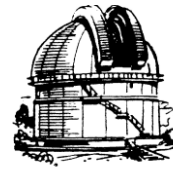

Journal

of the
Nottingham Astronomical Society



June 2002

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Thursday 6th June 2002

From 8.00pm onwards

Outdoor meeting at the Society's Mount Pleasant Observatory Site

Please

- **Bring warm clothing.** This is essential as there is **always** a cold breeze at the site;
- Bring along a **small telescope or binoculars**, if you would like to observe from this excellent dark-sky site – weather permitting!
- Do **NOT** drive on the access road beyond the gates. That is private land and we have no right to be there. Open the reservoir gates and drive up to the Observatory (park on the tarmac if it has been raining).

Please note that there is **no** meeting at Djanogly CTC that evening. But if you do not know how to get to the Observatory site or need transport there, please turn up at the CTC on the evening, **no later than 7.30pm** Dave Lukehurst will be there and will have some spare seats in his car!

4th July Meeting

Doors open at 7.30pm

We're back at our usual venue of Djanogly CTC again and our guest speaker on Thursday 4th July will be Dr Ian Morrison from Jodrell Bank, on the topic of
"SETI AND OUR PART IN PROJECT PHOENIX"

Sky Notes

June 2002

by Paul Stocks
Journal Editor



After May's spectacular array of evening-sky planets, June has rather less to offer. Of the "naked eye" planets, only Venus remains an easy object to view. Astronomical twilight lasts all night at this time of the year as the Sun is never more than 18° below the horizon at our latitude.

SUMMER SOLSTICE

June 21, 13h

THE MOON

Last quarter 3d 00h
New Moon 11d 00h
First quarter 18d 00h
Full Moon 24d 22h

Penumbral lunar eclipse: 24 June

This eclipse will be visible from the UK. Mid-point of the eclipse is at 21h 27UT (add one hour for BST), when the Moon will be low in the NW sky. Some slight dimming of the Moon may be visible, but many penumbral eclipses pass completely unnoticed!

THE PLANETS

Mercury is a morning object and reaches greatest western elongation on 21 June. Poorly placed for observation in the pre-dawn sky. Magnitude is -0.3 .

Venus is an evening object in the North Western sky and the planet's magnitude is a brilliant -4.0 .

Mars is far away and at magnitude 1.7. Poorly placed this month as it disappears into evening twilight.

Jupiter is an evening object but very low in the sky. Within a few degrees of Venus early in the month, by late June it will be too low in the sky for effective observation.

Saturn is in conjunction with the Sun on 9 June and is not visible this month.

Uranus is in Aquarius and is worth looking for this month as it rises at around 22.30UT by late June.

Neptune is in Capricornus, rising at around 22.00 at the end of June.

Pluto is at opposition on 7 June and is a very faint magnitude 14. (A target for the Society's large telescope, when we get it, perhaps?)

Meteors

There are no major meteor shows this month. The minor shower of the Ophiuchids will peak on 9 and 19 June, but rates are likely to be very low.

JUNE 6th Ordinary Meeting NOTICE

The June 6th meeting will be held at the Mt. Pleasant Observatory site. Please bring warm clothing, as there is **ALWAYS** a cold breeze at the site. Please do bring along a small telescope or binoculars. If you are able to make your own way to the site then it will be open from **8.00pm**. Do **NOT** drive on the access road beyond the gates – this is private land and we have no right to be there. Please open the reservoir gates and drive up to the observatory (park on the tarmac if it has been raining). Locator maps are available from the Secretary.

If you do not know how to get to the site, or need transport then please turn up at the CTC on June 6th **no later than 7.30pm**.

There will not be a speaker for the meeting, but the general idea is try and get some basic observing done, and help the members to more aware of the excellent site we own. If you bring a torch along, please try and make sure it has a red filter over the light/lens and keep it pointed downwards so as not to disturb observer's night vision.

PROCEDURES AND NOTES FOR THE USE OF THE MOUNT PLEASANT OBSERVING SITE

1. GENERAL

1.1 Members arriving before a key or code holder should wait at the reservoir gates and are reminded not to block the farm road leading up from the main road. The Society has right of access to the reservoir site along the farm road up to the reservoir gates, but not beyond. The reservoir gates will only open outwards.

