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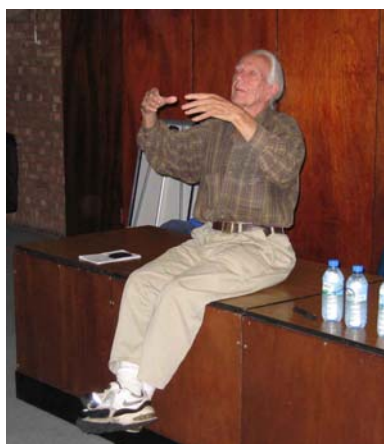
FEDERATION OF ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETIES

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

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL FAS ANNUAL CONVENTION

This year the Annual Convention of the Federation of Astronomical Societies was held at The Birmingham and Midland Institute and five intrepid G-Astronomers wended their way up the A30 and M5 - via the newly agreed club watering hole, The Harris Arms at Portgate, Lewdown. This hostelry served its purpose well. As indeed did the BMI, which comfortably housed the FAS Convention - except of course until one realised that this establishment predated air conditioning - or even, in the otherwise impressive auditorium, ventilation.

Ishwara Chandra of the National Centre for Radio Astrophysics, The Tata Institute, India, gave a brief introduction to Radio Astronomy, emphasising that deep sky radio images are weak and amount to the arrival of a mere 1 mJ in 100 years. Modern long baseline interferometric techniques, however, result in better resolution than conventional optical methods. The GMRT (Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope) instrument, a 30m x 45 antenna array at Khodad, India, operates in the 150 - 610 MHz waveband range and has embarked on measurements intended to discover the amount of Hydrogen in the early Universe. Other investigations include the study of Radio Galaxies, Pulsars, The Milky Way Galaxy, Galaxy Clusters and Planets and it has also made low frequency sky surveys. In particular it has made detailed studies of Galaxy 3C236, which has proved to be the largest radio galaxy yet discovered. The sensitivity of this instrument has also enabled the detection of gas flow between close galaxy pairs, which has not been seen in the visible, the observation of the radio afterglow of GRB's and of the magnetic lobes of Jupiter.



John Dobson

John Dobson is a very charismatic character and it was an interesting and unusual presentation.

Prof. John Brown, Astronomer Royal for Scotland, gave a splendid talk/demonstration entitled 'The Magic of the Cosmos', a liberal admixture of conjuring and astrophysics. He recalled that his first

John Dobson, renowned inventor of the Dobsonian telescope recounted his experiences of 'Sidewalk Astronomy' - taking observational astronomy to the masses. His early telescopes were evidently constructed using mirrors formed from ships' portholes. John spent much of his talk promoting his own less than obvious view of scientific and astronomical topics - from Quantum Uncertainty, the Big Bang and on to aspects of Intelligent Design - and this observer found many of his views hard to follow. But



Delegates perusing the trade stands at the FAS Convention

publication in 1957, on some aspect of solar physics has been cited some 500 times in the scientific literature and at a rate which follows the 11-year solar cycle. He also recalled that 1957 saw the appearance of a major comet. The Magic of the Cosmos demonstrated his claim that scientists should be made to attend magic shows so that they would 'Look Hard' at what they were seeing. Remarkably, he claimed, physicists were the easiest to fool by sleight of hand. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Prof. Brown's talk was his discussion of the consequences of curved space-time in the vicinity of Black Holes. But the memory is predominantly of the magic and like all good conjurors, just when I thought that I understood what was going on, Prof. Brown made things happen which made me wish that I had 'Looked Harder'.



Prof John Brown

(Continued on page 2)

LETTERS

Hi All

You may be interested to hear that the LAS Wirral Star Party was held on October 27th & 28th at the Wirral Ranger Service - Visitor centre, Thurstaston.

This event was attended by over 60 members of the public, and we did have moments of clear sky. We observed the Moon before it set behind the Welsh Hills, and had a good look at Comet Swan. Lectures inside were well attended, and they featured subjects such as what's on view during November/December nights, and General astronomy, solar eclipses, and taking images of the night-sky objects.

