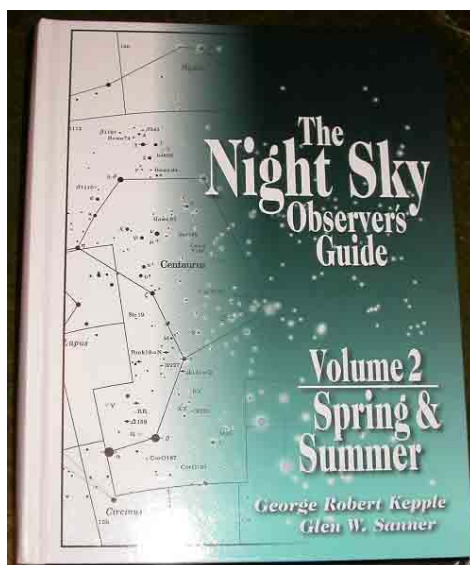
In 1987 George Kepple and Glen Sanner founded a bi-Monthly magazine called the *Observers Guide*. Its purpose was to describe, with the active participation of its readers, what could be seen from the Mid-Northern latitudes with mid and larger aperture telescopes of the day. Each issue was devoted to a single Constellation, and when completed in 1992, sixty-four Constellations had been covered. *The Night Sky Observers Guide* is the descendant of these early magazine articles.

Arranged alphabetically by constellation - omitting only those in the far-southern sky, each chapter gives practical descriptions of deep-sky objects as they appear through telescopes of various apertures. Whilst apertures of 8" and upwards dominate most of the book, there are many objects that can be observed in instruments as small as 4".

Each section begins with an overview of each constellation and a small table listing a number of showpiece objects, which are both suitable for scope and binocular viewing. To help the reader find their way around the sky, there is a single large, and a number of smaller scale star charts. Using a long focal length eyepiece and/or a finder scope, these are more than adequate for finding each object described.

Objects are ordered by NGC number, for easy location within each of the sections. There are numerous tables of information on brightness, distances, angular separations, sizes, shapes, orientations, and what size telescope and magnification is recommended for best viewing. In all these observations were made from notes taken from over 40 contributors. Many of these are illustrated with either photographic images or hand drawings, which help the reader put the object into context with its surroundings.

While primarily aimed observers of Galaxies, Nebulae and Clusters, data tables for both Variable and Double stars ensure these objects are not neglected. For particularly spectacular variable and dou-



bles, a brief observing description is also given in a similar format for the Deep-Sky objects given throughout.

At the beginning of Volume One, over 40 pages are devoted to a wide-ranging description of the various object types, as well as a comprehensive section on how to view and record your Deep-Sky object observations.

Whilst an evenings observation can be planned in seconds using one of the many computerised start chart programmes, these high tech tools don't prepare the observer for what they will actually see and this is where this book particularly excels.

Two copies of both volumes should be in every Astronomical societies library. One for arm chair reference, and the other for field use.

I obtained my copies from the US via Sky and Telescope magazine for \$35 each. With a few other books, there was still a considerable saving than buying these from a UK source...even with Fedex 2 day shipping. Books are exempt from import duty as well as VAT, which make for even better value.

Nick Tonkin, Brannel Astronomy

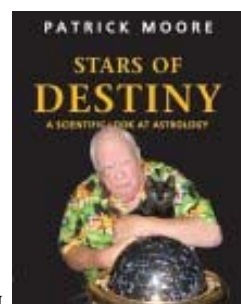
Stars of Destiny; a scientific look at astrology by Sir Patrick Moore

Hardcover 112 pages (September 1, 2004)

Publisher: Canopus Publishing

ISBN: 0953786862 Price: £9.95

I have, like most, grown up reading Patrick Moore's books so I jumped at the chance to review his latest book. Not only this but, as most astronomers would, I was intrigued by the title. I think I must have had at least 10 arguments this year with people about astrology. On every occasion I have felt justified in what I said but maybe it was worth a second look.



In this book Patrick Moore's main aim is to see if Astrology has any scientific basis. This means the book has an essay feel to it - not a bad thing. It has the feel of a traditional exam paper style question of "discuss". For most, the arguments that are used will be well known but this book is definitely worth a read for the advanced astronomer. If not only to clarify things in your mind for the next time you have a discussion about astrology but for some of the interesting stories that are spread throughout the book.

