
Journal

of the
Nottingham Astronomical Society
July-August 2026



In this issue

- A Message from the Chairman
- Sky Notes for July & August
- e-Services
- Diary Dates
- Social & Practical Astronomy
- latest meeting report
- Officers of the NAS
- Latest Results from a
Solar-Cam
- An Approach to Processing
Deepsky Images from a
Seestar
- Planetary Conjunctions in
June
- Advertisements
- Society Information

Thursday, July 2nd
Nottingham Emmanuel School
Gresham Park Road,
West Bridgford,
Nottingham, NG2 7YF

7:45pm (doors open at 7:15pm)

This evening we welcome

Dr Keiran Wood

of the Nottingham Particle Theory Group

who will be speaking on

Gravity and its Problems

Chairman's Message, July 2026

Dear members,

As I write this it is sweltering, so I hope you're all finding somewhere cool to hide from the temperatures! I missed the Plumtree spectroscopy meeting and it sounds like it was a great talk. I was out of the country, but just before that Aniket and I gave a talk and telescope demonstration to the Ruddington cubs, which went down well - and were some of the best behaved and attentive cubs I've ever come across! Before that we had Paul Money on atmosphere's of the solar system - which was also well received.

Coming up we have a lecture on gravity and it's problems by Dr Keiran Wood from Nottingham Particle theory group in July. August we don't have a talk at the Emmanuel school, but instead we have a members and friends barbecue at the observatory. That will be the 1st August and more details will be coming up in due course, but save the day!

Best wishes,

Julian

NAS Chair

Sky Notes

July-August 2026



Compiled by Roy Gretton

All times given below are in British Summer Time

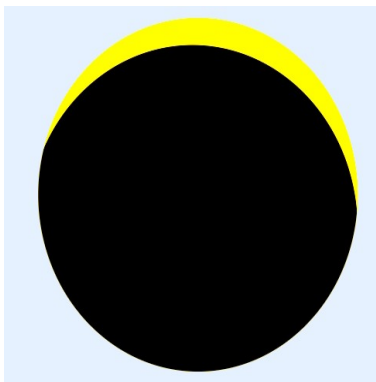
Earth will be at **aphelion** on the early evening of July 6th, when we shall be just under 152,088,000 km from the Sun.

PHASES OF THE MOON

Phase	July	August
Last Quarter	7 th	6 th
New Moon	14 th	12 th
First Quarter	21 st	20 th
Full Moon	29 th	28 th

In July the Moon is closest to Earth on the 13th, and furthest on the 25th. In August the corresponding dates are the 10th and the 22nd.

TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE SUN, visible from the whole of the UK as a partial eclipse in the evening of Wednesday, **August 12th**. The path of totality crosses the Arctic Ocean, eastern Greenland, western Iceland, northern Spain and ends in Mallorca. From Nottingham, the eclipse begins at 6:14pm, maximum eclipse (91%) will be at 7:10pm, and the eclipse will end at 8:04pm.



The view from Nottingham at 7:10pm, when the Sun will be 12 degrees above the western horizon

Standard solar observing precautions are essential

THE PLANETS

Mercury will be an evening object at the start of July, moving in to inferior conjunction on the 13th. Thereafter it will be a morning object until August 27th. Greatest western elongation will occur on August 2nd, when the planet will be 19.5 degrees from the Sun. The first and second weeks of August will be one of the best periods this year for observing Mercury in the morning sky.

Venus will continue to be a brilliant object in the western sky after sunset throughout July and August, its brightness steadily increasing from magnitude -4.1 to magnitude -4.6. Greatest eastern elongation (45.9 degrees) will be on August 14th, but by then it will be low down in the constellation of Virgo.

Mars will be an inconspicuous magnitude 1.3 object in the morning sky, and even at the end of August its angular diameter will be no greater than 5 arcseconds. By this time it will be rising soon after 1 am, in the constellation of Gemini.

Jupiter passes through solar conjunction on July 29th, and will be unobservable throughout these two months.

Saturn, brightening from magnitude 0.9 to magnitude 0.5 in the constellation of Pisces, will be rising at 1 am at the beginning of July and at 9 pm at the end of August.

On July 4th, **Mars** will pass within a few arcminutes of **Uranus** (magnitude 5.7) in Taurus, making for an interesting conjunction in binoculars.

Neptune, magnitude 7.9, hovers close to the celestial equator in Pisces during July and August.

METEORS

This year we welcome the **Perseids** to **near-perfect conditions**, their maximum activity on the night of August 12th - 13th occurring shortly after a New Moon, when scores of meteors should be visible per hour, especially after midnight. Some Perseid activity may be encountered on any night between July 17th and August 24th, so it is definitely worth looking out for them for at least a week either side of the peak.

The Nottingham Astronomical Society: E - SERVICES

Whether or not you are a NAS member, you can keep up to date with details of the Society's

NAS on Facebook

You are welcome to connect with other members and friends of the NAS on Facebook by going to:
<http://www.facebook.com/nas.org.uk>

NAS on X

The Society has an X account at <https://twitter.com/NottinghamAstro>

NAS Journal e-mailing list

To register for your monthly e-mailed link to the NAS Journal, just e-mail
membership@nottinghamastro.org.uk

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

If you happen to change your email address, please remember to inform the Society by emailing us at membership@nottinghamastro.org.uk

DIARY DATES 2026

Monthly Meetings of the Nottingham Astronomical Society

1. Meetings at
Nottingham Emmanuel School
Gresham Park Road,
West Bridgford,
Nottingham, NG2 7YF

Held on the **FIRST Thursday** of each month (**unless otherwise stated**)
except **August**

Doors open at 7:15pm for 7:45pm start.