Gerard Gilligan

Liverpool Astronomical Society

Images were taken by Mr Jim Stacey (LAS)



(Continued from page 1)

The lunch break offered the opportunity to tour the BMI building but the Brannel contingent opted for...Yes, you guessed it - Lunch ! This was followed in the programme by the FAS AGM. This overran slightly but did not otherwise detract from the day's astronomy related events.

Dr Allan Chapman recounted the life history of Sir Robert Staywell Ball (1840 - 1913) from his early years in the West-country through his association with William Parsons, 3rd Earl of Rosse and his time as Astronomer Royal for Ireland at Trinity College, Dublin, to his tenure as Lowndean Professor of Astronomy and Geometry at Cambridge. His interests in geometry centred on the theory of screws but his articles and books on astronomy were popular and written in a simple style. Allan Chapman's talks are a time to sit back and listen as the subject matter is brought to life in minute detail with a liberal sprinkling of anecdotal comment. Particularly memorable was the account of the procedures and practices of lighthouse inspection. This was a splendid lecture which illustrated the rich scientific culture which was present both in Ireland and England at the close of the 19th century, explained its origins and pointed to its legacy. Staywell Ball was certainly a member of the privileged scientific gentry but he also lectured widely to the masses (as he did at the BMI) and loved observational astronomy - a fitting subject for a talk at the FAS Convention.



Allan Chapman signing autographs

Just prior to the final presentation of the day the FAS drew their now famous raffle. Once again the prizes on offer were sufficiently desirable to warrant a sizeable investment from the Brannel group and once again our investment paid dividends with the Timbrell's walking off with two of the prizes. We are steadily building an enviable reputation.(..and are likely to be banned from future conferences if we continue to be successful...Ed!!)

Dr David Whitehouse, BBC Science correspondent, talked on Science in the Media. Littered with the amusing and at times alarming headlines which the media use to promote (- or should that read 'demote?') science and astronomy related topics, David Whitehouse's presentation was a demolition of 'glossy' science as we have all experienced it. There were memorable quotes "I know you've looked at the science but I want to get at the real truth !" and fantastic headlines "WW11 Plane Discovered on Moon" followed by "WW11 Plane on Moon Disappears !". This talk sent us all away with a smile on

our faces.

Saturday continued with that equally important purpose of these expeditions, namely gastronomy and, as in 2005, the day closed with an 'Indian' - this time coupled with a Bangladeshi flavour, though to be honest I couldn't tell the difference. The difference between chicken and duck was also hard to discern.

Brian Parsons

Presidents Log

September saw another successful FAS Convention, this year held at the BMI in Birmingham. With increased numbers over previous years, and an excellent programme of speakers, I think this can be classified as a success. Of course more feedback would be appreciated, so please get in touch and let me know what you like/disliked and we will see what we can do to address this in future meetings.

Standing down from the FAS Council this year was Ron Kelley, who served on council for many years as North West Regional Representative, Vice President and President. Ron will be missed from Council, and could be relied on to bring a sense of reality and fiscal prudence to proceedings. So a big thank you to Ron for his work and dedication through the years.

The FAS cannot operate without the hard work and commitment of the council members, and so much thanks must also go to Sam George, Peter Cooke, Frank Johns, Eric Hutton, Shaun O'Dell, Gary Gawthrope, Stan Waterman, Richard Sargent and Paul Harper too.

Planning for next years convention has already started, and we plan to return to the BMI in Birmingham on Saturday September 29th 2007. So please pencil this date in your diary, and if you are organising meetings around this date; please try and avoid it! In addition to a speaker programme we would like to have more society displays, and we will take more space at the BMI to support this. In addition we will try a new idea, which is short presentations from member societies – this will be in the style of 'Lessons Learned' and will be a way of sharing ideas and experience. So if you have ran a successful event or raised funds in a novel way, we would like to hear from you.

Publications have been a problem for the Federation for many years. Aside from the Astrocalendar the publications are a bit dated. As a group we are quite good at the publication side of things, but what we lack are authors. So if you would like to contribute to a new publication please get in touch – we are just looking for good text really, and format and final presentation are things we can sort out.