A short read, only 100 pages or so, which means that it is one you can sit down and have a relaxing few hours with - ideal for a cloudy night when there is not a star to be seen.

As I said before there some interesting stories throughout (I am sure Patrick Moore has a million more of them) and then there are the basic astronomical ideas, which will be understandable to any new astronomer. If anyone wanted to just learn a few interesting things about astronomy without going into detail then I would suggest that this would be a good book for them.

Every book has its flaws and for me this has to be the lack of detail of astrological ideas. I would have loved to see a slightly more detailed look at this but Patrick has obviously decided to take the more general key ideas point of view. Even without this detail I would highly recommend this book as an interesting read.

Oh and if you want to know what the constellations Pedicularis, Anarostum, Gravimercal or Antilla Gasolina are then you should read this book!

Sam George



FAS Council 2004/5

L to R: Paul Harper, Gary Gawthrop, Shaun O'Dell, Eric Hutton, Samuel George, Ian Coulson, Stan Waterman, Richard Sargent, John Parrat, Peter Cooke, Callum Potter, Ron Kelly (seated).

Taken after the Council meeting on Saturday 20th November 2004 at The London Planetarium.

A notable absentee is Secretary Clive Down, who was in sunnier climes. (To get into future shots I must learn how to operate the delayed action on the camera!!—Ed)

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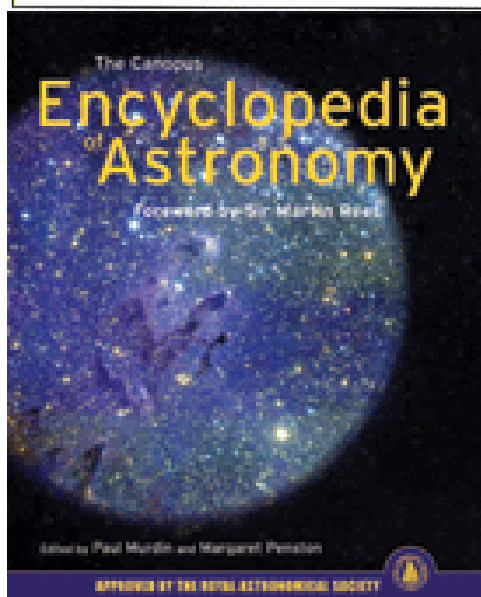
EMAIL us : alexandersobservatories@hotmail.com



Nick Evans

44 Hillmead, Norwich , Norfolk , NR33PF

01603 487282 – 07833 516933



The Canopus Encyclopedia of Astronomy

Edited by Paul Murdin and Margaret Penston

Publisher: Canopus Publishing 480 large format pages

ISBN: 0953786889 Price: £40

Oh No! – not another encyclopaedia – just another book that would end up being remaindered in the cheap bookshops! - that was my first reaction.

Then I saw that one of the editors was Paul Murdin, who gave a thoroughly entertaining and informative lecture at the 2004 FAS Annual Convention. This put me in a more optimistic mood, which was further improved when I saw that the Foreword was by none other than the Astronomer Royal himself. When I opened this rather weighty (literally) tome, I found that indeed I was not disappointed.

Now it is not too easy to review an encyclopaedia, there is no plot to get immersed in and there is no development of an involved theory to get one confused – just a lot of facts – in this case over 470 pages of them from 'Abastumani Astrophysical Observatory' (in Georgia) to 'ZZ Ceti star'.

However, whilst it is just a lot of facts, these are well researched and attractively set out, so creating an excellent source of information and data for amateur and professional, beginner and experienced.

As part of the review I did try a game of looking up facts in other books and checking them in this one - at no time did I find it wanting.

This book seems bang up-to-date, yet covers the history equally well.

All-in-all, worth having on every bookshelf.

Frank Johns

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01726-813602 Brian (evenings)

OBITUARY

It is with great sadness that we report the death on December 28th 2004 of Eric Zucker. Eric died peacefully after a long period of deteriorating health. Eric was the Federation's Education Officer for many years. The role was created for Eric with his unique position of being on the Council of the Association of Astronomy Educators (AAE) as well as the FAS.

When Eric retired from the FAS Council in the mid 90s, the Council of the FAS created an award, known as the Eric Zucker award to recognise service to amateur astronomy. Recipients have included Allan Chapman, Pam Spence, and this year Guy Hurst. In this way his memory will live on.