1.2 Members should not walk around the outside of the reservoir perimeter fence, particularly on the three sides adjoining the farmer's fields.

1.3 On opening the gates the key or code holder should fasten the chain by locking the opened padlock in such a manner as to form a closed chain around one of the gates. Code holders must ensure that the combination code has not been left on the lock. These are preventative measures to:

- a). Ensure the chain, padlock and combination padlock cannot be removed by accident or as a malicious act.
- b). Prevent the chain and locks inadvertently falling into the field or onto the road when the site is open.
- c). Compromise the combination number.

1.4 The last person in the arriving group should close the gates behind them. This is a preventative measure to protect the site from unwelcome guests if they see the gates open (particularly at night).

1.5 Members arriving after the gates have been opened should also close the gates behind them.

1.6 All vehicles should proceed slowly along the tarmac road within the reservoir complex to its end, and then onto the grass leading to the observatory site. Some of the route will be on uneven ground. Parking should be in a sensible manner.

Notes

Members/guests will be advised if:

- a). An alternative route to the observatory is required because of site works undertaken by Severn-Trent.
- b). The usual grass route/alternative grass route becomes waterlogged. Parking in this instance will be on the tarmac road inside the reservoir perimeter fence alongside the steps leading up to the reservoir pump house.

1.7 Vehicles leaving the site should do so by the same route as they entered it.

1.8 The last person out in a leaving group should close the reservoir gates behind them.

1.9 The last person to leave the site (which must always be a key or code holder) must ensure that the chain and padlock have been firmly fastened to prevent the gates being opened again. If the combination padlock was used the code holder must ensure that the combination is not on display.

Members are requested to take away all belongings (including litter), and must not interfere with the workings of the adjoining reservoir.

Observatory Supervisor

This notice first appeared in the April issue of the NAS Journal

With the Large Telescope project approaching completion during the next year, there is an urgent need for someone to oversee the work which needs to be completed in order for the Society Observatory building to be in a fit state to receive the Large Telescope.

At this time, it is hope that all members with appropriate skills and a little spare time will contribute to completing the outstanding work, but someone is needed to organise and oversee this work. Anyone interested in this task is invited to step forward at the earliest opportunity!

David Lukehurst
NAS President

Best of the Web

Water ice on Mars

Much Press and Television coverage has been given over recently to the discovery, by NASA's Mars Odyssey spacecraft, of substantial amounts of water ice below the surface of Mars.

The official News Release is available at:

http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/releases/2002/release_2002_121.html

The Mars Odyssey mission homepage is at

<http://mars.jpl.nasa.gov/odyssey/>

Other websites worth looking at for up to date news on this topic are:

BBC, Sci/Tech: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/sci/tech/>

CNN, Space: www.cnn.com/TECH/space/

Spaceflight Now, breaking news: www.spaceflightnow.com

SpaceRef: www.spaceref.com

Paul Stocks

DIARY DATES by Carl Brennan

FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE NOTTINGHAM ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

2002

June 6th

**Meet at Djanogly CTC for transport
or make your way to the
OBSERVATORY SITE.**

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

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

OTHER EVENTS

11th June I&DAS meeting at the function room,
Erewash Museum (7.30pm). Brian Griffin will be
giving a talk – topic unknown at this time.

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/

Future Events

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>>.

Nottingham Astronomical Society

The Secretary compiles these Diary Dates. Contributions are
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Nottingham Astronomical Society

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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 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

Small Advertisements

David Lukehurst

Astronomical Telescope Maker

Dobsonian Mounted

Newtonians

From 6¼ to 25-inches plus

12-inch f/6 truss-tube Dobsonian

£995

6-inch f/12 Achromatic Object Glasses

£295

1¼-inch Super-Plossl Eyepieces

£32

Ronchi testing eyepieces (50 or 100 lpi)

£32

For details & price list:

Tel: 0115 9602266

e-mail: 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

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www.telescopes-direct.com

eMail: call@widescreen-centre.co.uk

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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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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.
