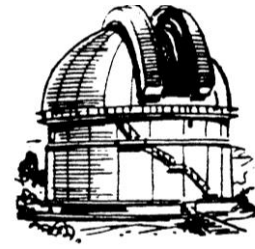

Journal

of the



Nottingham Astronomical Society

April 2005

Thursday 7th April

at the Djanogly City Technology College

Doors open from 7.30pm

Tonight we welcome

Madeleine Cox

of

Bassetlaw Astronomical Society

who will be speaking on

**Nottinghamshire –
A Heavenly County**

Inside this issue

- Sky Notes for April
- Diary Dates
- Advertisements
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- Membership application form
- Society Information

A VERY RARE ECLIPSE

On the day following our monthly meeting, a rare “hybrid” eclipse of the Sun will take place. It will begin off the coast of New Zealand and will finish about 3¼ hours later in Venezuela. The term *hybrid* is used to denote the fact that for the central portion of the track the eclipse will be **total**, but for the earlier and later portions it will be **annular**. This rare situation arises because on April 8th the apparent diameters of the Sun and Moon are almost precisely equal, but the portion of the Earth’s surface that experiences the middle of the eclipse is a few thousand kilometres nearer to the Moon, and so the Moon appears slightly larger than it does from the earlier and later parts of the track.

Sky Notes

2005 April

Compiled by Roy Gretton

All times quoted are U.T.



PHASES OF THE MOON

Last Quarter	2d 00h 50m
New Moon	8d 20h 32m
First Quarter	16d 14h 37m
Full Moon	24d 10h 06m

THE PLANETS

Mercury will reach its greatest western elongation on April 26th, when it will be 27° from the Sun. This is splendid for southern hemisphere observers, but not very good for us in the UK, because the planet lies south of the Sun and so will not climb very high in the morning twilight. It will therefore be fairly difficult to observe.

Venus remains almost unobservable this month, as it passed through superior conjunction on the last day of March.

Mars continues to draw slowly away from the Sun in the morning sky, but in spite of this it is still very difficult to observe from the Northern Hemisphere because of its southerly position. From the UK the planet will be only 10° above the horizon as twilight begins.

Jupiter reaches opposition on April 3rd, when it will be a magnitude -2.4 object in the constellation of Virgo. It will therefore be observable throughout the night, though not best-placed for observers at our latitude. Jupiter will in fact be occulted by the Moon on April 21st, as seen from some parts of the southern hemisphere.

Saturn continues to be well placed for observation after sunset, as it is still fairly high in the sky at this time.

Uranus and **Neptune** continue to be for all intents and purposes unobservable this month.

METEORS

The Virginids reach their maximum activity (about 5 meteors per hour) around April 10th, but the best of the April meteors, the Lyrids, reach their maximum activity close to the Full Moon, and so observation is unfavourable this year.

COMET MACHHOLZ

Comet 2004 Q2 (Machholz) continues to be observable through binoculars. It is circumpolar, moving through Draco and heading towards the Plough. It is now about magnitude 8.

DIARY DATES

Meetings of the Nottingham Astronomical Society

Don't forget to check our website:

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

for up-to-date details of Society activities.

Thursday 7 April

Djanogly CTC

Doors open 7.30pm

“Nottinghamshire, a Heavenly County”

Madeline Cox

Bassetlaw Astronomical Society

Monday 11 April

The Rose and Crown

Main Road, Cotgrave

NAS Annual Dinner

All members, their families and friends are very welcome.

An example of the menu will be available at the meeting on 7 April

Thursday 5 May

Djanogly CTC

Doors open 7.30pm

Members' Evening

Feel free to suggest ideas for the evening! E-mail them to the Secretary.

Thursday 7 July

Djanogly CTC

Doors open 7.30pm

“Extra-Solar Planets”

Dr Roger New

Sheffield Hallam University

Thursday 1 September

Djanogly CTC

Doors open 7.30pm

"Why do galaxies look the way they do?"