Lunar Eclipse - 28th October 2004

The eclipse occurred during the worst storm to hit the West Country for quite some time. No-one was expecting it to be at all visible. However during a call of nature at about 2.30am, a peep through the curtains revealed some breaks in the heavy cloud. With some misgivings I dressed and went out and opened up the dome. The breaks in the cloud became more frequent until there was a period of from about 3–3.30am when the sky was completely clear.



These images were taken using a Nikon Coolpix 4500 afocally through a 40mm eyepiece on a 10inch LX200 at f6.3. There cannot have been many people imaging that night, in view of the fact that Astronomy Now were desperate enough to use one of my images in their article on this event.

Frank Johns, Newquay



FAS Convention 2004

The FAS convention was for the second year in a row held at the wonderful Institute of Astronomy, Cambridge. As in 2003 the event was well attended with many members of the Astro' community and general public present.

The day itself included some excellent talks. These included Dr Paul Murdin - "The Reality of Black Holes", Guy Hurst - "The search for novae/supernovae: from visual to laptop", Dr Cathie Clarke - "The formation of stars, brown dwarfs and planets", Professor Douglas Gough - "Hardly Pulsating Stars".

During the lunch break there was a chance for everyone to look around the excellent telescopes at the IoA and to wander around the excellent displays on offer from societies and traders. There was also chance to buy tickets to our raffle draw in which there were over 10 prizes donated by various companies.

This years Eric Zucker award, awarded to an individual for their work in astronomy, was awarded to Guy Hurst.

Samuel George (FAS Publicity Officer)



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- Revised high resolution maps of planets obtained from the latest space missions.
- All recently discovered moons of Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune.
- Displays of Solar corona with total eclipse event, Meteor showers.
- "quasi-realistic" images of comets (with new comets).
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- Improved Display Mode for screen display without bars, display of multiple users as stars, comets, asteroids and spacecraft in the Sky Window.
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SOCIETY ROUND UP

ABINGDON AS

Abingdon AS at the Methodist Church Hall, Dorchester Crescent, Abingdon, at 8.00pm. For more details telephone Bob Dryden 01491 201620 or visit our website www.abingdonastro.org.uk

- Jan 10 'Oxfordshire's Space Centre' - Prof Richard Harrison(RAL) -
- Jan 17 Beginners meeting
- Feb 14 'Landing on a Comet' - Dr Andrew Ball (Open University)
- Feb 21 Beginners meeting
- Mar 14 'ESA Mars Project, Aurora' - Dr Sarah Dunkin (RAL)
- Mar 21 Beginners meeting
- Apr 11 'The Long and the Short of it: What Determines the Sizes of Galaxies?' - Dr Andrew Benson (Oxford Uni)
- Apr 18 Beginners meeting
- May 9 AGM
- May 16 Beginners meeting
- Jun 6 Beginners meeting
- Jun 13 TBA—Ms Deborah Hambly (Abingdon AS)

AS OF HARINGEY

Meetings in 2003 at Ashmole School, Southgate, London N14, at 7.30 pm www.ashastro.org.uk.

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.
Colin Spicer. Tel: 01484-721997 email: colin.spicer@cwgsy.net
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, Pembroly 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

BRANNEL ASTRONOMY - formerly The Roseland Observatory

Meetings on third Friday, and from April - the first Saturday, of each month at Brannel School, St Stephens, Cornwall .

Inaugural meeting Friday 18th February at Brannel School, 7.30pm
Speaker: Dr Sara Russell Natural History Museum.
Contact: Paul Hughes, 0796 6961802 or Frank Johns, 01637-878020

For details of changes go to: www.brannelastronomy.com

BRECKLAND AA

Open Meetings are on the second Friday of each month at Great Ellingham Recreation Centre near Attleborough, Norfolk at 7.30 PM.
Open meetings are followed by a tour and observing (weather permitting) at our adjacent observatory, which houses a computer controlled 20 inch reflector. We also have a 9 1/4 inch celestron Scmitt-Cassegraine, an 8 inch reflector and an 8 1/2 inch reflector.
Further details and a full contact list are available on our website at www.breckastro.supanet.com telephone 01953 602045

BRADFORD AS

Meetings usually held on a Monday in the upstairs room at Eccleshill Library, Bolton Road, Bradford, BD2 4SR at 7.30pm until 9.45pm.
For any further information please see our website at www.bradford-astro.freereserve.co.uk or ring Hilary on 01274 6725711.
For information about weekly night-time observing ring Andy on 01274 413464 or John on 01274 419142; or for weekend solar observing ring Colin on 01274 586584.