*These events are normally centred around a talk by a visiting speaker,
except Quiz Nights, etc, when NAS members provide the activities.
Normally we have a **Helpdesk** open at each meeting.*

Date	Topic	Speaker
2 nd July	Gravity and It Problems	Dr Keiran Wood of the Nottingham Particle Theory Group
Saturday 1 st August	Annual Summer Barbecue at the Observatory (members and their guests only)	
3 rd September	Ten Things you might not know about the Milky Way	Paul McMillan University of Leicester
1 st October	Racing the Moon's Shadow	Mike Provost

2. Social and Practical Astronomy Meetings at the Burnside Memorial Hall, Plumtree

Church Hill, Plumtree, Nottingham, NG12 5ND
Held on the **THIRD Thursday** of each month from **7:30pm**

*These meetings are of a more informal nature, providing opportunity for
members and guests to share their hobby over a cup of tea or coffee,
as well as listening to a short talk or discussion*

The next meeting will be on **July 16th**

Social and Practical Astronomy, Plumtree, June 2026

The **June** Plumtree saw Neil Oldham talk to us on his work starting out in astronomical spectroscopy. You might be tricked into thinking Neil was just doing the basics, but with a professional and academic background in mass spectrometry he has clearly hit the ground running and is also getting spectra for all sorts of celestial objects and has been able to calculate the Hubble Constant from his own data which falls within a few percentage points of scientifically acceptable values.

Chris made a really tasty lemon and orange cake which rapidly vanished. Neil can be seen cutting the cake to the right, and talking to the assembled audience above.

The **July** Plumtree is a talk by Diya on the mythology of the constellations and promises to be another fascinating insight into what ancient civilisations believed lay behind the patterns they saw in the night sky.

James Dawson

helpdesk@nottinghamastro.org.uk

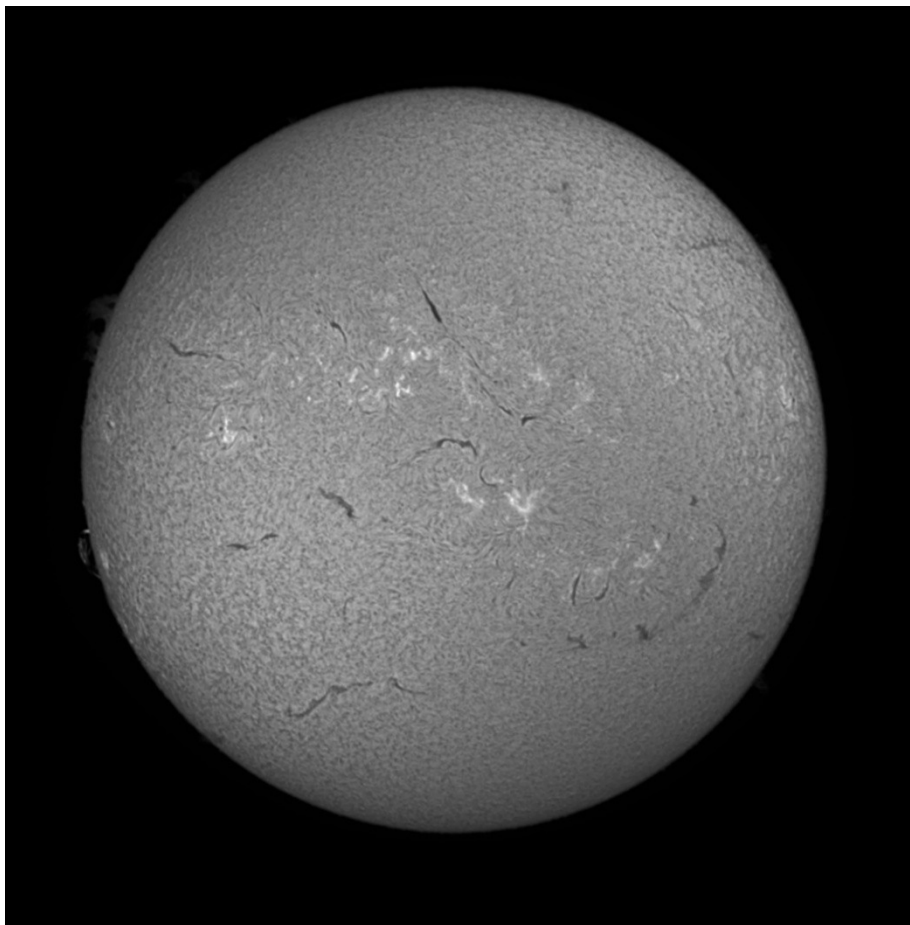


Upcoming events for the amateur astronomer

27 th June 2026	FAS Annual Meeting	Cardiff
25 th July 2026	SPA Meeting	London
18 th September 2026	BAA Meeting	Liverpool
3 rd October 2026	Radio Astronomy Section Day	Mansfield
28 th October 2026	BAA Meeting	London
31 st October 2026	SPA Meeting	London
12 th December 2026	BAA Christmas Meeting	London

