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FEDERATION OF ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETIES

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

John Dobson - *of Dobsonian fame* to Attend FAS Convention

The FAS Convention and AGM

Saturday 30th September 2006

At The Birmingham and Midland Institute

(the BMI is just 5 minutes walk from Birmingham New Street station and near to local car parks)

Doors Open at 9.00am

Welcome and First Talk at 10.00am

Close at 5.00pm

Guest Speakers;

Professor John Brown - Royal Astronomer for Scotland

Dr Allan Chapman - University of Oxford

Dr Somak Raychaudhury - University of Birmingham

Dr David Whitehouse - Science Journalist / BBC

Plus: John Dobson

plus Full Trade Exhibition - Multi-prize Raffle - Tour of BMI Library

Tickets £12 on the door or £10 in advance.

Email Callum Potter - president@fedastro.org.uk

For more information visit: www.fedastro.org.uk

The world comes to Portsmouth to debate Dark Skies

The British Astronomical Association's Campaign for Dark Skies (CfDS) will stage the SIXTH EUROPEAN DARK-SKY SYMPOSIUM in Portsmouth in SEPTEMBER 2006.

All amateur astronomers, local government officials and anyone connected with the making, choosing and installing of outdoor lighting will be warmly welcomed.

The CfDS is busily organising this, its second UK-based International Symposium on the subject of light pollution (some readers may remember the Reading colloquium in 1993). This will be the sixth such event, others having been held annually in Switzerland, Germany, France, Belgium and Italy. It is hoped to make the event the most successful to date, both in attendance numbers and in putting across our message that quality lighting and a view of the stars are compatible.

The Symposium will be held on Friday 15th & Saturday 16th September 2006. Friday will focus on the interests of Local Government Officers, lighting professionals, and other interested parties. One of the many highlights of the day will be an analysis of the lighting section of the new Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act by eminent law expert Martin Taylor (BAA Coun-

(Continued on page 2)



Light pollution from a Norfolk caravan park (Bob Fuller)

LETTERS

CHARITY REGISTRATION AND GIFT AID

Astronomical Societies are in their nature charitable - they are providing science education for their members and the public. They qualify for Registered Charity status if the Charity Commission approves their constitution. Constitutions which do not meet Commission requirements, can easily be adjusted. The benefits of being Registered include easier access to grants from bodies such as the Lottery, and claiming Gift Aid.

Gift Aid - how it works :-

Someone makes a donation to your organisation. Donations can include annual subscriptions depending on the wording of the Gift Aid Declaration. If the donor is a UK tax payer s/he fills in the Societies Gift Aid Declaration.

The organisation sends a claim once per year to Inland Revenue.

Inland Revenue sends you a cheque for 28% of the donation. (28p per £1)

The process makes no difference to donors' tax status.

Charities who are not Registered cannot claim Gift Aid.

For "small" charities, with a turnover of less than £10,000 per year, the Commission do not require fully Audited accounts - Inspected will do. The cost of an annual full audit is the only cost downside as far as I know.

Being Registered creates minimal annual paperwork for a small charity.

Claiming Gift Aid is more complicated, requiring good record keeping by the treasurer.

My Society, The York Astronomical Society, is discussing whether or not to Register to get Gift Aid. The YAS committee decided to ask other Astronomy Societies for their ideas.

I e-mailed 121 Societies in England and Wales listed in the Federation Handbook, saying :-

" (after pleasantries) We are considering applying to be a Registered Charity. If your AS is Registered please will you tell me how goes it? Are there any costs you did not expect? Have any complications arisen since you Registered which you did not expect?

Quite a lot of the email addresses failed, so my request never got through to them.

I got 28 replies. Of these :-

- 13 are Registered Charities and are in favour of the process.
- 8 had looked into Registering and had decided against.
- 7 were not Registered, but wanted to know more.

Many sent interesting comments about their experiences or ideas.

My overall impression so far is that Registration is worth it if someone is willing to do all the paperwork, and if the Society is big enough, i.e. has over 100 members. Ambition also plays a part - are you wanting to build an observatory or buy fancy telescopes?

Will YAS agree to Register and claim Gift Aid? - watch this space!

A lot of information is available via the Internet. e.g.

<http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/>

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities/claim_tax_back.htm

Any comments for and against Registering would be appreciated! We are planning to claim Gift Aid if we Register - I will be reporting progress on this via the FAS.

Dark skies. Martin Whillock. Hon. Sec. York Astronomical Society.

<http://www.yorkastro.co.uk/>



(Continued from page 1)

eil and Law School, de Montfort University). Mike Simpson, past president of the Institution of Lighting Engineers, will join Dr Chris Baddiley (CfDS) in discussing the mechanisms of skyglow and the best solutions. Other aspects to be aired on the Friday will be lighting and wildlife and lighting and crime - subjects both more complex than they seem at first sight.

Saturday's sessions will focus on astronomers and light pollution, including papers from Friedel Pas (Belgium) and Wim Schmidt (Holland) that show how deep sky observation in light-polluted Europe is monitored, and speakers will provide insights into how the problem is tackled in the international arena. From the USA, Bob Gent of the International Dark Sky Association will chair a session during which IDA awards will be presented.

The event will be opened by Lembit Opik MP, and closing remarks will be made by Robert Key MP. Other speakers already secured include Dr John Mason (BAA, South Downs Planetarium), astrophotographer Philip Perkins, and many others from the UK and abroad.