| | | |
|--------|---|-----------------|
| Jan 10 | AGM, followed by slide show or video | |
| Jan 22 | OPEN DAY for new telescope owners / beginners | 10am to 4pm. |
| Jan 24 | Welcome to Astronomy | Claire Wilson |
| Feb 7 | Untilted Images of the Night Sky | Mark Adamson |
| Feb 21 | 75 years of the planet Pluto | Martin Whipp |
| Mar 7 | Here's One I Prepared Earlier | Andrew Makin |
| Mar 21 | Members Night/Video Night | |
| Apr 4 | Different Views of the Sun | Dr Roger New |
| Apr 18 | Deep Sky Objects | Tony O'Sullivan |

- May 9 Mapping the Big Bang
- May 23 Genesis - the Birth of Stars

Iain Morison
Paul Money, FRAS, FBIS

BRISTOL AS

Meetings held on Friday evenings at 7.15pm at Bristol Grammar School, Contact John Pickard (Vice Chairman), tel. 01454 632692 or Tricia Brown (Secretary), tel. 0117 968 5023
www.bristolastrosoc.freereserve.co.uk

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.
David Powell (secretary), 029 2055 1704. Email CAS@ilddat.demon.co.uk
www.cardiff-astronomical-society.org

CLEETHORPES AS

Meetings held at the Beacon Hill Observatory, Cleethorpes, start at 7.30pm.

| | | |
|----------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Feb 2nd | A Panoramic Moon | Peter Rea |
| Feb 17th | Seminar on Astrophotography | |
| Mar 2nd | Cosmic Collisions | Dennis Ashton |
| Apr 6th | A brief history of the moon | Ray Emery |
| May 4th | The Tunguska Event | John Brown |
| May 10th | Patrick Moore | Bill Cobley |
| June 1st | Milestones in Astronomy | Rod Hine |

Contact Paul Thompson 01472 233552 or e-mail paul@cleethorpesastronomy.co.uk. www.cleethorpesastronomy.co.uk

CLEVELAND & DARLINGTON AS

Most monthly meetings held at Grindon Parish Hall.
Contact: Neil M. Haggath, Tel. 01332 740977, E-mail: neil.haggath@ntlworld.com

COTSWOLD AS

Meets second Saturday of every month at Shurdington Church Hall, Shurdington, Cheltenham. 7.45 pm. Contact Duncan Willoughby (01452-416405)
www.cotswoldas.org.uk

CREWKERNE & DISTRICT AS (CADAS)

Have outline planning permission to build an observatory, meeting room and work room in a dark sky site close to Crewkerne.
Anne Dodgson Crewastra@aol.com

EASTBOURNE AS

Meeting dates are: 8th January, 5th February, 5th March, 9th April, 7th May, 4th June and 2nd July at the Willington Memorial Hall, Church Street, Willington starting at 7.30 p.m. Contact Peter Gill, tel. 01323 646853, email pbj.gill@btinternet.com. www.EastbourneAS.org.uk

ILKESTON & DISTRICT AS

All meetings take place at Erewash Museum, Ilkeston, Derbyshire and start at 7.45p.m. Contact Mary Mc Multy, tel. 01298 78234

EWELL AS

Meets 2nd Friday each month at St Mary's Church Hall, Ewell.
Secretary; Richard Gledhill, tel. 0208-393-1068

HUDDERSFIELD ASTRO. & PHIL. SOCIETY

Meetings at Observatory and Town Hall
www.huddersfieldastronomy.co.uk

LEEDS AS

Centenary House, North Street, Leeds between 7.00 pm and 9.30 pm
leedsastronomy.org.uk

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|----------|---|------------------|
| 9th Feb | Messier and Herschel | Jim Cornmell |
| 9th Mar | The Fathers of Variable Astronomy - Lunn/John Goodricke/Pigott | |
| 13th Apr | The Liverpool Telescope | Dr Andrew Newsam |
| 11th May | Title to be arranged | Dr Malcolm Grey |
| 8th June | The Work of the Liverpool Astronomical Society Sidewalk Astronomers | David Owen |

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 Jerry Workman (0208-507-7568)
las-astro.org.uk

