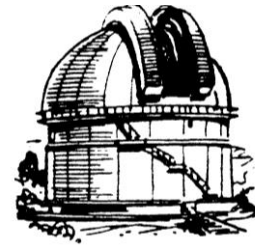

Journal

of the



Nottingham Astronomical Society

July/August 2002

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Thursday 4th July at Djanogly CTC

Doors open 7.30pm

SETI and our part in Project Phoenix

is the title of the evening's talk, and we are pleased to welcome our guest speaker

**Dr Ian Morrison
of Jodrell Bank**

*Our next meeting at the CTC is on 5th September.
Please see Diary Dates inside this issue for details.*

OBSERVATORY APPEAL

The NAS observatory building recently suffered serious damage when thieves broke in through the annexe roof and also kicked out the window, having previously damaged the door in attempting to force their way in.

This is not the first time that the building has been vandalised and it is unfortunately clear that the building has to be made much more secure if thieves are not to be able to break-in again at their leisure.

The wind turbine and solar cell were stolen, together with the Society's 3-inch refractor. Due to the isolated location of the building, this attack was done by people who were able to be undisturbed for some appreciable time and used various tools in breaking in and in removing the turbine and solar cell.

The annexe roof is now in urgent need of repair and the repairs, together with other works needed to make the building secure, will cost an estimated £1200.

The site is also now without power and the favoured solution to this is to obtain a generator.

The Society has some funds available for these works, but they are not sufficient to do everything.

I am therefore appealing urgently for donations from members to raise sufficient funds so that the repairs can be undertaken quickly and to a standard that will make the observatory properly secure. This is especially necessary, as the Large Telescope will be installed during the coming year.

David Lukehurst
President NAS

Sky Notes

July & August 2002



A fairly quiet period, with Venus being the only bright planet easily observable. But don't forget to look for the Perseid meteors in August.

The Moon

	July	August
Last quarter	2d 17h	1d 10h
New Moon	10d 10h	8d 19h
First quarter	17d 5h	15d 10h
Full Moon	24d 9h	22d 22h
Last Quarter		31d 3h

The Planets

Mercury: Unobservable, except for perhaps during the first week of July, when the planet will be visible very low in the NE early morning sky before sunrise. Not really worth getting up early for.

Venus: With magnitude increasing from -4.1 to -4.4 , Venus is a brilliant evening object.

Mars: Badly placed in July, in conjunction with the Sun on 10th August and hence unobservable.

Jupiter: In conjunction with the Sun on 20th July and therefore unobservable. During late August, the planet will be visible in the constellation of Cancer in the early morning sky at magnitude -1.8 .

Saturn: Visible as an early morning 0.0 magnitude object in Taurus, moving into Orion during August. By late August, the planet will rise at around 23.00 UT.

Uranus: In Aquarius in July, moving into Capricornus in August and at opposition on the 20th of that month. Magnitude is 5.7. A good time to look for this outer planet, but it is a very bland object in the telescope!

Neptune: As with Uranus, this is a good time to search out Neptune as the planet is at opposition on 2nd August in Capricornus. Magnitude is 7.8.

Meteors

The major meteor shower during this period is the **Perseids**, which will be active from 20th July to 20th August. The period of maximum visibility is between 11 and 14 August, peaking on the 12th. Conditions are favourable as Moonlight will not interfere, so if skies are clear, expect an average hourly rate of around 60 during the peak.

DIARY DATES, by Carl Brennan

FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE NOTTINGHAM ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

July 4th Djanogly C.T.C.

Doors open from 7.30pm

SETI AND OUR PART IN PROJECT PHOENIX

Dr Ian Morrison, Jodrell Bank

September 5th Djanogly C.T.C.