Regional Groups are a topic we discussed at our recent council meeting. We recognise that the FAS should encourage and promote regional groups, but wonder whether they should be integral to the makeup of the FAS. Strangely enough, although two areas have been without regional representatives for some time, we are pleased to welcome Steve Williams as Chilterns & Thames Valley rep, and Keith Brackenborough as SAGAS rep. However, there are large areas of the country with no groups and reps, and whilst we would encourage local societies to get together, it is not something we can enforce. It needs to come from the ground up. A benefit of the Regional Reps for the FAS has been as a 'breeding ground' for Officers of the Federation. So in any consideration for the future, we must not lose this. So a proposition we are considering is to remove the Regional Reps from the FAS Constitution, and replace with Ordinary Elected Members (without portfolio). Nothing is finalised on this, and I am noting this here to promote discussion, so please do let me know what you think.

Recently we were contacted about a proposed International Year of Astronomy to be held in 2009 (IYA 2009). This is sponsored by the IAU, with the RAS supporting this in the UK. A meeting was held in November in London with many interested parties attending, including the FAS, SPA, BAA, NAW, BA, RAS etc. What is clear is that for events to be successful local astronomy societies will have a key role in being the facilitators for reaching out to the public so they can experience the night sky at first hand, with one of the goals of IYA2009 being for everyone in the UK to have a chance to look through a telescope sometime that year. Although this is at an early stage, things will pick up speed quickly, and so ideas about things that could be done in IYA2009 need to be raised soon, so we can pass these to the organising group. Your input as people at the 'coal face' would be particularly appreciated.

Finally, we have been informed that the room for Society displays will not be available at Astrofest 2007. We are looking at alternatives so that the FAS and our member societies can have some visibility at Astrofest, but unfortunately commercial realities have overtaken the previous beneficence.

Brannel Astronomy Goes to COAA

It took 18 months in the planning, but in September of 2006, seven members of Brannel Astronomy finally made it to COAA - the Astronomical holiday centre based in Portugal

Founded in 1987, COAA is run by Bev and Jan Ewen-Smith and is situated in the Algarve, approximately 10 km North of Portimão.

Getting to COAA was a breeze. Unless you plan of driving from the UK, the nearest airport is Faro, which is approximately an hour's drive from COAA. Car hire in Portugal is inexpensive and makes the most sense, as you will inevitably want to get around during the day-time during your stay.

Bev supplies an almost idiot proof set of directions to find COAA from the airport, and for those blessed with GPS navigation systems, even include co-ordinates of each step along the way.

The accommodation is broken down into three suites, and could probably sleep 10 people in comfort....more if you are *very* friendly. The continental Breakfasts are taken outside under the shade of the Olive trees. We did eat out a lot during the day, but after a hard day out enjoying ourselves, we did not feel the need to go out for dinner so took advantage of Jans's wonderful cooking whilst enjoying the lively banter that you get when eating at a communal dining table with your hosts.

The house and domes are located on a Southerly facing hill and are flanked by Olive and Eucalyptus trees to the North and North West. We found the scopes all had excellent views from the North East round through the South and to the West. Although facing towards the large conurbation of Portimão which did provide a little in the way of skyglow, the site was sufficiently dark so that the Milky Way was easily visible from Horizon to Horizon. Something I've

not experienced in Cornwall in an area with similar light pollution levels.

We chose to go in September where the probability of getting a clear night was in the 80% range. We were not disappointed and had six clear nights out of the seven we were there.

The primary instruments are housed in four domes. While we were there, they contained a 200mm reflector on a Go-To Vixen mount, A 300mm reflector on a driven fork mount, A manual 250mm Dobsonian, and a 500mm Dobsonian on a driven Fork mount. Bev has various other small refractors available, although we



Inspecting conditions around the domes

(Continued on page 5)

REVIEWS

THE INFINITE COSMOS by Joseph Silk

Oxford University Press

ISBN10: 0-198505-108

I have to admit to having that uneasy feeling of "why did I volunteer for this?" when I first had a quick scan of this book. I mean, the whole cosmology subject often leaves me thinking about how much of the more exotic theories are simply made up, and magazine articles do not always provide me with enough hard convincing proof to back up the theory.

The subtitle of 'questions from the frontiers of cosmology' accurately describes how this excellent book is laid out. The author guides the reader through all the latest theories regarding the universe, starting with its creation to a possible dark cold ending by posing questions and then providing convincing answers, using the latest observations and evidence gathered by X-Ray, visual and Radio telescopes and experimental techniques.