The venue (the Royal Sailors' Home Club) has an excellent hall and restaurant and is close to many visitor attractions (Portsmouth Naval Base, HMS Victory, HMS Warrior, the Mary Rose, the new 170m Spinnaker Tower, the new Gunwharf (harbour-side) shopping and leisure complex, Historic Old Portsmouth, etc.). This will enable us to arrange evening and lunchtime trips as a supplement to the event, including Hampshire Astronomical Group's

REVIEWS

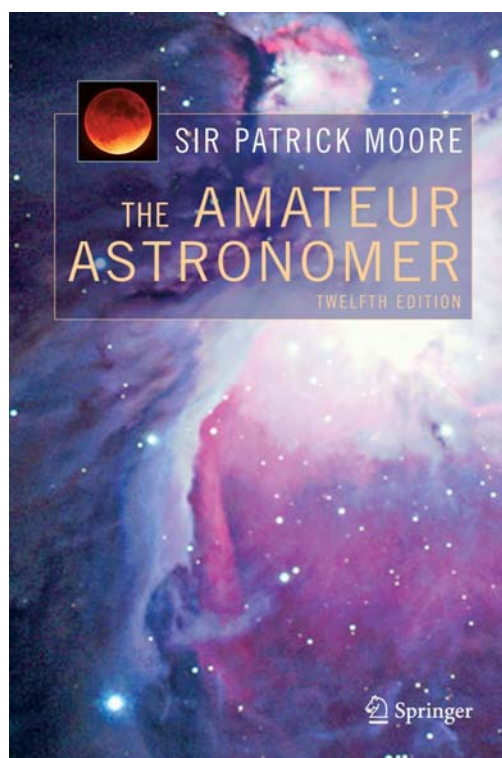
The Amateur Astronomer (12th Edition) by Sir Patrick Moore

How do I dare review this book? It is written by the most prominent figure in British astronomy and a hero of mine.

He was the main reason I became interested in astronomy in the first place and has inspired many others in a long and distinguished career. Sir Patrick is without doubt the most published author in the field of astronomy and a lot of us probably cut our teeth by reading one of the earlier editions of this very book. But with the inevitable march of progress astronomy has moved on, so the question is, has the Amateur Astronomer?

The first edition of this book appeared way back in 1957 and has been regularly updated since. This edition is still aimed at the beginner to astronomy and consists of 18 chapters, which cover the basic topics of astronomy in an easy to read but thorough way with numerous illustrations and pictures. Besides covering all the main objects in the solar system the universe from beginning to end is

(Continued on page 3)



Clanfield Observatory and the Chichester South Downs planetarium.

Amazingly, the two-days attendance fee for amateur astronomers is a mere £5 (or £3 for one day). The lunchtime and evening trips will cost a little more. Please note that application forms and all other information are on www.dark-skies.org (see link to CfDS 2006 on first page).

Bob Mizon CfDS (telephone 01202 887084)



50%UP: light pollution in Essex (James Abbott)

(Continued from page 2)

also examined in an uncomplicated and relatively jargon free manner.

Additionally there are 30 appendices, containing comprehensive data for our solar system, lunar maps, forthcoming celestial events and a host of star and nebular catalogues. The constellation guides are original line drawings and are much easier to use and less cluttered than printed ones and will certainly assist the beginner to locate and learn the constellations. The lunar maps are also original drawings, which I found to be much easier to follow than the highly detailed printed versions that you find in other books.

Inside the book there is a wealth of information and the authors knowledge, enthusiasm and his idiosyncratic personality make it a joy to read with the occasional laugh. This is the type of book that you will keep on your shelf and often refer to for the small but important piece of information.

Unfortunately the book does have some serious omissions and if I can quote from the preface "if you belong to the technology of the 21st century, this book is not for you". Sir Patrick makes it clear in the preface that he will not cover computer controlled scopes and computers.

The cost of Goto scopes now starts at around £250, and they supposedly work straight from the box. These scopes are intended for the

newcomer and any book aimed at the beginner should really cover the subject of computerised scopes if only briefly.

Regrettably Goto scopes remove the need for its owner to have any understanding of astronomy and it will wiz from one fuzzy object to another without the user ever knowing what they are missing on the way to their target or even what the intended target really is.

However to use one properly a basic knowledge is required and this is where the book comes into its own. Astronomy clubs should be recommending books like this to new members as it will increase their enjoyment and spur them on to discover and understand things that Meade or Celestron do not include on their computer chips.

It is a pity that the technical side is missing from the book and with the prices of digital and CCD cameras falling to an affordable level it does mean that the more serious amateur astronomer will have to look elsewhere to find out how to use his expensive toys.

So to sum up this is an ideal book to explore the basics of astronomy and it would make a great present for beginners to start learning their way around the stars and also possibly for the more seasoned stargazer as a handy reference guide and a trip down memory lane but don't expect any hi tech answers.

Review by Dennis Gavin Callington Astronomy Group (ex Luddite)

New Project Launched by Mexborough & Swinton AS

Mexborough and Swinton Astronomical Society have launched an ambitious £65,000 project to re-equip their Observatory with a high quality research grade instrument.

This will replace the existing 18" telescope and drive, with an up to date instrument with computer control and digital imaging facilities. Under the banner of the "New Horizons Project" it has been broken down into a number of component packages which can be delivered incrementally as funds become available.

Although grant applications are being prepared, members are rolling up their sleeves, literally in one case, to gather funds. A member undertook a sponsored bench press when he lifted 100 Kg, 100 times - and earned over £2000!

"Members are very enthusiastic about this", said Chairman Les Marsden. "Our original telescope has come to the end of its useful life, and this new instrument will provide not only a superb addition to our observatory but give increased publicly accessible viewing."

The Observatory at Hooper, near Rotherham, plays host to hundreds of visitors during the winter, and the project will also provide access for the disabled; and offer visitors to participate "hands on" in observing events.

It is also envisaged that the Observatory will play host to an increased number from schools, colleges, and youth groups.

The Society recently extended its meeting room to accommodate increased numbers of members and visitors to its Thursday night meetings.

"I am positive we can achieve this" added Les "We gathered the money to build our Observatory. We have a large and enthusiastic membership from throughout South Yorkshire, who are prepared to "dig in" and raise the necessary funds".

www.msas.org.uk

Secretary: Shaun O'Dell, 147 Queen Street, Swinton, South Yorkshire, S64 8NG

Nottingham AS complete theirs

13th May 2006 marked the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Nottingham Astronomical Society. The society celebrated this milestone and the completion of work on their large telescope project by holding an Opening Ceremony for our Observatory located near Cotgrave, about 7 miles south of the city of Nottingham, at a good dark sky site. Guest of honour Professor Michael Merrifield of the University of Nottingham declared the Observatory officially open. At the well-attended ceremony, Prof. Merrifield read out congratulatory messages from Lord Rees, Astronomer Royal and President of the Royal Society, and from Professor Michael Rowan-Robinson, President of the Royal Astronomical Society.