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|--------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 20 Jan | Mapping the Heavens | Ken Harrison |
| 27 Jan | New Universe | Dr Bob Langbourne (OU) |
| 3 Feb | Clouds of Magellan | Konrad Malin-Smith |

10 Feb Galileo Mission Review Jerry Workman
 17 Feb Observing/Titbits
 24 Feb Captured Image Competition
 3 Mar AGM
 10 Mar Latest Images from Mars Jerry Workman
 17 Mar Widefield CCD Imaging Ian King
 24 Mar Exploring the Moon Jerry Stone
 31 Mar Spring Skies A Robertson/C Munton
 7 Apr Spectroscopy Jack Martin
 14 Apr Observatory Review/Observing
 21 Apr 500 Years of Eclipse Imagery Peter Hingley
 28 Apr Cassini Mission Update Jerry Workman
 12 May Astronomy in Education Richard Williams
 19 May Making Stars & Planets Dr Helen Walker
 26 May Landing on a Comet Dr Andrew Ball

LOWESTOFT & GT YARMOUTH RA (LYRA)

Tues 18th Feb AGM

Meetings normally take place on the 2ND Thur at the Sunrise Inn in Corton Road. All meetings begin at 8pm.

Kirkley Observatory is now open for use mainly on (Sat/Sun evenings 7PM with an option for weekday evenings if requested). 12-inch reflecting scope.

Richard Chilvers: 28 Blyford road, Lowestoft 01502 57401

email: good.goat@tiscali.co.uk www.lyra.gb.net

MARR AS

Meets: Last Tuesday of the month at 1930, Learney Arms Hotel, Torphins.

Observational meetings as weather permits

Contact David Pattullo, wolfscot@dialstart.net

www.freewebs.com/marrastro

MORAY AC

Meetings 1st Friday of every month starting at 7.30PM at Elgin High School, New Elgin, Morayshire. Observing Evenings every Friday from mid September at The Bothy, Easterton Airfield. For details contact Ian Brantingham on 01466 771371 or ian@branters

freeserve.co.uk Web site: <http://www.sigma-astro.co.uk>

4th Feb Computers in Weather Forecasting Dave Rutherford

4th Mar Near and Far - Mercury and Pluto Pauline Macrae

1st Apr Transit of Venus Douglas Cooper

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

NORTH ESSEX AS

Public meeting at 7.30pm on the third Thursday of every month (excluding August & December) at the BT Exchange Social Hall in Collingwood Road, Witham.

For more information contact (01376) 521897.

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

ORWELL AS

email ipswich@ast.cam.ac.uk

www.ast.cam.ac.uk/~ipswich

Astronomy Workshops: 5th Jan, 2nd Feb, 2nd Mar, 6th Apr, 4th May

PAPWORTH ASTRONOMY CLUB

Meets on the first Wednesday of every month.

2nd Feb Magnetic Observations of Saturn during the Insertion

Orbit of Cassini Nick Achilleos

2nd Mar Open Evening at Pendragon Primary School

Contact Keith Tritton - phone 01767 677219, email kpt2@tutor.open.ac.uk

ROSELAND OBSERVATORY

See Brannel Astronomy

SCARBOROUGH & DISTRICT AS

Public observing nights at The Astronomy Centre, Dalby Forest, Thornton Dale, near PICKERING, North Yorkshire, on the first Friday of the month. Contact 01723 500389

www.scarborough-as.org.uk

SEKAS (SOUTH EAST KENT)

We are an active one, have excellent speakers, and are very sociable too !!!

Instruments include a 20" DarkStar dobsonian, and ccd work is pursued by a good number, as well as h-alpha solar observation, traditional observations, public observation nights, etc. Contact: Tony Bennet 01843-831079

Secretary@sekas.co.uk www.sekas.co.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

24th June Planetary Nebulae- The Fate of the Sun Dr Rhys Morris

23rd Sept Exploring the Universe from Jodrell Bank Tim O'Brien

SOCIETY FOR THE HISTORY OF ASTRONOMY

Contact Stuart Williams, secretary@shastro.org.uk

www.shastro.org.uk

SOUTHAMPTON AS

All Meetings are held at Southampton University, Physics Building in the Physics & Astronomy Seminar Room at 7.30pm.

Monthly Meetings

Jan Practical telescope demonstration with society's new equipment.