Any doubts on whether the Universe began with The Big Bang vanish as you read of the history of the idea and how predictions were followed by observational evidence supporting the theory. Everything is discussed; black holes, size and shape of the universe, even time travel and the place of God in cosmology.

All aspects of cosmology are covered; some easier to understand and accept than others. A number of times I found myself reading passages again and again before I half understood what was being discussed. This was probably down to me being a bit dense but some of this book required some heavy thinking.

Joseph Silk has a style of writing which makes you feel he is talking to you, which makes the more complex subjects easier to read. I do not pretend to necessarily believe all cosmological theories, probably because I don't understand them and the author openly admits to

there not being enough evidence yet to support some theories. An obvious example is Dark Matter and Dark Energy. Here he supports the theory by explaining all the indirect evidence gathered. I particularly liked the quotations used to introduce each subject. Some were thought provoking on their own. My three favourites are:-
Two things are infinite – the universe and human stupidity, and I'm not sure of the former. – Albert Einstein.

I think that a vacuum in space is a hell of a lot better than some of the stuff that Nature replaces it with. – Tennessee Williams.

Time is the longest distance between two places. – Tennessee Williams.

In conclusion, I found parts of this book very easy to read, as they were the sections closer to my general knowledge as an amateur astronomer, such as star formation. Other subjects such as parallel universes and time travel were harder to follow.

Very few drawings were used to illustrate the book but that did not spoil my enjoyment. The fact that

I read it all, makes me believe that anyone with an interest in the more advanced ideas relating to our hobby, or wishes to gain a deeper understanding of cosmology, will enjoy The Infinite Cosmos.

Keith Lane

Callington Community Astronomy Group



Space Shuttle Columbia, Her Missions and Crews By Ben Evans

Springer-Praxis Books

ISBN 0-387-21517-4

To most people their image of the Space Shuttle Columbia is the horrific fireball crossing the Texas sky on the 1st February 2003 with the tragic loss of all seven on board. For me Columbia conjures up the image of sitting with a group of fellow students in a school music room watching the live TV coverage of the first Space Shuttle launch in 1981. This book fills in the details between these two events. The book briefly touches on the accident investigation resulting from the loss of Columbia but as is stated by the author in the preface, this book is not a study of the last flight but a journey of celebration and discovery into the missions and crews of Columbia.

This book covers the operational life of Columbia, there is a little on the history or development of the orbiter, other books cover this topic. Each mission, its aims, triumphs, and problems are recorded in the pages in a manner that engages the reader with just enough depth to maintain the interest. Reading this book will provide an insight into the missions and the science that this individual space shuttle was involved in. The Challenger disaster is recounted briefly because of the road that led to the loss of the first Space Shuttle and the aftermath had an effect on the rest of the fleet, in relation to the mission types and frequency of flights undertaken.

Columbia never went to the International Space Station due to her weight limiting the useful payload, but this meant that Columbia out of all the Shuttles in the later years was tasked with more science missions. It is perhaps an ironic twist in this story that had Columbia

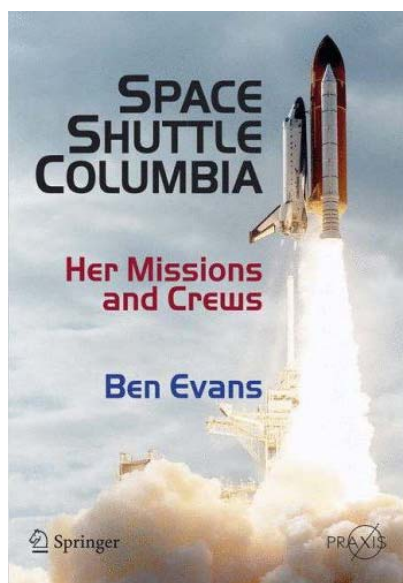
not been lost that day her next mission would have been to the ISS. Whilst the Shuttle is a symbol of American spaceflight, reading this book provides an insight into the truly international nature of the science and crews that involved in space programs today.

The last ten or so pages recounts the tributes and memories from members of the astronaut community to those lost on flight STS-107, this makes for a thought provoking testament to the crew. The final section of the book is a data-file type summary of all of Columbia's crews and missions.