The Nottingham Astronomical Society's large telescope and observatory project began over 20 years ago, when a plot of land was leased from Severn Trent Water and construction of the observatory dome and annexe began. In 2001, the Society was successful in an application for a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund 'Awards for All' scheme. When added to contributions from the Society's members, the 'Awards for All' grant enabled the Society to purchase a telescope with an aperture of 24 inches, constructed by Beacon Hill Telescopes. The Observatory has been brought into regular use thanks entirely to the hard work and dedication of members and friends of the Society, who have given their spare time and skills to bring the project to a

successful conclusion."

Information and contact details:

Website: <http://beehive.thisisnottingham.co.uk/nottinghamastro>

E-mail: nottinghamastro@yahoo.co.uk

Secretary: Paul Stocks, Tel: 07963 997290



The NAS committee with their guest, Professor Michael Merrifield (to the left of the plaque).

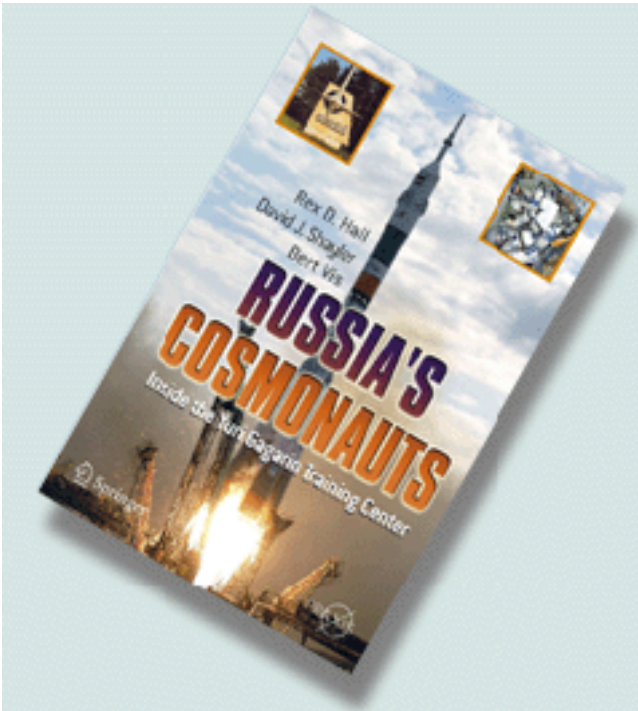
REVIEWS

Russia's Cosmonauts

Inside the Yuri Gagarin Training Centre

By: Rex D. Hall, David J. Shayler, Bert Vis

Published in ass'n with Praxis Publishing ISBN: 0-387-21894-7



The covers of this book promise much, and in the main this book certainly does deliver, at least so far as the mass of information it contains is concerned.

From a personal perspective I found the book more than a little disjointed in its presentation of the many facets of the formerly Soviet, and latterly Russian space programme.

I was also disappointed to find that, despite an impressively colourful cover, all of the photographs inside the book are in black and white.

The title, *Russia's Cosmonauts*, felt a little misleading until I reached about a third of the way through the book, as that first part concentrates almost entirely on the formation of the Space centre itself, and the forms of the various selection and training programmes, some detail of the multitude of departments which controlled those processes, and a tantalising but fleeting revelation of the politics that were undoubtedly involved in these processes.

Having been almost no mention of the many Cosmonaut applicants themselves for almost the first third of the book, they appear in a torrent after that, and, if one is unfamiliar with many of the names of those who never actually made it into space, it tends to present an information overload, as many of these applicants names are repeated as they move from one project to another.

The book reflects what was the ever changing development of the various Soviet space projects, as they first competed with the American Space programme, then moved from competition to alternative focus, and finally to co-operation with America and other Agencies on the Apollo/Soyuz, MIR and ISS projects.

It also details the opening of training and participation opportunities, firstly to other Soviet Block Countries, and latterly with other countries, and individuals able to cough up the sometimes USD 20 Million fee.

The book will be certainly of interest to students of Space Exploration, and it does give, possibly for the first time, a very detailed account of the history of the initially Soviet and latterly Russian Space Programme and its expansion into commercial ventures, up to the time of publication. Had I more time and facilities to expand the very detailed information to a format outside the pages of this book, or if I were a serious student of the history of Space Exploration, I would no doubt find this book invaluable. But given those constraints, I still found it an often interesting, but rather hard read.

Andy Read

Dartmoor Sun by Jack Walker

Publisher: Halsgrove Discover Series 2005

ISBN: 1841144231

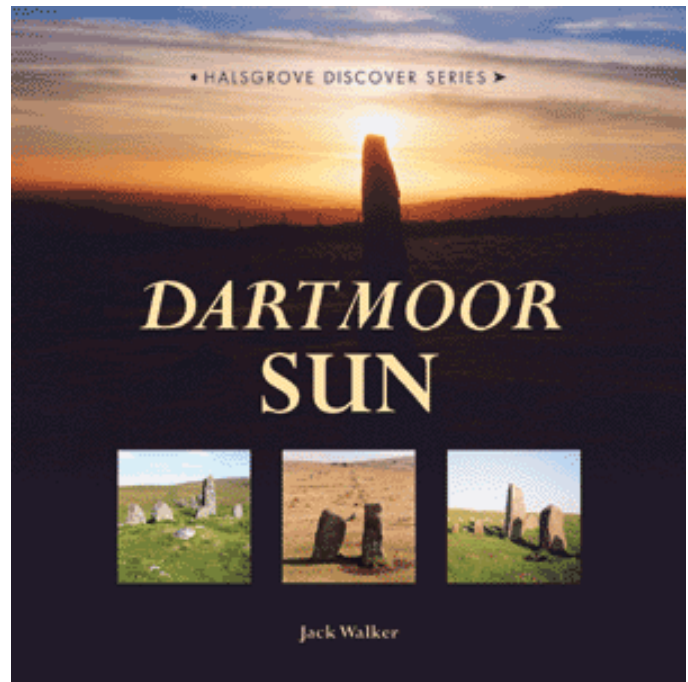
Anyone who has ever walked the wild beauty of Dartmoor will have encountered at least some of the many treasures of the remains of Neolithic and Bronze Age occupancy. I have frequently wondered about the stone circles, stone rows, hut circles and megaliths which litter the moor. Why here? - What for? - By whom? - these are some of the questions which come to mind as one gazes over these long forgotten creations.