The Sun in hydrogen alpha

On the 19th June 2026 I captured various video files of the Sun in hydrogen alpha with my Lunt 50mm double stacked solar scope using a 2600MM camera. This was a 60 second video taken at 10:25 UT, consisting of 3195 frames. I stacked the best 75% in AS!4 and sharpened in WaveSharp. I also made a time lapse animation of the Sun at the same time which shows a prominence build up, coil and snap. This is on the Facebook page. I say this every time, but it blows my mind that the Sun is a star and we are able to get such images and show some of the activity which is constantly happening.



Officers of NAS

As part of the NAS 80th birthday celebrations I was tasked to determine who held the post of President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Society from when the society was formed in May, 1946.

James Dawson conducted an electronic search of the local press where there was mention of the Nottingham Astronomical Society. The Minutes book and folders (in hard copy form) were also consulted. Unfortunately, the minutes prior to the AGM in 1968 were not available (presumed to be lost). The minutes post-2002 were not available (presumably stored in digital form). Therefore, the NAS Journal Archive was used to yield information up to the present day. This information gave a few gaps (pre-1962), where most were filled from old programme cards and consultation of the Accounts Book. This still left about seven gaps in the eighty years of the NAS existence. These gaps were filled using intuitive guessing based on the people in the respective roles either side of the gaps. So, if anyone thinks there is a mistake please get in touch.

The resulting Table shows who held the post of President, Secretary and Treasurer in each year since the first meeting in May, 1946. To be consistent it is the person elected at the AGM (unless otherwise stated).

	President	Secretary	Treasurer	Names in year elected (at AGM, except 1946)
1946	A K Bennett	A J Ashmore	A J Ashmore	First year was 17months
1947	R F T Granger (d. Jan 1948), Lake Aske took over	Mr C A Halley	A J Ashmore	First AGM was 2 October 1947 (all AGMs after this year were in October, UOS)
1948	Mr A W Lane Hall	Mr C A Halley	A J Ashmore	
1949	Mr W E Fox	Mr C A Halley	T W Whitaker (hand writing in accounts book is Mr C L Swift)	
1950	A J Ashmore	Mr C A Halley, later Mr G T M Butler took over	Mr C A Halley (acting), (hand writing in the accounts book is Mr C L Swift)	
1951	A J Ashmore	Mr G T M Butler	Mr Charles L Swift	
1952	Lake Aske	Mr G T M Butler	Mr Charles L Swift	
1953	Mr A W Lane Hall	Mr G T M Butler	Mr Charles L Swift	
1954	Mr W E Fox	Miss M Mott	Mr Charles L Swift	
1955	Mr W E Fox	Miss M Mott	Mr Charles L Swift	
1956	Lake Aske	Miss M Mott	Mr Charles L Swift	
1957	Lake Aske	Miss M Mott	Mr Charles L Swift	
1958	Alan W Heath	Miss M Mott	Mr Charles L Swift	
1959	Alan W Heath	Miss M Mott	Mr Charles L Swift	
1960	Mr G W Evans	Miss M Mott	Mr Charles L Swift	
1961	Mr G W Evans	Mr Charles L Swift	Mr J Bolding	
1962	Mr A W Lane Hall	Mr Charles L Swift	Mr J Bolding	
1963	Mr A W Lane Hall	Mr Charles L Swift	Mr J Bolding	
1964	Mr A W Lane Hall	Mr Charles L Swift	Mr J Bolding	
1965	Alan W Heath	Mr Charles L Swift	Mr J Bolding	
1966	Alan W Heath	Mr Charles L Swift	Mr J Bolding	
1967	Mr John Richards	Mr Charles L Swift	Mr Adrian Smith	
1968	Mr John Richards	Mr Charles L Swift	Mr Adrian Smith	
1969	John R Pressman	Mr Charles L Swift	Mr Adrian Smith	