The origin of galaxy morphology"

Dr Alfonso Aragon-Salamanca

University of Nottingham

Thursday 6 October

At NAS Observatory site 7.30pm

Members' Evening at the Observatory

Thursday 1 December

Djanogly CTC 7.30pm

“Cosmic Collisions”

Dennis Ashton

Director, Sheffield Hallam University Star Centre

DIARY DATES (2)

Other events

*The website for the Scarborough & District A.S. event has a downloadable booking form.
Or just ask me for a form if you need one.*

*Paul Stocks
NAS Secretary*

Scarborough and District Astronomical Society Fifth Summer Star Festival, 2005

Friday August 5th to Monday August 8th
(Three nights observing)

Adderstone Field, Dalby Forest, in the North York Moors National Park

We invite you to come and join us for three nights observing in an elevated dark site within the stunning Dalby Forest on the foothills of the North York Moors. Our site is within easy reach of Pickering, with its steam railway, and the seaside resorts of Scarborough, Whitby and Filey. There are many beautiful walks in the area, both within the forest itself and further afield. This area is well known for its many and varied attractions. There is a large and well-drained field for camping, (tents and caravans) with portable toilets.

The cost for the weekend will be £17 per adult, £5 for 5-16 year-olds, with children under 5, free. We are sorry to have to increase the adult fee, but the toilets will be more expensive next year following the takeover of the original suppliers. There is a limit to the number of guests we can accommodate - last year we had to turn people away at the end, so **book early** and avoid disappointment! Please also note that any bookings accepted after July 7th, space permitting, will cost £20 / £6 to cover last-minute arrangements."

This fee includes a forest pass to enable you to take advantage of the forest facilities, as well as a 'wine and nibbles' get-together on the Friday evening to welcome you to Dalby Forest. Please book ahead so that you can receive your pass – otherwise you may be asked to pay the toll as you enter the forest.

Again we will hold one of our famous team 'Astromind' competitions in the communal marquee and speakers will be organised for various times during the event. If there is anyone amongst you who would like to volunteer to talk or demonstrate at other times, we would love to hear from you! A number of trade stands will also be on site for part or all of the time.

The Low Dalby site is now being re-developed, and the new Visitor Centre complex, with community room is already taking shape. We are told that this phase should be completed by March – but let's add a couple of months and say it should be ready in time for Starfest 2005!

We look forward to meeting all our old friends and new ones too!

Best Wishes,

Sheila

Telephone enquiries 01723 500389

E-mail enquiries jonvran@aol.com Website <http://www.scarborough-as.org.uk>

We do need you to book – the number of toilets ordered is directly proportional to the number of guests!

Other events (continued)

3rd Kielder Forest Star Camp Northumberland, 8 – 11 September

The Forestry Commission and Sunderland Astronomical Society are staging the 3rd Kielder Forest Star Camp in Northumberland from **8 - 11 September 2005**.

The venue remains the well appointed campsite in Kielder - which has the kind of dark skies you would expect of England's remotest village, set amidst 230 square miles of rolling woodland.

The main day will be Saturday 10 September at nearby 18th century Kielder Castle, a former hunting lodge of the Dukes of Northumberland. Last year this proved a great success and once again we plan on having a host of trade stands, top speakers, along with more activities for beginners. Over the four days there'll also be wildlife walks and more astro-talks.

Red lights rules will apply as the campsite has been totally blocked booked for our event. Pitch fees are from £10, with the campsite having a full array of modern facilities. The wonderful Border countryside is yours to explore during the day. There's plenty to do, from taking a boat ride to going biking or even spending a few hours in the pub five minutes walk away.

The star camp website is at www.richarddarn.demon.co.uk/starcamp/ or e-mail starcamp2005@richarddarn.demon.co.uk Telephone: **Richard Darn** on 01226 246351

Small Advertisements

For Sale

Maksutov 6-inch by Drew. 2x2-inch finderscopes, equatorial tripod mount with circles, eyepiece tray, carry box. Selection of eyepieces, Barlow lens, star diagonals.

Buyer collects. **£495** for prompt sale.

**Telephone Peter Davison
on 0115 923 0040**

For Sale

8³/₄-inch Newtonian telescope on Dobsonian mount

Built by David Lukehurst.
65x and 250x eyepieces, finderscope.
3 years old.
Hardly used, very good condition.