Jack Walker has written a delightful little book - rich in photographs and easy prose which attempts to answer some of these questions by applying some science and engineering to an analysis of the alignments of some of the most distinctive monuments on Dartmoor.

He has chosen the stone rows on Hingston Hill, Drizzlecombe and Merrivale. Over an extended period of time and with the aid of his wife as a fiducial mark, the author has taken some careful observations using the simplest of instruments - a good compass and a tape measure. Observations at the summer and winter solstices indicate how these rows and menhirs could well have been used to create a calendar which the ancient peoples could have used to predict the changing of the seasons.

All of the sites which Jack has studied are easily accessible and proper Ordnance Survey References are quoted. Using the book and its many excellent photographs and diagrams, any of us could take the time to examine these alignments and enjoy the thrill of "making contact" with our ancient ancestors.

This is a book written in simple, understandable language which will have wide appeal. The additional chapters explaining the alignments



of Stonehenge and descriptions of life on Dartmoor in prehistoric times enrich the read.

My alarm clock is already set for the next Summer Solstice - I'll be there with my camera and compass.

Mike Thompson

IN SEARCH OF DARK MATTER

Ken Freeman and Geoff McNamara

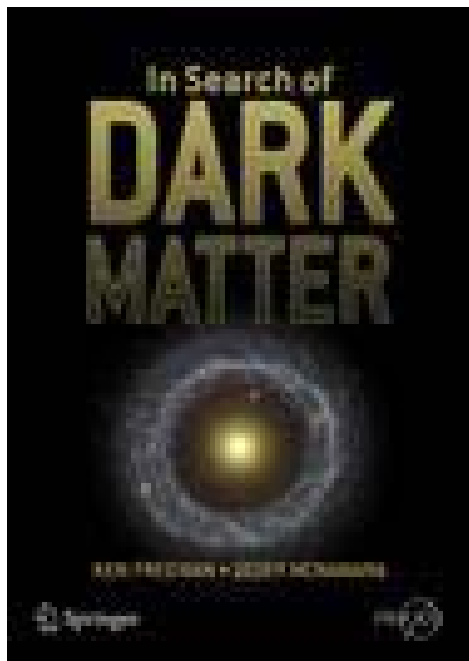
Published by Springer – Praxis ISBN: 0-387-27616-5

This slim volume traces the history of the enigma that is Dark Matter from its beginnings in the 1920s and 30s with the pioneering work of Jan van Oort and Fritz Zwicky to the present day. The book is an equation free zone which makes it very readable, although there are some sections, such as the brief review of Milgrom's alternative theory of Modified Nonrelativistic Dynamics, which might have benefited from some mathematical support. The book spends much of its 150 pages in providing a detailed review of the experimental evidence for the discrepancy which exists between the mass of visible matter and the gravitational mass inferred from a study of galactic and galactic cluster dynamics. In later chapters we find a review of the problems which emerge when we attempt to identify the nature of the missing mass. There is thus a detailed consideration of the many candidates for explaining the Dark Matter conundrum, from neutrinos to axions, together with a discussion of Dark Energy and The Cosmological Constant.

The great strength of the book, however, is in the insight which it provides of the history of the investigation, as it proceeded over a timescale during which our understanding of the cosmos was transformed. Ken Freeman is an experienced astronomer whose research work has impacted directly on the emerging Dark Matter issue during the later part of this time period, whilst Geoff McNamara is a teacher of science. The key issues and stages in this history are thus identified with authority and explained with clarity. One could argue that too great an emphasis is given to the Australian contribution to the study

of the Dark Matter problem, although that contribution has indeed been substantial. This is an excellent and timely review of the Dark Matter issue and if the conclusion that it provides is an optimistic one, the reader is left in little doubt that there may yet be a 'twist in the tail' – Astronomers should continue to 'Watch this Space !'

Brian Parsons



US Spacesuits

Kenneth S. Thomas and Harold J. McMann.

ISBN 0-387-27919-9 £20

I approached this book with a mix of apprehension and intrigue. With an engineering background I have come across similar books, where the authors have taken what might have been a potentially dry topic and turned it into a fascinating, educational and above all enjoyable journey though a subject I would not have given much thought about.

Did this volume enthral and captive or was it a struggle to read? My initial thumb through the book was favorable, the good quality paper allowed the 250 illustrations and photographs (all B/W) to be reproduced with clarity.

The book itself was a very mixed read, some chapters captivated whilst other were a struggle. The book is broken down into chapters that cover specific areas or periods. The early chapters dealt with the development of systems to help pilots survive the adverse conditions found at altitude, which started during the First World War. The book then goes on to explore the problems that have to be mastered to keep a human alive at high altitude and in space. Like most engineering projects the development of the spacesuit is a balance between many opposing factors, for example the suits need to be pressurized but this adversely effects mobility. The compromises and solutions to these problems are explored in detail.

The pictures seen in most books only show the top coverall garment, this book takes you underneath and examines all the garments that are needed to ensure protection and life support. The readability of some chapters is affected by the suits being known by their manufacturers number, often requiring the reader to flip back through the book to refresh the memory on the AX3H or G2C suit.