Referred to as the flagship of the Space Shuttle fleet, during its operational life Columbia acquired a number of firsts and holds many records for spaceflight. These facts coupled with the affection of the crews have towards this aircraft truly justifies this status. The book gives an interesting and readable account of the complex and iconic

machine that was the Space Shuttle Columbia. The enthusiasm of the author for this subject comes over in the text making this book readable.

John Durston



Doc Sutton gets the Eric Zucker - Award

The FAS Annual "Eric Zucker - Award" has been awarded to Dave 'Doc' Sutton, Worthing Astronomical Society in recognition of his contribution to the FAS over many years since the founding of the Federation and for his roles as Assistant Treasurer, Treasurer, Newsletter Distribution & Printing and Help/Advice to the FAS Committee and Societies.

It is worth noting that Worthing AS is the only Society of which two members have received this award. In 2001 it was Pam Spence.



COAA from the air

(Continued from page 3)

never got round to using them.

In September, the daily flight from Exeter arrives in the evening, so our group didn't arrive at COAA until 9pm. Jan kindly provided us with a cold buffet and a very nice glass...or two, of the local Rose which all went down very well.

After we were fed and watered, Bev took us down to the domes and opened up the half-meter Dob. Now I have never looked through anything larger than a 350mm Cassegrain at one of our star party's, and even then, I was blown away at what I could see compared with the 200mm scope that I was used to observing through. However, even this did not prepare me for the delights I was about to experience.

Two objects in particular on just our first night, would have made the whole one-week trip worthwhile if it had done nothing but rain thereafter.

The first were both parts of the Veil Nebula NGC 6960 and NGC 6995. Being an imager at heart, I don't look through a scope often, and the last time I peeked these two out of the murk, were through a 100mm Tak refractor on a particularly clear night. Even then, both parts were only just discernable and at the end of an evening looking at it, I felt quite chuffed at having seen it at all!!

However, through the half-metre, both parts of the Nebula were so easily seen, that you could make out filamentary structure without having to resort to averted vision. This view was one of those truly memorable views that I guess every astronomer has, and is one I will never forget.

The other object was memorable for a different reason.

I've seen The Dumbell Nebula NGC 6853 many times through a lot of medium sized scopes and have always enjoyed viewing it. On this occasion I was one of the last to view this through the large Dob, and the person before me had the focus set way out from where I

FOR SALE—FAS SLIDE COLLECTION

As the FAS has now digitised all the slides in its collection, these slides are to be put up for sale.

Anyone interested in these should contact Sam George, the FAS Secretary for full details.

would have set it. Even so out of focus, the Dumbell was still easily recognisable and in those few milliseconds before I could focus it properly, it still just resulted in a WOW response.

For the rest of the week, we spent our time doing various things. A number in our group have the Meade DSI, and wanted to spend more than just one night in thirty getting to know how it worked. At this point your writer found out how painful it is sitting on a concrete floor hand guiding a telescope for these guys.

One of our group mounted his DSLR camera on an unguided Vixen mount and just images the milky-way using the camera's standard lens, and got some stunning wide field views for his effort.

The remainder of the group spent most evenings been given a tour of the night sky by Bev, through the 'Big Dob' It was on these evenings that we were all just amazed at Bev's skill at finding any given object without having to resort to GO-TO. Without exception, all objects we gave him were nailed right in the centre of the eyepiece in less than a minute. My own visual inexperience meant that I could hardly see Stephans Quintet when it was smack in view, let alone find it by hand. Bev's consummate skill prodded us into spending the early hours of the morning on our last day, trying to find various objects just using a pair of binoculars and a star chart.

During the day, the Algarve offers you activities from slumming it on seaside city beaches with all the comforts of Southend on Sea, through to the hills of Monchique and its out of the way café's and rural views of the countryside....plus everything else in between. Bev is also an accomplished Pilot, and one afternoon took us up in groups in his local flying club's Cessna.

Portugal is a very inexpensive destination, and coupled with a whole week of astronomical observing, is a holiday that anyone would thoroughly enjoy.

For me, the whole trip allowed me to indulge in aspects of visual astronomy that I do not do anymore...and now find that I really miss doing. I need a 'Big Dob'!