£375 or near offer

**Telephone Terry Naylor
on 0115 9815968**

The Widescreen Centre

18, **LADY BAY ROAD**, Nottingham, NG2 5BJ
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WebShop: www.widescreen-centre.co.uk
www.telescopes-direct.com

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You are always made welcome at our shop or a telephone call to Lynda will bring you our latest catalogue

The Nottingham Astronomical Society: E - SERVICES

'Beehive' Website

Whether or not you are a NAS member, you can now keep up to date with details of the Society's meetings and other events by visiting the NAS 'Beehive' website:

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

NAS Journal e-mailing list

To register for your monthly e-mailed copy of the NAS Journal, just e-mail

Carl Brennan at: carl.stella@virgin.net

You don't have to be a Society member to take advantage of this service.

NAS Observatory Group

A web group page and message service (for NAS members only) is available at

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/nottinghamastronomicalsociety/>

It is used for circulating information to members about work at the observatory and use of the large telescope. If you are a member of the Society, you can join this online group by visiting the website and clicking on "Join this Group".

Nottingham Astronomical Society

The Nottingham Astronomical Society, and/or the Editor accept no responsibility for any errors that may occur within this publication. Any views expressed in the NAS Journal are those of the individual authors and not necessarily endorsed by the Nottingham Astronomical Society, its Committee or Members.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

If you would like to join the Nottingham Astronomical Society, please complete and tear off this slip. Make your cheque/postal order payable to:

THE NOTTINGHAM ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

Then send the slip and payment to Paul Stocks, Hon. Secretary, **Nottingham Astronomical Society**, 22 Killerton Park Drive, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7SB

Alternatively you may hand the slip and payment to the Secretary or Treasurer at one of the Society's regular meetings.

Your name _____

Full address _____

_____ Postcode _____

I wish to join the Nottingham Astronomical Society and enclose the membership fee for

(please tick appropriate box)

- Full Adult £24
- Junior (17 years or under) £12
- Concession (*full time student, UB40, etc*) £12

Nottingham Astronomical Society

Affiliated to the **British Astronomical Association**
Member of the **Federation of Astronomical Societies**
Member of the **Society for Popular Astronomy**
Supporters of the **Campaign for Dark Skies**
Registered Charity No: 1066645

PRESIDENT:

Greg Eisenhauer

Tel: 01949 875857

e-mail: greg.eisenhauer@ntlworld.com

HONORARY VICE PRESIDENT

Alan Heath (Ex. Dir. BAA Saturn Section)

VICE PRESIDENTS:

David Lukehurst

e-mail: gildor@ntlworld.com

website: www.dobsonians.co.uk

Dr Roy Gretton

e-mail: roy@gretton.surfonwater.com

HONORARY SECRETARY:

Paul Stocks

Tel: 0115 914 8185

e-mail: nottinghamastro@yahoo.co.uk

TREASURER:

Dr Mike Provost

e-mail: mike.provost@ntlworld.com

JOURNAL EDITOR:

Dr Roy Gretton

e-mail: roy@gretton.surfonwater.com

CURATOR OF INSTRUMENTS

David Lukehurst

e-mail: gildor@ntlworld.com

CAMPAIGN FOR DARK SKIES:

Greg Eisenhauer

ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Joe Sowerby

Dorothy Sowerby

Meetings

Formal monthly meetings, with speakers, are held on the first Thursday of each month (except August, and occasionally other months as announced) at

Djanogly City Technology College

Sherwood Rise, Nottingham NG7

Doors open	7.30pm
Meetings Start	7.45pm
Meetings end	10.00pm

Non-members are very welcome at our meetings and there is no charge for the first meeting. We make a small charge of £2.50 adults, £1.25 juniors to non-members after their first attendance. Invited guests are admitted free of charge.

Annual Subscriptions, 2004-05

Full Adult:	£24
Junior (<i>17 years or under</i>)	£12
Concessions	£12

(*Full time student, UB40, etc*)

Subscriptions become due on 1 October. Half-price subscription is charged if joining after 1st April. Please make cheques payable to:
Nottingham Astronomical Society.

If you would like further information about the **Nottingham Astronomical Society**, or would like to become a member, please contact the Honorary Secretary, Paul Stocks, at the address given above, or speak to any NAS committee member at one of the regular monthly meetings.

A membership application form appears inside this issue of the Journal.