This book does not only concentrate on the spacesuits but also covers life support systems and mobility aids to assist the astronaut during extra vehicular activity (from simple hand held gas jets, lunar rovers to the present and future man maneuvering units.)

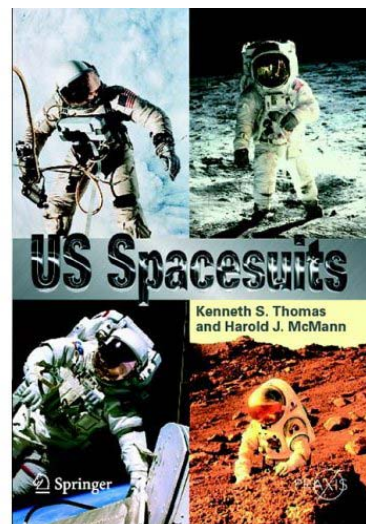
The last 40 pages are filled by appendices, the first giving a photo and small technical description of each suit and the second listing every EVA, the astronaut, the duration of the EVA and the suit used.

Does this book hold interest for the amateur astronomer? To be truthful I will have to say no, but the book is aimed at those with an interest in manned spaceflight. If you only have a moderate interest in space flight technology then this book will not draw you in. To appreciate this book you will require a deep interest in man's battle to overcome the adversity of the extremely hostile environments found once we venture outside the narrow habitat zone we have evolved to survive in.

Having read this book would I have bought it if I saw it on the shelf of my local bookstore? The answer would be no. The authors have put a lot of work collating information from many different companies over the past five decades, but this is a very specialist subject that will only appeal to a small population of readers, of which I was not one.

John Durston

Callington Community Astronomy Group



SOCIETY ROUND UP

ABINGDON AS

Meets 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

ALTRINCHAM & DISTRICT AS

Meets at 8.00pm on the first Friday of the month (except July & August) at the Timperley Village Club Hall, 268 Stockport Road, Timperley. Altrincham
For more details telephone Don Utton 0161 941 4185 or visit our website www.astroadas.org.uk

AS OF GLASGOW

Meetings 3rd Thurs. at Room 345, Uni of Strathclyde (Montrose St entrance)
21 Sep: Astronomy in Ancient Babylon Dr John Steele
19 Oct: SALT, Africa's 10m Telescope Pros Gordon Bromage
16 Nov: Frontiers of Cosmology & Particle Physics Dr Arjun Berera
21 Dec: Solar Activity & Earth's Climate Dr Alex MacKinnon
18 Jan: The Dark Side of the Universe Iain Nicholson

AS OF HARINGEY

Meetings generally 3rd Thursday at Ashmole School, Southgate, London N14, at 7.30 pm www.ashastro.org.uk.

ANDOVER AS

Meetings 19:30 third Thursday of the month except August in Grateley Village Hall. Secretary: Charles Roach e-mail: cjroach@worldonline.co.uk
www.andoverastronomy.org.uk

AYLESBURY AS

Meetings take place at the Scout Hut, Oakfield Road, Aylesbury.
Contact Simon Foster on 01844 216108 www.aylesbury-astronomy.org.uk

AYRSHIRE AS

Meetings 3rd Mon of month at Ayr Academy, Fort St, Ayr
John Walker email: gm0dig@hotmail.com

BASINGSTOKE AS

Contact: Andria Harbinson email: andria.harbinson@ntlworld.com
Website: <http://www.basingstokeas.org.uk/>

BATLEY & SPENDBOROUGH AS

Contact: I Newsome 01924-443860 email: beviaan11@hotmail.com

BEDFORD AS

Meets last Wednesday at 19:30, Bedford School, Burnaby Road, Bedford, MK40 2TU Contact: , 01234 211532 society@bedsastro.org.uk
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

26 Sep: A Warwickshire Eclipse

31 Oct: In Pursuit of Pulsars

28 Nov: t.b.a.

Mike Frost

Prof J Bell

Dr Mark Sims

BOLTON AS

Bolton TIC Centre on Minerva Road (near Bolton Royal Hospital), from 7.30pm to 9pm. Every 1st and 3rd Tuesday.
<http://boltonastro.fateback.com/index.html>. Secretary: Peter Miskiw.

BRADFORD AS

Meetings usually held on alternate Mondays in the upstairs room at Eccleshill Library, Bolton Road, Bradford, BD2 4SR at 7.30pm until 9.45pm. Observing on clear Thursdays at Rawdon Model Boat Club.

www.bradfordastronomy.co.uk or ring Hilary on 01274 6725710.

For information about weekly night-time observing ring Andy on 07736 747252, Tony on 07813 240601 or John on 01274 419142.

25 Sep: How Stars Actually Form

9 Oct: Observing Techniques and Equipment

23 Oct: The Outer Planets

6 Nov: Observing Faint Variables from City Skies

20 Nov: Blowing Bubble in the Universe

4 Dec: Cosmic Collisions

18 Dec: The Christmas Quiz

Dr J Wild

Andy Hatfield

Paul Money

Gary Poyner

Prof John Dyson

Dennis Ashton

Hilary Knaggs

BRANNEL ASTRONOMY

Meetings on first and third Fridays of each month at Brannel School, St Stephens, Cornwall.

www.brannelastronomy.com

Contact: Frank Johns, 01637-878020 e-mail: frank@laplage.demon.co.uk

BRECKLAND AA

Open Meetings are on the second Friday of each month at Great Ellingham Recreation Centre near Attleborough, Norfolk at 7.30 PM.

Meetings are followed by a tour and observing (weather permitting) at our adjacent observatory.