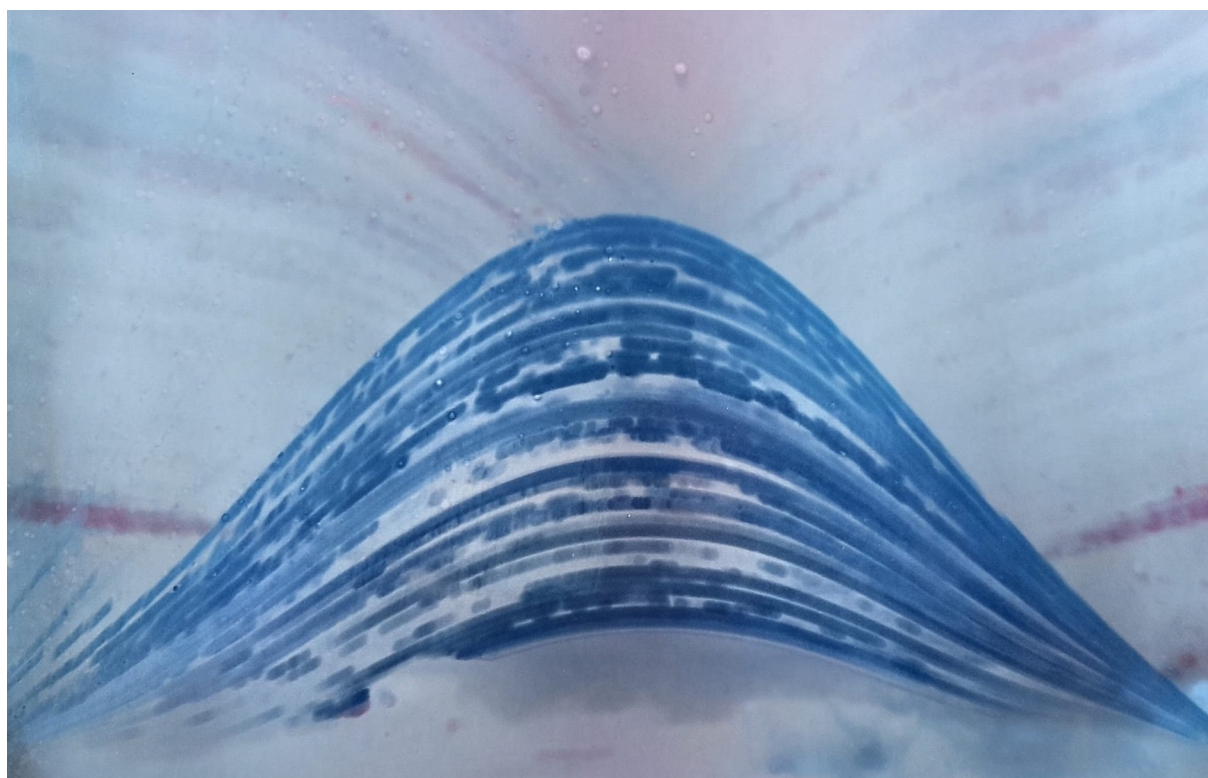
1970	John R Pressman	Mr Charles L Swift	Roy C Sulley	
1971	Mr Adrian Smith	Mr Charles L Swift	Roy C Sulley	
1972	Mr Adrian Smith	Mr Charles L Swift	Roy C Sulley	
1973	Roy C Sulley	Mr Charles L Swift	Gordon Edwards	
1974	Roy C Sulley	Mr Charles L Swift	Gordon Edwards	
1975	Brian Griffin	Mr Charles L Swift	Gordon Edwards	
1976	Brian Griffin	Mr Charles L Swift	Gordon Edwards	
1977	Brian Griffin	Mr Charles L Swift	Gordon Edwards	
1978	Brian Griffin	Mr Charles L Swift	Gordon Edwards	
1979	Alan N M Molloy	Mr Charles L Swift	Gordon Edwards	
1980	Pat Fountain	Mr Charles L Swift	Brian Griffin	
1981	Pat Fountain	Mr Charles L Swift	Brian Griffin	
1982	Robin Gray	Mr Tony Carroll	Brian Griffin	
1983	Robin Gray	Mr Tony Carroll	Brian Griffin	
1984	Andrew Patton	Mr Tony Carroll	Brian Griffin	
1985	Andrew Patton	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
1986	Andrew Patton	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
1987	Andrew Patton	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
1988	Robin Haynes	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
1989	Robin Haynes	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
1990	Robin Haynes	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
1991	Karl Wood	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
1992	Karl Wood	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
1993	Andrew Greenwood	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
1994	Tony Elliott	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
1995	Tony Elliott	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
1996	Christine Wells	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
1997	Christine Wells	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
1998	David Lukehurst	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
1999	David Lukehurst	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
2000	David Lukehurst	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
2001	David Lukehurst	Carl Brennan	Brian Griffin	
2002	Paul Stocks	Carl Brennan	Mike Provost	Last AGM in October AGM moved to November (all AGMs after this year were in November,UOS)
2003	Greg Eisenhauer	Paul Stocks	Mike Provost	
2004	Greg Eisenhauer	Paul Stocks	Mike Provost	
2005	Fred Hopper	Paul Stocks	Mike Provost	
2006	Fred Hopper	Paul Stocks	Mike Provost	
2007	Fred Hopper	Paul Stocks	Sam Boote	
2008	Fred Hopper	Rob Bush	Sam Boote	
2009	Fred Hopper	Rob Bush	Sam Boote	
2010	Fred Hopper	Victoria Jolly	Sam Boote	
2011	Fred Hopper	Victoria Jolly	Sam Boote	
2012	Fred Hopper	Rob Bush	Sam Boote	

2013	Chris Jackson	Victoria Jolly	Sam Boote	
2014	Roy Gretton (acting)	Richard Myrie (acting)	David Anderson	
2015	John Hurst	Richard Myrie	David Anderson	
2016	John Hurst	Sam Boote	David Anderson	
2017	John Hurst	vacant	David Anderson	
2018	John Hurst	vacant	Mike Provost	
2019	John Hurst	David Buxton	Mike Provost	Last AGM in November
2020	John Hurst	Rob Bush	Mike Provost	No AGM (moved to Jan 2021)
2021	Julian Onions	Chris Sneddon	Mike Provost	AGM moved to January (all AGMs after this date were in January, UOS)
2022	Julian Onions	Chris Sneddon	Mike Provost	
2023	Julian Onions	Chris Sneddon	Andrew Green	
2024	Julian Onions	Chris Sneddon	Andrew Green	
2025	Julian Onions	Chris Sneddon	Richard Severn	
2026	Julian Onions	Chris Sneddon	Richard Severn	

Brian Griffin

Latest Results from a Solar-Cam

The solar cam records the track of the Sun across the sky from solstice to solstice, in this case from December 2025 to June 2026. It is simply a pin-hole camera aimed due south, with a six-month exposure.



