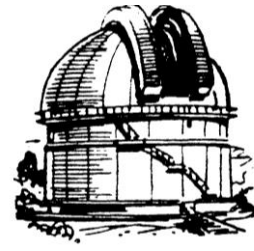


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# Journal

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## Nottingham Astronomical Society

February 2004

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Inside this issue

- Sky Notes for February (including ISS for the first week)
- Secretary's Notices
- Diary Dates
- Advertisements
- E-Services
- Membership application form

### Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February

at the Djanogly City Technology College

*Doors open from 7.30pm*

Tonight is a

## Members' Night

with an update on progress with the Society's large telescope and observatory

*All members and friends welcome.  
Find out the latest on this important project*

### IMPORTANT ASTRONOMICAL EVENTS OF 2004

*visible from Britain*

- MAY 4:** Total eclipse of the Moon (at moonrise)  
**JUNE 8:** Transit of Venus across the Sun  
**OCTOBER 28:** Total eclipse of the Moon

These are *as certain*, as they say, *as tomorrow's sunrise*. Less certain, but equally exciting, is the prospect of two naked eye comets in the late spring (although only one of them is likely to be favourable from our latitude).

Also, three of our best meteor showers, the Perseids (August), Leonids (November) and Geminids (December) are *favourable* this year.

# Sky Notes

## 2004 February

Compiled by Roy Gretton

*All times quoted are U.T.*



### THE MOON

Full Moon	6d 08h 47m
Last Quarter	13d 13h 39m
New Moon	20d 09h 18m
First Quarter	28d 03h 24m

### THE PLANETS

**Mercury** is not well placed for observation in February, but may be glimpsed low in the morning twilight the beginning of the month.

**Venus** continues to grow in prominence in the evening sky as its declination steadily becomes less negative. The planet crosses the celestial equator early in the month, and by the end of February is  $10^\circ$  north of it. Its magnitude is now  $-4$ , and its elongation from the Sun increases to  $44^\circ$  by the end of the month. It is  $3^\circ$  north of the Moon on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Mars**, still fading, sets at around midnight. It is now in the constellation of Aries, and only about 6 arcseconds in diameter. The Moon passes within one degree of Mars on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Jupiter** is a brilliant object, magnitude  $-2.4$ , now rising in the evening. Opposition occurs early next month. It is  $3^\circ$  south of the Moon on the 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Saturn** continues to be the gem in Gemini. It is fading in brightness, down to magnitude  $-0.1$  by the close of the month. It is  $4^\circ$  south of the Moon on the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Uranus** and **Neptune** both pass through conjunction this month and are therefore unobservable.

### METEORS?

February is the one month of the year with no significant meteor shower activity!

## THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION FOR THE FIRST WEEK OF FEBRUARY

Information from [www.heavens-above.com](http://www.heavens-above.com)

Date	Mag	Starts			Max. <u>Altitude</u>			Ends		
		Time	<u>Alt.</u>	<u>Az.</u>	Time	<u>Alt.</u>	<u>Az.</u>	Time	<u>Alt.</u>	<u>Az.</u>
<a href="#">01 Feb</a>	-0.3	18:17:15	10	W	18:20:15	58	SSW	18:21:48	24	ESE
<a href="#">01 Feb</a>	2.6	19:53:12	10	W	19:53:43	13	WSW	19:53:43	13	WSW
<a href="#">02 Feb</a>	0.7	18:49:07	10	W	18:51:53	33	SSW	18:52:37	29	S
<a href="#">03 Feb</a>	0.0	17:45:12	10	W	17:48:09	51	SSW	17:51:06	10	ESE
<a href="#">03 Feb</a>	1.9	19:21:20	10	WSW	19:23:22	17	SW	19:23:31	17	SSW
<a href="#">04 Feb</a>	1.1	18:17:03	10	W	18:19:42	28	SSW	18:22:21	10	SE
<a href="#">05 Feb</a>	2.3	18:49:30	10	WSW	18:51:02	13	SW	18:52:35	10	S
<a href="#">06 Feb</a>	1.7	17:44:53	10	W	17:47:22	23	SSW	17:49:50	10	SSE
<a href="#">07 Feb</a>	2.9	18:18:02	10	SW	18:18:34	10	SW	18:19:07	10	SSW

*Note: The best occasions to look for the ISS are when it has a large maximum altitude, such as 6.20 pm on 1<sup>st</sup> Feb, 6.51 pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5.48 pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 6.19 pm on the 4<sup>th</sup>.*

*Don't be surprised if the times differ a little from the published ones, as the orbit of the ISS continually undergoes minor changes.*

## Secretary's Notices

There are two brief items that I would like to mention this month.

### **New e-mail address**

Following the change of Secretary, the main e-mail address for the NAS is now:  
[nottinghamastro@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nottinghamastro@yahoo.co.uk)

### **Guest speakers – help needed!**

To keep the society's programme of meetings as varied and interesting as possible, a constant supply of guest speakers is needed.

We may in future have more "members' evenings" at the CTC and "observatory evenings" out at the site, but as secretary I shall still need to find between six and eight speakers to talk at our CTC meetings on topics of interest to members.

The June and September meetings are now arranged, but I am still looking for speakers to come and give talks in April and May.