Further details and a full contact list are available on our website at www.breckastro.supanet.com telephone 01953 602045

Contact: Tony Osborne. Anthony@emanti.wanadoo.co.uk

BRIGHTON & HOVE AS

Four meetings per year at Patcham Village Hall, Brighton, BN1 8XR
Contact J. Luvian-Wade tel. 01273 889112 john_wade@ntlworld.com
www.bhas.fsnet.co.uk/

BRISTOL AS

Meetings held on Friday evenings at 7.15pm at Bristol Grammar School,
Contact: Tricia Brown (Secretary), tel. 0117 968 5023

www.bristolastrosoc.org.uk

CALLINGTON COMMUNITY ASTRONOMY GROUP

Meetings: First and third Saturdays (except August), at Callington Space Centre, Callington Community College, Launceston Road.

Becky Watson; callintonastro@kimwatson99.fsnet.co.uk

www.callington-astro.org.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@illdat.demon.co.uk

www.cardiff-astronomical-society.org

CAROLIAN AS

Contact: Chris Ashman 01562 743758. Email: carolianastro@btinternet.com

CASTLE POINT AC

Meets most Wednesdays at St Michaels Church, St Michaels Rd, Daws Heath, Hadleigh.

Contact: 01702 434449. Email: secretary@cpac.org.uk

www.cpac.org.uk

20 Sep Sun Stars & Constellations - Deanna Amos

4 Oct Space Art (Venue Southend Museum) - Jackie Burns

18 Oct "Bang" (Venue Southend Museum) - Chris Lintott

1 Nov Astronomical Pin Hole Cameras - Ron Mansfield

15 Nov Dark Matter in the Universe - Dr Mark Wilkinson

29 Nov Trials and Tribulations - Ted Rodway

6 Dec Observing & recording the winter night sky - Pete Carson

20 Dec Social

CLEETHORPES AS

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

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, 01332 740977, E-mail: neil.haggath@ntlworld.com

CORNWALL AS

Meets second and fourth Thursday of every month at The Godolphin Club, Wendron St., Helston. Contact: Robert Beeman (01326-341164)

Email: robert.beeman@btinternet.com or info@CornwallAS.org.uk

www.CornwallAS.org.uk

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

COVENTRY & WARWICK AS

Contact S Payne 02476-474227

www.cawas.freemove.co.uk

CRANBROOK & DISTRICT AS

Contact M Hannan secretary@epublish.co.uk

www.cadsas.epublish.co.uk

CRAWLEY AS

Meets third Friday of every month (exc July & Aug) at Ifield Community Centre. 7.30 pm. (December dates can be variable)

Contact: Jim Swift 01293-882560 or 07973-142779 (mobile)

E-mail: cytron@btinternet.com and/or jimswif@btinternet.com

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

DUMFRIES AS

Monthly meetings at the St. George's Churchhall, George Street, Dumfries 7 to 9.30 pm. September to May. For dates/details contact the Secretary Klaus Schiller at lesley.burrell@btinternet.com or 01387 269762

Society web-site www.astronomers.ukscientist.com

EASTBOURNE AS

Meetings on Saturdays at the Willingdon Memorial Hall, Church Street, Willingdon starting at 7.30 p.m. Contact Peter Gill, tel. 01323 646853, email pbj.gill@btinternet.com. www.EastbourneAS.org.uk

EAST RIDING ASTRONOMERS

Contact Tony Scaife, email astrogen@astrogen.karoo.co.uk

EWELL AS

Meets 2nd Friday each month at Nonsuch High School for Girls, Cheam. Secretary; Richard Gledhill, tel. 0208-393-1068

8 Sep: Basic Astro-Photography

13 Oct: Deep Sky Object thro' the seasons

10 Nov: Solar System

8 Dec: AGM + t.b.a.

Bob Mizon

Alan Smith

Paul L Mooney

Peter Edwards

FARNHAM AS

Meet 2nd Thursday at The United Reform Church, South Street, Farnham
Secretary; Barry Bellinger, tel. 07748766610 barry.bellinger@nokia.com
www.farnham-as.co.uk

FLAMSTEED AS

Meets 1st Monday each month at Royal Observatory & National Maritime
Museum, Greenwich. Contact: Friends Office. tel. 020 8312 6678
As well as a full programme of lectures and visits members assist astronomers at
the Royal Observatory with many and various projects.

GUERNSEY AS

Meetings at the Observatory, Rue Lorier, St. Peters, Guernsey. Every Tuesday
evening and Friday if clear for observing.
Contact: Jessica Harris. 01481 247193

GUILDFORD AS

Meet at the Guildford Institute, Ward Street, Guildford on the 1st Thursday of
every month (bar August). www.guildfordas.org
Contact: John Axtell. 01932 341036 johnaxtell42@aol.com

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB AS

Meets at 7.30 pm Room 3 (the Oriel Room) Free Church Hall, Northway,
London NW11. Entrance via the door on the left side of the building.
Contact: Dianne Fishman 020 8458 4038 hgsas@dfish.demon.co.uk

HANNEY & DISTRICT AS—NOW DEFUNCT

Last Wednesday in month, 20:00hrs. Royal British Legion Hall, Hanney, Mill
Orchard, East Hanney, Oxon, OX12 0JH
Contact: Mr J Walker 01235 771706 email: johnwalker@mac.com

HARROGATE AS

Meetings last Friday of the month. Harlow Community Centre, Harlow Ave.
Contact: Lyn Smith 01937 531171 lynsmithbridgehouse@hotmail.com

HAVERING AS

Meetings 3rd Wednesday of the month. Cranham Community Centre,
Marlborough Gardens, Upminster. Contact: Frances Ridgley 01708 227397
www.ccdland.com (follow link for Havering AS)

HERSCHEL AS

Secretary. Peter Snell, 128 Langley Road, Slough. SL3 7TF (01753 675634)
Email: hasadmin@gmail.com

HIGHLANDS AS

Meetings 1st Tuesday of the month at The Green House, Beechwood Business
Park North, Inverness. Contact: Dr Pat Williams, Inverness Tel: 01463 793464
pat.williams@ndirect.co.uk.