David Buxton

An Approach to Processing Deepsky Images from a Seestar S50

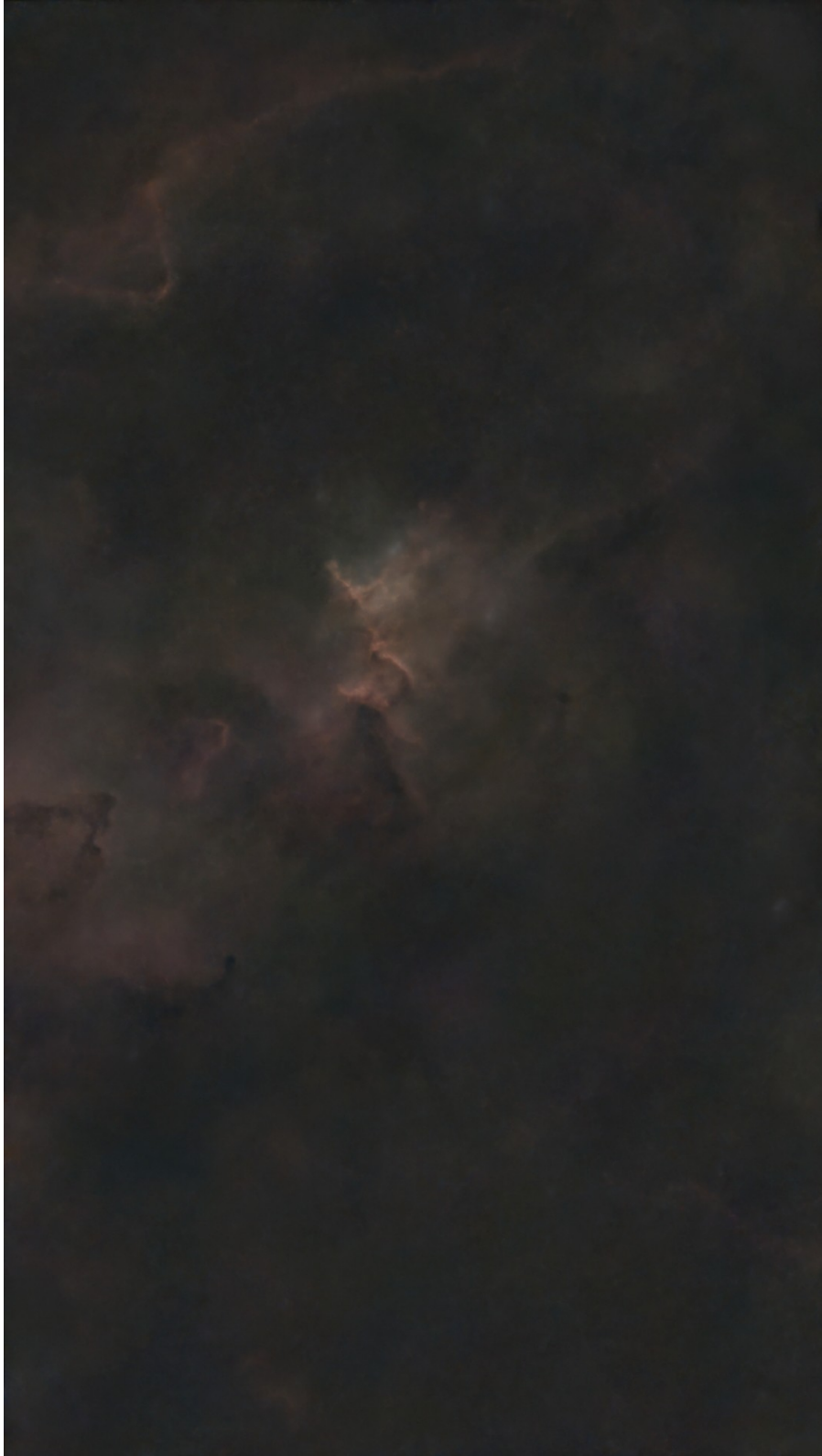
Andrezj Bargiela imaged the nebula IC1805 (Melotte 15) on 25th November 2025 using a Seestar S50 with ASI462 sensor, LP filter and EQ mount. The exposure time was 576 minutes, after which the image was processed in Lightroom and Affinity Photo.