So, if you know of anyone who would be willing to give us a talk or you would yourself be prepared to speak on an astronomy/space science topic, please let me know!

Many thanks

Paul Stocks  
NAS Secretary  
[nottinghamastro@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nottinghamastro@yahoo.co.uk)  
0115 914 8185

### **Electrician wanted!**

Can any member help with an electrical wiring job at the NAS Observatory please?

The parts for the dome shutter mechanism are now ready for installation. We need to wire up the mechanism's 110V motor, including a reversing switch, and possibly over-run switches to prevent the motor moving the shutter too far up or down.

If you can help, please contact the Secretary or any other NAS committee member, as soon as possible.

Many thanks,

Paul Stocks  
NAS Secretary  
[nottinghamastro@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nottinghamastro@yahoo.co.uk)  
0115 914 8185

## Diary Dates

### Meetings of the Nottingham Astronomical Society 2004

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February**

Djanogly CTC

*Doors open from 7.30pm*

#### **Members' Night**

A general get-together including an update on progress with the Society's large telescope and observatory.  
Please come along and join the discussion.

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March**

Djanogly CTC

*Doors open from 7.30pm*

#### **William Herschel's Telescopes**

**Madeline Cox**

**Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> June**

Djanogly CTC

*Doors open from 7.30pm*

#### **The Exploration of the Moon**

**Dr Mike Leggett FRAS FBIS**

(to be confirmed)

**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September**

Djanogly CTC

*Doors open from 7.30pm*

#### **Update on European/UK Space Science Programmes**

**Prof Ken Pounds**

Dept of Physics & Astronomy, Leicester University

#### **Other events**

**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April**

#### **British Astronomical Association**

#### **Meeting in Nottingham**

#### **“Practical Observing Tips for Amateurs”**

Full programme to be announced

Open to all interested members of the public

This meeting is hosted by the NAS and we are delighted to welcome the BAA to Nottingham

#### **Venue:**

**Nottingham High School for Girls**

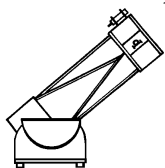
**Arboretum Street, Nottingham**

Doors open at 11.00am

## Small Advertisements

**David Lukehurst**

*Astronomical Telescope Maker*



**Large, Highly Portable Dobsonians**

From 6¼ to 30-inches

12-inch f/6 truss-tube Dobsonian: £995

**Also:**

Large Finders, Low-profile Helical and Rack & Pinion Focussers, Eyepieces, Barlow Lenses, Ronchi Testers, etc.

**For details & price list:**

Tel: 0115 9602266

[gildor@ntlworld.com](mailto:gildor@ntlworld.com)

## 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**

## The Widescreen Centre

18, LADY BAY ROAD ,Nottingham, NG2 5BJ

0115 945 5459 FAX: 0115 945 5362

WebShop: [www.widescreen-centre.co.uk](http://www.widescreen-centre.co.uk)

[www.telescopes-direct.com](http://www.telescopes-direct.com)

eMail: [call@widescreen-centre.co.uk](mailto:call@widescreen-centre.co.uk)

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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

### *The Journal*

To register for your FREE Journal, just E-mail Carl Brennan at [carl.stella@virgin.net](mailto:carl.stella@virgin.net) - You don't have to be a Society member to take advantage of this service.

### *Observatory Group*

A web group page and message service has been set up at <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/nottinghamastronomicalsociety/>  
It will be used for circulating information about the observatory construction and projects, large telescope up-dates, and use of the site by members of the Observatory Group. Please visit the web site and E-mail on line if you wish to join (NAS Members only)

### *Minute Reports*

If you wish to receive E-copies of the draft minutes of the committee let Carl Brennan know at [carl.stella@virgin.net](mailto:carl.stella@virgin.net) . This service is open only to Society members.

### **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, it's Committee or Members.*

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## **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 £23
- Junior (17 years or under) £11.50
- Concession (*full time student, UB40, Senior Citizen*) £11.50

# 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

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## PRESIDENT:

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Tel: 01949 875857

e-mail: [greg.eisenhauer@ntlworld.com](mailto:greg.eisenhauer@ntlworld.com)

## HONORARY VICE PRESIDENT

**Alan Heath** (Ex. Dir. BAA Saturn Section)

## VICE PRESIDENTS:

**David Lukehurst**

e-mail: [gildor@ntlworld.com](mailto:gildor@ntlworld.com)

**Dr Roy Gretton**

e-mail: [roy@gretton.surfonwater.com](mailto:roy@gretton.surfonwater.com)

## HONORARY SECRETARY:

*Paul Stocks*

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e-mail: [nottinghamastro@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nottinghamastro@yahoo.co.uk)

## TREASURER:

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## JOURNAL EDITOR:

**Dr Roy Gretton**

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## CURATOR OF INSTRUMENTS

**David Lukehurst**

e-mail: [gildor@ntlworld.com](mailto:gildor@ntlworld.com)

## CAMPAIGN FOR DARK SKIES:

**Greg Eisenhauer**

## ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBER:

**Carl Brennan**

**Joe Sowerby**

**Dorothy Sowerby**

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## 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, 2003-04

Full Adult:	£23
Junior (17 years or under)	£11.50
Concessions	£11.50

(Full time student, UB40, Senior Citizens)

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

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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.

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