Doors open from 7.30pm

THE HUMANIZATION OF SPACE

Dr. Michael Martin-Smith, author and
member of Hull Astronomical Society

OTHER EVENTS

9th to 12th August Scarborough & District

Astronomical Society Summer Star Festival

Details from Carl Brennan, or Mrs. S. Aderson,
25 Highfield, Scarborough, N. Yorks, YO12 4AW,
Telephone 01723 500389, E-mail

gwernan2@ukf.net

www.baryte.demon.co.uk/astro/

21st September (Saturday)

BAA Exhibition Meeting. To be held at the
Cavendish Laboratories, Madingley Road,
Cambridge.

Future Events

“Hi Astronomers.

The BBC's new SPACE programme will be
broadcast on 22nd JULY AT 8.30 PM. PART OF
A SIX-PROGRAMME SERIES.

*TONY. W. CROSS. PUBLIC RELATIONS
OFFICER. MANCHESTER ASTRONOMICAL
SOCIETY.*”

The next National Astronomy Week.

On 27 August 2003 the planet Mars will come to a
particularly good opposition. To celebrate this
event, Britain's astronomers are planning another

[National Astronomy Week](http://www.astronomyweek.org.uk)

[<http://www.astronomyweek.org.uk>](http://www.astronomyweek.org.uk).

Nottingham Astronomical Society Provisional Programme 2002/03

2002

November 7th

HISTORY OF THE CONSTELLATIONS:

Madeline Cox, Bassetlaw Astronomical Society

December 5th

SUNSPOTS; Dr. Paul Mathews, University of
Nottingham **T.B.C.**

2003

January 2nd

MEMBERS NIGHT; Bring along some examples of
your work/projects

February 6th

OBSERVING THE UNIVERSE; Alfonso Aragon-
Salamanca, Department of Physics and astronomy,
University of Nottingham

March 6th

EINSTEIN VERSUS STAR TREK: Les Jepson,
Bassetlaw Astronomical Society

April 3rd

UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM (TBC)

May 1st

Provisional speaker booked but not confirmed

June 5th

No speaker booked as yet

July 3rd

Provisional speaker booked but not confirmed

September 4th

MARS ODYSSEY; Andy Lund, The Planetary
Society, UK Regional Coordinator (£30 expenses
and petrol)

October 2nd

**OBSERVATORY MEETING NIGHT –DETAILS TO
FOLLOW**

November 6th

A.G.M.

December 4th

No speaker booked as yet

Nottingham Astronomical Society

The Secretary compiles these Diary Dates. Contributions are
always welcome (please include source acknowledgement).
Nottingham Astronomical Society, and/or the Secretary accept
no responsibility for any errors that may occur within this
publication. Any views expressed in *Diary Dates* are those of
the individual authors and not necessarily endorsed by the
Secretary, Nottingham Astronomical Society, it's Committee or
Members.

AGM 2003

The sharp eyed amongst you may have already noted from the *Diary Dates* that the **2003** AGM date is down as November 6th and not October as normal. I will be making a formal proposal in the September issue to go before you the members at the **2002** AGM concerning this. The main reason for this move involves the Society's financial year, and new internal auditing procedures. Subscriptions would still become due on October 1st as now, but it is planned to move all future AGM's to November.

If you feel you want to know more, please talk to Mike Provost or myself. Whichever way you feel, please do let me know your views.

Thanks
Carl Brennan
Society Secretary.

Personal Notice from the Secretary

By now most of you will be aware that I do not intend to continue in the office of Secretary at the next AGM. I have given this a lot of thought, and feel it would be in the best long-term interest of the Society. I am afraid that the resignations of the "old guard" during this session have hurt me deeply. I do not agree with the reasoning behind those resignations (although I can partly understand them). However, I do think they underline major changes made within the last two or three years, and to be honest I don't feel ready to fully embrace those changes. I really do think that the time has come for a new Secretary to bring a new perspective to the job.

I have greatly enjoyed being Secretary since 1984, and will continue to support and help any member who now takes on this job. I'm afraid that in 1984 I was thrown in at the deep end, (now there is a story for a pint sometime). I would hope that the new Secretary will feel able to accept help if they think its needed, but will understand completely if they want to do things their own way.