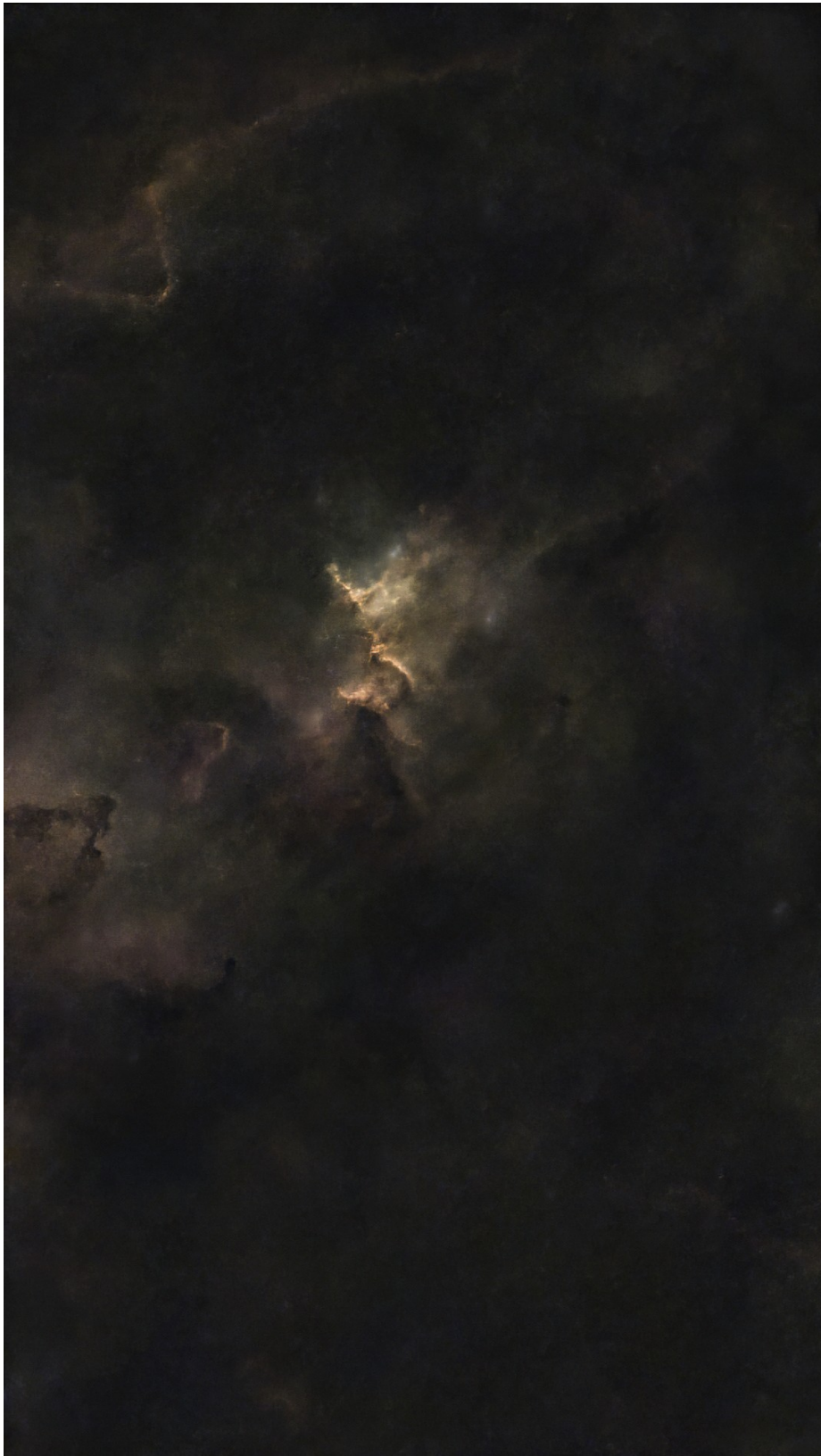
1. Original capture



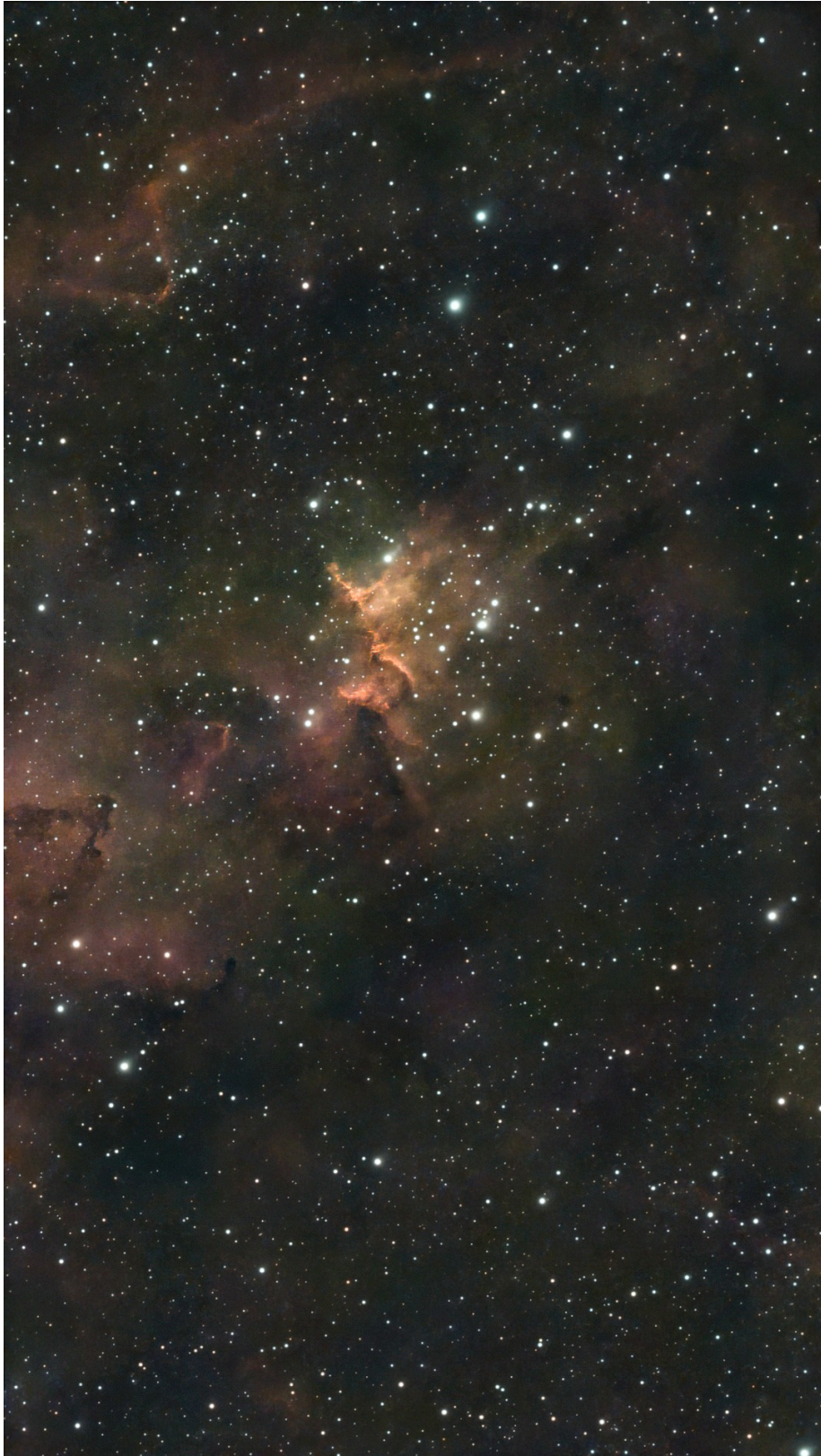
2. Extracted stars (no processing to stars was deemed necessary as they look good right into the corners of the frame)



3. Extracted starless frame (to be processed)



4. Starless frame with stretched histogram



5. Combined stars and starless frames

Planetary Conjunctions in June