HULL & EAST RIDING AS

Meets 2nd Monday of month at 7.30 from Sept to May. Room S25, Wilber-
force Building, University of Hull, Cottingham Road, Hull, HU6 7RX
Contact: Sharon Long, President. E-mail: charon@charon.karoo.co.uk

HUDDERSFIELD ASTRO. & PHIL. SOCIETY

Meetings at Observatory and at 4A Railway Street.
Contact: Paul Harper 01484-606832 www.huddersfielddastryonomy.org.uk

ILKESTON & DISTRICT AS

Meets on second Tuesdays at Hayloft Erewash Museum, Ilkeston, Derbyshire
and start at 7.45pm.

Contact Mary McMulty, tel. 01298 78234 email: mintaca@msn.com

Also meets last Wednesdays at The Green Room, Shipley Park Visitor Centre,
Heanor, Derbyshire at 7.45 pm

IRISH AA

Meets alternate Wednesdays at 7.30pm at the Teachers Training College,
Stranmellis, Belfast.

Contact: Johns Hall e-mail: jimmyaquarius@btinternet.com

JERSEY AC

Meets 2nd Monday of the month, 8.00pm at Sir Patrick Moore Astronomy
Centre, Les Creux Country park, St Brelade.

Contact: Eileen Besnard. 01534-860802 e-mail: hakmat@jerseymail.co.uk

KNOWLE AS

Meets alternate Wednesdays at 7.30pm at the Teachers Training College,
Stranmellis, Belfast.

Contact: Bruce Fulford. e-mail: bruce@bfulford.eclipse.co.uk

LEEDS AS

Centenary House, North Street, Leeds between 7.00 pm and 9.30 pm
Mailto: xavier@leedsastronomy.org.uk or xvermeren@gmail.com

LEICESTER AS

Meets 2nd and 4th Tues 19:30. National Space Centre, Exploration Drive,
Leicester LE4 5NS

Contact: Chris Gutteridge 0116 270 0596 chris@gutteridge.co.uk
www.leicester-astronomical.co.uk

LETCWORTH & DISTRICT AS

Meets last Wednesday of the month at Plinston Hall, Letchworth: 7:45pm

Contacts: Nick Ellis e-mail: ellis.nick@virgin.net

LIVERPOOL AS

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

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

15 Sep: On being Awestruck David Forshaw
20 Oct THE Pyramids & a Scottish Astronomer Murad Ghorbal

LONDON HEATHROW TELESCOPE CLUB

Secretary: Dunstan Fronteras
email: londonheathrowtelescopeclub@yahoo.co.uk
www.freewebs.com/londonheathrowtelescopeclub/index.htm

LOUGHTON AS

Meet 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

7 Sep: t.b.a. Bob Mizon

21 Sep: Autumn Skies Charles Munton

28 Sep: Imaging Techniques Nik Szymanek

5 Oct: Venus Express Dr Andrew Coates

12 Oct: Don't forget your lenscap -2 Steve Richards et al

19 Oct: Sky Camp Reports LAS Members

2 Nov: Fireworks + astro-update LAS Members

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.

Richard Chilvers: 28 Blyford road, Lowestoft 01502 57401

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

LUTON AS

Meets last Thurs in month at University of Luton. LU2 8LE

Contact: David Early daval@kbnet.co.uk www.lutonastrosoc.org.uk/

MANCHESTER AS

Meets third Thurs in month from early autumn to late spring at Renold Build-
ing, University of Manchester, Sackville Street at 19.30hrs. Meets all other

Thurs evenings at Godlee Observatory, Floor G, Sackville Building, U of M.

Contact: Kevin Kilburn massecretary@manastro.co.uk

www.manastro.co.uk/

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/marraastro

MELTON & DISTRICT AS

Meets: Monthly at Village Hall, School Lane, South Croxton, Leics.

Observational meetings as weather permits

Contact: Andrew Atterbury - andy@att143.freereserve.co.uk- 01664 812673

29 Sep: t.b.a. Dr Ann Bonell

MID KENT AS

Meetings of the society are held first and last Fridays of the month at The
Bredhurst Village Hall, Hurstwood Road, off The Street, Bredhurst, Kent

Contact: 01634 308035 email m.morrison-smith@lineone.net

http://www.mkas-site.co.uk/

MILTON KEYNES AS

Meetings are held at Rectory Cottages, Church Green Road, Bletchley, Milton
Keynes on alternate Fridays, starting at 8.00 pm.

MORAY AC, SIGMA

Meetings 1st Friday of every month starting at 7.30PM at Birnie Village Hall,
Thomshill, Elgin, Moray. Observing Evenings every Friday and Saturday from

mid Sep to May at our bothy on Easterton Airfield, Birnie, Elgin. For details

contact Ian Brantingham on 01466 771371 or ian@branters.freereserve.co.uk

Sigma website: http://www.sigma-astro.co.uk

NORTH EAST LONDON AS

Meets normally on the third Sunday of each month (excluding August) be-
tween 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

NORTH NORFOLK AS

Meetings held in East Barsham Village Hall. For more information contact
Colin Hards, Gen Sec., 45 Commercial Rd, Dereham, Norfolk. NR19 1AE

http://www.nnas.org

NORTHAMPTON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Meetings held on Monday at 19.30 in The Humfrey Rooms, 10 Castilian
Terrace, Northampton.

Contact Cyril Sampson at The Humfrey Rooms. www.hamal.demon.co.uk

NORTHANTS AS

Meetings held on first Tuesday at 19.45 at Church House, St Bodolphs Rd,
Seagrave, Kettering.