Nick Tonkin



Frank & Marion Johns, Phil Brotherwood, John Barnard, Nick Tonkin, Heather Bobek and Mark Timbrell.

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.astroroads.org.uk

AS OF GLASGOW

Meetings 3rd Thurs. at Room 345, Uni of Strathclyde (Montrose St entrance)
18 Jan: The Dark Side of the Universe Iain Nicholson
15 Mar: V. High Energy Gamma ray Astronomy Dr Paula Chadwick
19 Apr: Formation of Planets & Systems Dr Kenneth Rice

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.aylesburyastronomy.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: bevia11@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

BOLTON AS

Bolton TIC Centre on Minerva Road (near Bolton Royal Hospital), from
7.30pm to 9pm. Every 1st and 3rd Tuesday.
www.boltonastro.org.uk Secretary: Peter Miskiw.

BRADFORD AS

Meetings usually held on alternate Mondays in the upstairs room at Eccleshill Li-
brary, 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.

22 Jan: The Sun and the 2006 Eclipse	Kevin Read
5 Feb: Orbits, Spin and Chaos	Rod Hine
19 Feb: Blinking Stars	Melvyn Taylor
5 Mar: Location Leo	Paul Money
19 Mar: The Bradford Robotic Telescope	Dr John Baruch
2 Apr: Cosmology from the Greeks to Newton	Richard Tyers
16 Apr: From the Sublime to the Ridiculous	Colin Dawson
30 Apr: Comets and Exploaration by Spacecraft	Prof Hughes
21 May: Venus Unveiled	Mike Lancaster
4 Jun: Bridestones Legacy	Kevin Milburn

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/

BRIDGEND AS

Meets 2nd Friday of month (Sept-May) at Parc Slip Nature Reserve, Aberkenfig.
12 Jan: Time and the Stars Bob Mizon
9 Mar: Solar Astronomy—Harriot to Hoyle Dr John Birks

13 Apr: Chaos on the Solar System
www.cobwebs.uk.net/clivedown

Dr Edward Gomez

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.
Beccy Watson; callintonastro@kimwatson99.fsnet.co.uk
www.callington-astro.org.uk

6 Jan: Exploartion of Venus	Keith Lane
3 Feb: History of the Space Shuttle	John Durston
3 Mar: Voyager	Dennis Gavin

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

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

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

CLYDESDALE AS

Contact David Stevens 01555-770696. e-mail: stephd@lineone.net

CORNWALL AS

Meets second and fourth Thursday of every month at The Godolphin Club, Wen-
dron 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 jimswift@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

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 Oriol 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

HARROGATE AS

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

HASTINGS & BATTLE AS

Contact: Keith Herbert kh@ibismedical.co.uk

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)

HEBDEN BRIDGE AS

Meetings at Hope Baptist Church Rooms at approx 4 week intervals.
Contact: Len Entwistle (01422-378368) or visit FAS Diary on FAS webpage.

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.

HORSHAM AS

Meetings 1st Wednesday of the month (exc Aug) at Christ's Hospital.
Contact: Corrine Loudon. Email: hoag.secretary@hotmail.co.uk

HULL & EAST RIDING AS

Meets 2nd Monday of month at 7.30 from Sept to May. Room S25, Wilberforce 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.huddersfieldastronomy.org.uk

ILKESTON & DISTRICT AS

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

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 1st Mondays (exc Aug & BHs) at Dorridge Methodist Church Centre, Mill Lane, Dorridge, Solihull.

Contact: Nigel Foster. e-mail: nfstest00@hotmail.com www.knowleastro.org.uk

5 Feb: White Dwarves—Resurrecting the Stellar Graveyard Dr Boris Gaensecke

5 Mar: Space Weather & Solar-Terrestrial Relations Erwin Verwichte

30 Apr: Gamma Ray Bursts Dr Andrew Levan

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

LETCHEWORTH & DISTRICT AS

Meets last Wednesday of the month at Plinston Hall, Letchworth: 7.45pm

Contact: 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

LLANDRILLO COLLEGE & COASTAL AS

Meets second Tuesday of the month at Llanelian Community Centre, Colwyn Bay
Contact: Jean Smith, 16 Byron St, Trelawnyd, Flintshire. LL18 6DP
e-mail: jsmith2859@aol.com

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

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.lutonastro.org.uk/

MANCHESTER AS

Meets third Thurs in month from early autumn to late spring at Renold Building, 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 massecretery@manastro.co.uk

www.manastro.co.uk/

MARCHES A G

Meets 2nd Fri in month at Spaceguard Centre, Knighton, Powys. LD7 1LW.