On June 9th **Venus** moved into conjunction with **Jupiter** (in Gemini), making for an interesting evening spectacle.



June 9th, 10:38 pm, date of closest approach



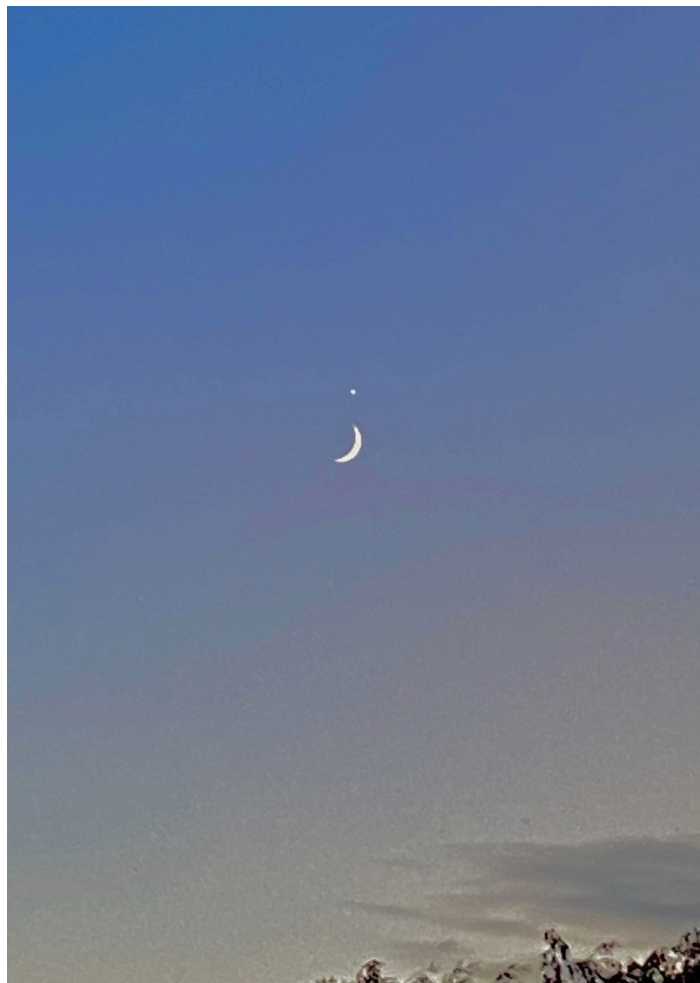
June 10th, 10:45 pm



June 12th, 10:37 pm

Both planets were moving eastwards against the background stars, but Venus being closer to Earth and to the Sun appeared to move faster, thus passing to the north of Jupiter.