Ian Gore - Secretary 01329 310876

Lawrence Harris - Publicity 023 8090 8488

STAFFORD & DISTRICT AS

Meetings held at Weston Road High School, Stafford. 19.15

Contact L Hodkinson, 01785 712065

STOUR AS

Meets monthly in the Jubilee Room of Cavendish Memorial Hall, Cavendish, Suffolk on the first Tuesday of every month at 7.30 p.m.

Contact K. Marshall, 01787-249534

STRATFORD UPON AVON AS

Meetings 7.30pm at the Home Guard Club, Tiddington, Nr Stratford upon

Avon. Contact: Mike Whitecross 01789 731784

www.astro.org.uk

SWANSEA AS

Meetings held at 7.30pm in lecture theatre C of the Science Block at the University of Wales Campus, Swansea

Feb 24 T.B.A.

Mar 10 Antihydrogen In The Lab

Mar 24 The Psychology of Visual Perception

Apr 14 Measuring Minor Planets - Have Telescope

Apr 28 The Planet Mercury

May 12 The Gerry Lacey Memorial Lecture: To See The Beginning Of Time

Mr. Andy Lound

May 26 Annual General Meeting With Members' Talks

TIVERTON AS

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

TULLAMORE AS - new member society

<http://www.iol.ie/~seanmck/tas.htm>

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM AS

We are a University society with the majority of our members being Undergraduate students, but we always welcome people along.

Contact Scott Porter, email: scp@star.sr.bham.ac.uk

www.astrosoc.org.uk

VECTIS AS (Isle of Wight)

Meetings held in Parish Hall, Town Lane, Newport.

John@vlangley.freeserve.co.uk

website: www.wightskies.fsnet.co.uk

WOLAS (West of London AS)

Secretary: Duncan J Radbourne. 9 Wellington Road, Hatch End, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 4NF. Email: duncan.radbourne@gmail.com

Website: www.wolas.org.uk

WOLVERHAMPTON AS

Meets alternate Mondays, at 7.30pm, between September and April, with additional meetings in May and June, at Beckminster Methodist Church Hall, Birches

Contact: Sydney Crump (tel 01299 871606), email secretary@wolas.org.uk

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

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.

LIST OF OFFICERS 2004/2005

President: **Ron Kelly**

See front cover for details

Vice President: **Callum Potter**

The Cottage, Bredon's Hardwick, Tewkesbury, Glos.,
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Secretary: **Clive Down,**

See front cover for details

Treasurer: **Peter Cooke,**

See front cover for details

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See front cover for details

Handbook Editor: **VACANT**

Publications Sec: **VACANT**

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73 Woolbarn Lawn, Whiddon Valley, Barnstaple, North
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Andy_Salmon@compuserve.com

Yorkshire Group : **Paul Harper**

45, Lydgate, Lepton, HUDDERSFIELD, West Yorkshire,
HD8 OLT Tel: 01484 606832

FAS Publications

The FAS 'Astrocalendar 2004-2005' is now available.

Discounts for quantity purchases, pricing details are available at:
<http://www.fedastro.org.uk>

Members Prices:

| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Astrocalendar 2005 | £2.00 + C5 SAE (34p stamps) |
| Observational Astronomy | £2.20 + C5 SAE (34p stamps) |
| Using a Telescope | £2.30 + C5 SAE (34p stamps) |
| Step by Step | £1.60 + C5 SAE (28p stamps) |
| Astrophotography | |
| FAS Handbook 2001 | £1.00 + C5 SAE (44p stamps) |
| (published 2001) | |
| FAS Handbook 2004/5 | £3.50 + C5 SAE (69p stamps) |
| (published Dec. 2004 - 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

Amendment to 2004/5 Yearbook - List of Speakers

Please note the contact details for Mr Andrew Green are now:
173 The Rowans, Milton, Cambridge
Cambridgeshire. CB4 6YZ
07970-318547 01223-440597
Email: arg@freenet.co.uk

European Astrofest 2005

Friday 4th & Saturday 5th February 2005

The FAS will again have a stand at this event - why not
stop by for a chat about what you and your Society are up
to?

Deadlines for submission for newsletter in 2005:

Spring 2005 - 8th April 2005
Summer 2005 - 12th August 2005
Winter 2005/6 - 9th December 2005

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

THE FAS WEBSITE HAS BEEN REVISED
- CHECK OUT
www.fedastro.org.uk