Contact: Michael Birch 01597 850010 zakdorn@hotmail.com

www.spaceguarduk.com/mag

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

MELTON & DISTRICT AS

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

Observational meetings as weather permits

Contact: Andrew Atterbury - andy@att143.freemove.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/>

12 & 26 Jan: Constellation of the Month Peter Parish

9 Feb: Terrestrial Craters & Geology M Phillips / P Bassett

23 Feb: Cosmology Chris Lintott

MILTON KEYNES AS

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

Contact: Mike Leggett Tel: 01908 503692

Email: mike-pat-leggett@shenley9.fsnet.co.uk www.mkas.org.uk

19 Jan: Exploration of Venus Dr Mike leggett

16 Mar: Planetary Landers Andrew Ball

11 May: Observing the Lunar 100 Dr Lillian Hobbs

8 Jun: Gadgets and Things Pete New

26 Oct: The Sun—A Biography Dr David Whitehouse

23 Nov: Mars Rover Jerry Workman

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.freemove.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) 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 (excl. Aug & Dec) at the Henry Dixon Hall, Rivenhall End, Witham.

Contact Neil Short e-mail: njs.int@btinternet.com

<http://www.neas.me.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 AA

Meetings held on 1st Tues at 19.45 at Church House, St Bodolphs Rd, Barton, Seagrave, Kettering and on 3rd Tues at Newton Field Centre nr Geddingdon.

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

6 Feb: 2 Mass A View of the Universe Paul Money

6 Mar: AGM

3 Apr: General Relativity Paul Abel

17 Apr: tba Jerry Workman

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(Continued from page 7)

1 May: Exploring mars and other planets

Helen Walker

NOTTINGHAM AS

Meetings held on 1st Thurs at 19.30 at British Geological Survey, Nicker Hill, Keyworth, Notts. NG12 5GG.

Contact: Paul Stocks. email: nottinghamastro@yahoo.co.uk
http://beehive.thisisnottingham.co.uk/nottinghamastro

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

PAPHOS AS (CYPRUS)

Meetings 2nd Wednesdays of the month at Tsada Golf Course, Paphos, with 2 over-night 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 kpr2@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.

ST NEOTS AS

Contact: Davi Roberts - 01480-212960. email: davidr.astro@btinternet.com

SALFORD AS

Sept to April: Weekly Wednesday 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

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. 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

SHANNONSDALE AC

Meet 1st Wednesday of the month at 8.00pm, Room 206, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick

Contact: Tony O'Hanlon. 00353-65-6892221

www.shannonsdaleastronomy.com

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

www.delscope.demon.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

8 Feb; Volcanoes & Astronomy

12 Apr; Star Names

10 May; Bang—The Complete History of the Universe

14 Jun; Things that go Bang in the Night

12 Jul; Introduction to CCD Imaging and Image Processing

Michael Maunder

Mark Hurn

Chris Lintott

Ron Arbour

Nick Szymanek

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

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

TAVISTOCK AS

Meetings are held at 7.30 p.m. at The Physics Laboratory, Kelly College. Contact:

Contact: jewels on 07877-448117

10 Jan: History of Space Flight & Rockets

Clive Purchase

7 Feb: Basic Astronomy

Dennis Young

7 Mar: History of Earth

Tony Turnbull

28 Mar: Exploration of Venus

Keith Lane

2 May: History of ESA Southern Observatory

John Durston

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 www.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: klg494@googlemail.com www.astrosoc.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@westcornwallastrosoc.org

Website: www.westcornwallastrosoc.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

14 Feb: The Enigma of Neptune's Prediction Dr N Kollerstrom

14 Mar: Space Astronomy Dr G Branduardi-Raymont

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 email: martin@whillock.me.uk

www.yorkastro.co.uk

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.

Deadlines for submission for the next newsletter:

Spring 2007 - 6th April 2007

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