Contact: Steve Williams 01933 650331. www.naastronomy.com

4 Sep: General Relativity Paul Able

3 Oct: Favourite Images from Hubble Telescope Steve Williams

17 Oct: Mars Express Jerry Workman

5 Dec: Christmas Lecture t.b.a.

OFFA'S DYKE AS

Contact: Graham Arnold 01547 530205

ORWELL AS

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

Roy Gooding (Secretary) 01473-462977

LIST OF OFFICERS 2005/2006

President, Secretary, Treasurer & Newsletter Editor - See cover

Vice President: Ron Kelley :vicepresident@fedastro.org.uk

PLI & Distribution: Eric Hutton plisecretary@fedastro.org.uk

Membership Sec: Shaun O'Dell membership@fedastro.org.uk

Minutes Sec: Richard Sargent minutes@fedastro.org.uk

Webmaster: Gary Gawthrop webmaster@fedastro.org.uk

Chilterns Group : Ian Coulson chilterns.rep@fedastro.org.uk

North West Group : Richard Sargent

West Midlands : Andy Salmon west.midlands.rep@fedastro.org.uk

Yorkshire Group : Paul Harper

Deadlines for submission for newsletter in 2005/6:

Autumn 2006 - 18th August 2006

Winter 2006/7 - 15th December 2006

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

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. However if the details of your society are incorrect, or indeed if you aren't included, please send details to the Editor.

(Continued from page 7)

PAPHOS AS (CYPRUS)

Meetings 2nd Wednesdays of the month at Tsada Golf Course, Paphos, with 2 overnight stays during the year and some dark site observing.

Tel: 00357 26 936041 e-mail: dbrown@logos.cy.net

PAPWORTH ASTRONOMY CLUB

Meets at Upper Pendrill Court, Papworth Everard, nr Huntingdon on the first Wednesday of every month at 19.30. Contact Keith Tritton - phone 01767 677219, email kpt2@tutor.open.ac.uk

PETERBOROUGH AS

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday each month at 7.30pm, at St Kyneburgha's Cedar Centre, Castor, Peterborough.

Contact: Gerry Holland (secretary) - phone 01733 772236

Email: gerry@comrep.freemove.co.uk www.pas-stargazer.co.uk

PORT TALBOT AS

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday each month at 7.15pm, at Mozart Drive Community Centre, Sandfields, Port Talbot.

Contact: Andrew Short (secretary) - phone 01639 765146.

SALFORD AS

Sept to April: Weekly Wednesdays meetings are held. May to August: 1st & 3rd Wednesdays only. Meetings 7.30pm, at Room 115—Level 1, University of Salford, Maxwell Building, The Crescent.

Contact: Kath Radford - phone 0161 794 3179.

email: mail@howarddazeley@demon.co.uk

SCARBOROUGH & RYDALE AS (Note the change of name)

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 email: sdas@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. Contact: Tony Bennet 01843-831079 Secretary@sekas.co.uk www.sekas.co.uk

SHETLAND AS

Meet monthly, South Mainland, Shetland

Contact: Peter Kelly Tel: 01957 733242 theglebe@zetnet.co.uk

SHROPSHIRE AS

Speaker meetings are generally held on the first Friday of the month at Gateway 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 3rd Tuesday 19:30-22:00. Room 8, Oaklands Centre, Fairisle Road, Lordshill, Southampton

Contact: Ken Medway. 02380-582204 ken@medway1875.freemove.co.uk

SOUTHAMPTON AS

Meetings are held at Edmund Kell Unitarian Church Hall, Bellevue Road at 7.30pm on the 2nd Thursday of the month.

Dr Lilian Hobbs - Secretary 023 8026 3319

Secretary@southampton-astronomical-society.org.uk

STAFFORD & DISTRICT AS

Meetings held at Weston Road High School, Stafford. 19.15

Contact L Hodgkinson, 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

SUNDERLAND AS

Meets 2nd & 3rd Sunday at 19.00hrs

Contact: Graham Darke 0191 415 2625 darke@bun.com

www.sunderlandastro.com

SWANSEA AS

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

THURROCK AS

Meetings are held first Wednesdays (except August) at 7.30 p.m. at The Methodist Hall, High Street, Horndon -on-the-Hill, Essex SS17 8LN

Contact: Roy Hookway Tele: 01375 676602

email: roy.hookway1@btinternet.com web: www.thurrockastronomy.com

TIVERTON AS

Meetings are held Fridays at 7.30 p.m. at St Aubyn's School, Blundells Road, Tiverton. Contact: Neil Purves 01884-277425 ww.tivas.org.uk

TULLAMORE AS

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

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM AS

We are a University society but all are welcome.

Contact Kym Moss, email: kkg494@googlemail.com www.astroc.org.uk

USK AS

Contact: jbrince9@yahoo.co.uk www.uskastronomicalsociety.org.uk

VECTIS AS (Isle of Wight)

Meetings held in Parish Hall, Town Lane, Newport.

rosemarypears@aol.com website: www.wightskies.fsnet.co.uk

WADHURST AS

Meetings held on third Wednesday of month at the Methodist Church Upper Room, High Street, Wadhurst.

Contact: G G Rathbone, 13 Brookfield, Kemsing, Sevenoaks, Kent. TN15 6SQ

WEST CORNWALL AS

Meets first Wednesday of month at St Michaels Hotel, Falmouth, and

Third Thursday at the CPR Learning Centre, Camborne

Contact: Robin Wadding email: robinwadding@westcornwallastroc.org

Website: www.westcornwallastroc.org

WEST YORKSHIRE AS

Meets every Tuesday of month at 7.30pm at 'Rosse Observatory', Carlton Rd, Pontefract. Contact: Ken Willoughby 01977 795535.

www.wyas.fsnet.co.uk Email: ken.willoughby@btinternet.com

WEALDEN AS

Meets third Wednesday of month (exc Aug) at 7.30pm at Upland Community College. Contact: Keith Woodcock. Email: wealdenas@hotmail.co.uk

WHITE PEAK ASTRO OBS GROUP

Meets Hopton Cottage, Hopton, Top Hopton, Derbyshire, DE4 4DF

Contact: Robin Spencer. Email: thespencers@care4free.net

www.wpaog.co.uk/

WOLAS (West of London AS)

Secretary: Duncan J Radbourne. 49 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@wolvast.org.uk www.wolvast.org.uk

WORTHING AS

Contact: Graham Boots meeting_secretary@was.org.uk 01903 505346

13 Sep: Sir Arthur Stanley Eddington Mark Hurn

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 Martin Whillock on 01347 821849

www.yorkastro.co.uk