Then, on **June 17th**, there was a nice pairing of Venus and the Moon (in Cancer)



June 17th, 10 pm

(which happened to coincide with half-time in the England-Croatia match)

All images taken with a hand-held iPhone 11.

Roy Gretton

Advertisements

For sale

Celestron NexStar 6SE SCT and accessories

The following standard accessories are included:

- visual back
- star diagonal
- 25 mm Plossl eyepiece
- red-dot finder
- tripod
- full instructions
- original cardboard boxes (if you want them)

The following additional accessories are included in this package:

- Bob's Knobs collimation aid (already fitted)
- Celestron dew heater band (already fitted)
- Celestron aluminium dew shield with cover
- Farpoint Bahtinov mask
- Geoptik pack-in bag for transporting the scope and mount

Price £795

More photos available. Inspection welcomed. Free delivery within a reasonable distance.

Sam Boote sam@boote.myzen.co.uk or at Society meetings



ASTRO-JUMBLE SALE
 ★ SATURDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER ★

Dear Astronomers,
 Do you have a telescope, eyepiece or anything Astro you'd like to sell, if so then you can sell it at our Astro Jumble Sale.

Melton & District Astronomical Society are holding a one day Astro Jumble Sale at
TILTON ON THE HILL VILLAGE HALL
 Oakham Rd, Tilton on the Hill, Leicester LE7 9DB

What3Words: [narrates.professes.muddy](#)

You can sell anything Astronomical on your table from books to telescopes so long as its Astronomical then you can sell it.

We will also looking to have a few stalls from local Astro sellers but the aim is to help amateur astronomers sell their unwanted gear which we all accumulate over time and find a new home for your precious equipment and may be even find a bargain or a item you've been looking for years.

★ EVENT DETAILS ★
 ⌚ Set up from 8.30am on the day
 🚪 Doors to the public open at 10am
 ⌚ The event will finish at 3pm
 🍷 Refreshments on sale too!

★ TABLES ARE £20 ★
 Which includes a £10 deposit of which the deposit will be refunded on the day of the Jumble Sale.
 ⚠️ If you don't turn up on the day then you will lose your £10 deposit and your table fee.

TO BOOK A TABLE OR TO FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL SIMON ON 07766 446132

BUY, SELL OR BROWSE - EVERYTHING ASTRO!

Dear Astronomers,

Do you have a telescope, eyepiece or anything Astro you'd like to sell, if so then you can sell it at our Astro Jumble Sale.

Melton & District Astronomical Society are holding a one day Astro Jumble Sale at Tilton on the Hill Village Hall. Oakham Rd, Tilton on the Hill, Leicester LE7 9DB

What3Words: [narrates.professes.muddy](#)

You can sell anything Astronomical on your table from books to telescopes so long as its Astronomical then you can sell it.

We will also looking to have a few stalls from local Astro sellers but the aim is to help amateur astronomers sell their unwanted gear which we all accumulate over time and find a new home for your precious equipment and may be even find a bargain or a item you've been looking for years.

Set up from 8.30am on the day and doors to the public open at 10am. They'll be refreshments on sale too. The event will finish at 3pm.

Tables are £20 which includes a £10 deposit of which the deposit will be refunded on the day of the Jumble Sale.

If you don't turn up on the day then you will lose your £10 deposit and your table fee.

To book a table or to find out more information please call Simon on 07766446132.

Kind Regards,

Simon Brown

Melton & District Astronomical Society

Nottingham Astronomical Society

Affiliated to the **British Astronomical Association**
Member of the **Federation of Astronomical Societies**
Supporters of the **Commission for Dark Skies**

CHAIRMAN:

Julian Onions

email: chairman@nottinghamastro.org.uk

VICE CHAIRMAN:

James Dawson

email: vicechairman@nottinghamastro.org.uk

SECRETARY:

Chris Sneddon

email: secretary@nottinghamastro.org.uk

TREASURER:

Richard Severn

email: treasurer@nottinghamastro.org.uk

JOURNAL EDITOR:

Roy Gretton

email: journal@nottinghamastro.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Richard Severn

email: membership@nottinghamastro.org.uk

WEBMASTER:

Leigh Blake

email: leigh@nottinghamastro.org.uk

OBSERVATORY DIRECTOR:

James Dawson

email: observatory@nottinghamastro.org.uk

LIBRARIAN:

Holly McNiven

Aniket Mahapure

Meetings

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

**Nottingham Emmanuel School
Gresham Park Road,
West Bridgford,
Nottingham, NG2 7YF**

Doors open	7:15pm
Meetings start	7:45pm
Meetings end	9:15 pm

These meetings are open to the public, and visitors are welcome to attend, subject to a charge of £5 per meeting for adults (£1 for concessions).

Annual subscriptions 2026

Individual	£40
Family (maximum of two adults, and children/students living at the same address)	£55
Under-18s and full-time students	£5

Subscriptions become due on 1st January. Half-price subscription is charged if joining after 30th June (minimum subscription £5).

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 membership@nottinghamastro.org.uk or speak to any NAS committee member at one of our regular monthly meetings.

The 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 are not necessarily endorsed by the Nottingham Astronomical Society, its Committee or members.