Myself, well I'm just looking forward to attend meetings, sitting back and enjoying the talks, and maybe having a chin wag after over a brew.

Carl Brennan

Can you spare a few hours to help repair the Society's Observatory?

As you will have seen from the appeal on the front page of this month's Journal, the Nottingham Astronomical Society's observatory is in need of urgent repair work before the planned telescope can go into it. We need to re-roof the observatory's annexe (about the size of a large garden shed) and make the building fully secure. To help keep costs down, we need volunteers to help do this. "DIY" skills will, of course, be much appreciated.

More details will be available at the meeting on 4th July but the NAS committee has provisionally set the **August Bank Holiday weekend** as the time to try to get the work done.

Are you able to help the Society in this way please? If you can spare some time over the August Bank Holiday weekend, please make yourself known to any of the committee at the 4th July meeting, or contact:

NAS President **David Lukehurst** - telephone 0115 960 2266

E-mail: gildor@ntlworld.com

or

NAS Secretary **Carl Brennan** - telephone 0115 854 8687

E-mail: carl.stella@virgin.net

Your help will be much appreciated and will be a major step in completing our observatory and telescope project, from which all members of the Society will benefit.

NEXT ISSUE OF THE NAS JOURNAL

The next issue of the Journal will be in September. Any items for the September issue must be with the Journal Editor by **16th August**, please.

Paul Stocks
Journal Editor

Best of the Web

A mixed bag of topics this month.

Transit of Venus, June 2004

Read about the transit of Venus due in 2004 and the first since the 19th Century. The Orpington Astronomical Society have some informative pages at www.chocky.demon.co.uk/oas/venus.html

Astrobiology Magazine

The search for life elsewhere in the Universe is covered by the “e-zine”, Astrobiology Magazine. Take a look at www.astrobio.net/

Stand by for lift off!

Read about Britain’s own (privately built) manned rocket project at <http://uk.news.yahoo.com/020624/80/d1rn7.html>

“Get ready for National Astronomy Week 2003!

Probably you already know that there will be another National Astronomy Week in 2003. I am writing to give a few more details. The week will be 23-30 August 2003, which might seem a long way off, but plans will have to be put in place now.

First, a few words about the timing of the week, which includes the date of the closest opposition of Mars ever in history. Although we all know that Mars will actually be rather easier to observe by the public a little later in the year, media interest at the time of opposition will be intense. They will actually be beating a path to our door, so we all need to be ready for them! This will be the week for star parties, made easier by the fact that the schools are on holiday so more people will be able to stay up late.

The NAW committee, which includes representatives from all national UK societies and other interested parties, is aiming to give maximum publicity to the events that will be taking place during the week. We are hoping for TV linkups as well as press stories, and we are also planning an information sheet that will give some basic information on Mars and how to observe it. This time, the main source of information about NAW will be the Web, and we will be putting most information on our website, www.astronomyweek.org.uk, rather than trying to distribute material by post.

Best wishes

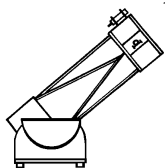
Robin Scagell

NAW 2003 Publicity Officer”

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

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**

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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.*

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 Carl Brennan, Hon. Secretary, **Nottingham Astronomical Society**, 40 Swindon Close, The Vale, Giltbrook, Nottingham NG16 2WD.

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 £22
- Junior (17 years or under) £11
- Concession (*full time student, UB40, Senior Citizen*) £11

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:

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e-mail: gildor@ntlworld.com

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e-mail: carl.stella@virgin.net

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Paul Stocks

e-mail: stocks_paul61@hotmail.com

CAMPAIGN FOR DARK SKIES:

Christine Wells

e-mail: wells_chrissie@hotmail.com

Meetings

Formal monthly meetings, with speakers, are held on the first Thursday of each month (except August) 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, 2001-02

Full Adult:	£22
Junior (17 years or under)	£11
Concessions	£11

(Full time student, UB40, Senior Citizens)

Subscriptions become due at the October AGM. 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, Carl Brennan, 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.
