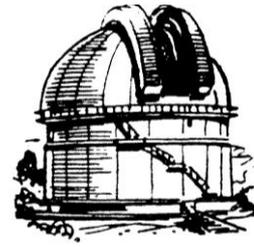

Journal

of the



Nottingham Astronomical Society

January 2008

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Thursday 3rd January
at the
British Geological Survey
Nicker Hill, Keyworth

8 pm (doors open at 7.30pm)

Tonight is a

MEMBERS' EVENING

in which a variety of short topics will be covered

The Committee wishes all members and friends of the Society
a very happy and prosperous New Year.

ASTRONOMICAL HIGHLIGHTS OF 2008

A total eclipse of the Moon on February 21st, the whole of which will be visible from the United Kingdom.

A total eclipse of the Sun on August 1st, visible as a partial eclipse from the United Kingdom. The maximum extent of eclipse in Nottinghamshire will be about 25%.

A lunar occultation of Venus on December 1st.

Sky Notes

2008 January

Compiled by Roy Gretton



The Earth will be at perihelion (its closest approach to the Sun, 147 million kilometres) on January 2nd.

PHASES OF THE MOON

New Moon occurs shortly before midday on January 8th

First Quarter occurs in the early evening of the 15th

Full Moon occurs early in the afternoon of the 22nd

Last Quarter occurs on the early morning of the 30th

This month the Moon is closest to Earth on the 19th, and furthest from Earth on the 3rd.

THE PLANETS

Mercury is an evening object this month, and reaches greatest eastern elongation (19 degrees) on January 22nd. About this time the planet will be visible low down in the southwest after sunset, and will be setting approximately 90 minutes after the Sun. It will be shining at magnitude -0.5, but since the surrounding sky will not be dark, you may find binoculars helpful for locating Mercury.

Venus continues its appearance as a brilliant white object (magnitude -4) in the morning sky at the beginning of January, but will be drawing closer to the Sun as the month progresses, and will be rising two hours before sunrise at the end of January (whereas at Christmas it was rising three hours before the Sun).

Mars, in the constellation of Gemini, is a prominent reddish star high in the southern sky in the late evening. It was closest to Earth at Christmas, when its apparent diameter was 16 arcseconds and its magnitude -1.6, but by the end of January it will have receded to a distance where its diameter will have decreased to 13 arcseconds, and its magnitude to -0.8.

Jupiter is too close to the Sun to be observed this month.

Saturn, in the constellation of Leo, is a morning object, rising at 9 p.m. at the beginning of January. At magnitude +0.6 it is dimmer than usual because the rings are being presented toward us at a decreasing angle and are therefore reflecting less light toward Earth.

Uranus and **Neptune** are virtually unobservable this month.

METEORS

Conditions are very favourable this year for the **Quadrantids**, which reach their maximum activity on the night of January 3rd-4th (in the hours following our January meeting). The peak is expected just before sunrise. The radiant is in the north of the constellation of Bootes, and will be 60 degrees above the horizon at dawn.

VARIABLE STAR: Algol

There are four minima of this dark-eclipsing binary visible from the UK this month. They occur on January 10th (6.20 am), the 13th (3.05 am), the 15th (11.55 pm), and the 18th (8.40 pm). The star dims from its normal brightness (magnitude 2.1) to magnitude 3.4 over a period of about five hours.

DIARY DATES 2008

Meetings of the Nottingham Astronomical Society

Our programme for the coming months is below. Don't forget to check our website:
<http://beehive.thisisnottingham.co.uk/nottinghamastro>
for the latest information about the Society's meetings and observing sessions.

Thursday 3 January 2008

British Geological Survey, Keyworth
8.00pm (Doors open 7.30pm)

Members' Evening

A variety of short topics, including 'telescope basics'

Thursday 7 February 2008

British Geological Survey, Keyworth
8.00pm (Doors open 7.30pm)

Talk: 'Simple Sums for Astronomers'

Dr Roy Gretton
NAS Vice-President

Thursday 6 March 2008

British Geological Survey, Keyworth
8.00pm (Doors open 7.30pm)

Topic/speaker to be announced nearer the date

Thursday 3 April 2008

British Geological Survey, Keyworth
8.00pm (Doors open 7.30pm)

Topic/speaker to be announced nearer the date

Coming in Summer 2008

Our guest speakers will be:

June – **Andrew Lound** with his talk '**The Discovery of New Worlds**' with some amazing images accompanied by music and supported with various props!

July - **Paul Money** will give his talk '**Mars – the Next Generation**' including 3D images.

OTHER EVENTS

Astronomy Course

Mansfield and Sutton Astronomical Society

are running a course from their observatory in the New Year.

It is an 8 week non-accredited course in basic astronomy starting **Friday 25th January** at 7.30.

The cost is £40.

For more information about the course, directions to the observatory etc., please e-mail **Phil Randall** - phil@philsphotos.wanadoo.co.uk or phone the observatory: **01623 552276** and leave your details.

Small Advertisements

Various items of equipment for sale

| | |
|---|------|
| Celestron Nexstar 5 telescope and tripod etc. (including nylon cover and power supply) | £395 |
| Pop-up observatory tent | £95 |
| Carl Zeiss 10x50 binoculars with leather case | £25 |
| Meade 9.7 Super Plossl eyepiece | £25 |
| Celestron 3.6 Plossl eyepiece | £10 |
| Celestron 90-degree erecting diagonal | £10 |
| sodium light pollution filter | £10 |

**Please contact Sam Boote
s.boote@bcs.org
0115 937 4644**

**This advertising space is available
free of charge to society members**

For Sale

10 inch reflector telescope, focal length 63 inches
with RA Drive
two eyepieces
and storage shed

Any reasonable offer accepted

Phone **Mr Chambers**
0115 914 1454

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

nottinghamastro@yahoo.co.uk

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

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, 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:

- Full Adult £25
- Junior (17 years or under) £12.50
- Concession (*full time student, UB40, etc*) £12.50

Please tick and enter your e-mail address if you wish to receive:

- the monthly **NAS Journal** (in 'Word' format) by e-mail
- e-mail notifications of dates & times of observing sessions using the large telescope at our observatory.

Your e-mail address: _____

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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CURATOR OF INSTRUMENTS**

John Hurst

email: jmhurst@hotmail.co.uk

Observatory line: 07726 940700 (line open during observing sessions)

ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Joe Sowerby

Dorothy Sowerby

Kevin Greally

Robert Bush

Meetings

Our meetings, often with an illustrated talk by a guest speaker, are held on the first Thursday of each month (except in August & October) at:

The British Geological Survey

Nicker Hill

Keyworth

Nottingham NG12 5GG

Doors open 7.30pm

Meetings start 8.00pm

Meetings end 10.00pm

Meetings are open to the public and visitors are always welcome to attend.

Annual subscriptions 2007-08

Adult £25

Junior (under 18 years) £12.50

Concessions* £12.50

(*Full-time student, jobseeker's allowance, basic state pension)

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 more information about the **Nottingham Astronomical Society**, or would like to become a member, please contact the Secretary, Paul Stocks, 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.
