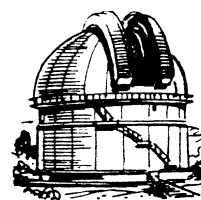

Journal

of the

Nottingham Astronomical Society

May 2017



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Thursday, 4th May

**British Geological Survey
Nicker Hill, Keyworth**

8 pm (doors open at 7.30pm)

Tonight we give a warm welcome to

Prof Emma Bunce

of the University of Leicester



who will be speaking on

Juno:

Exploring the Mysteries of Jupiter

In Gemini: Two open star clusters of very different sizes and ages

M35 is a well-known open cluster, very easy to find with small binoculars in the constellation of Gemini. Alongside M35 is a much more distant cluster containing many more stars. **NGC2158** is estimated to be four times as distant as M35, and over ten times older. In this image, captured at using a Canon 450D camera at the prime focus of a 30-cm Newtonian reflector, a portion of M35 is visible to the upper left of NGC2158.



Sky Notes

May 2017

Compiled by Roy Gretton



All times given below are in British Summer Time

PHASES OF THE MOON

| <i>Phase</i> | <i>Date and time</i> |
|---------------|----------------------------------|
| First Quarter | 3:47 am on May 3 rd |
| Full Moon | 10:42 pm on the 10 th |
| Last Quarter | 1:19 am on the 19 th |
| New Moon | 8:44 pm on the 25 th |

This month the Moon is closest to the Earth on the 26th, and furthest on the 12th.

THE PLANETS

Mercury spends the whole of May as a morning object, passing through greatest western elongation of the 17th; but in spite of being 26 degrees from the Sun on this date, it will be extremely difficult to observe from our latitude, being only 8 degrees north of the celestial equator.

Venus is a brilliant object in the morning sky, but surprisingly difficult to spot due to its small elevation. As May begins it will be shining at magnitude -4.6 , and will be almost 40 degrees from the Sun, but relatively few degrees above the eastern horizon at sunrise.

Tiny, distant **Mars** continues to linger in the evening sky, moving from Aries into Taurus in mid-May, but all the while getting harder to spot in the sunset glow. Its angular diameter will have diminished to 3.7 arcseconds by the end of the month.

Jupiter, moving in a retrograde fashion in the constellation of Virgo and shining at magnitude -2.3 , is the stand-out object in the evening sky. It is by far the best planet to observe this month, with an equatorial diameter greater than 40 arcseconds throughout.

Saturn's retrograde motion this month will carry it westward from Sagittarius back into Ophiuchus. Being still more than 22 degrees south of the equator, it will continue to be challenging target for telescopic observers in the UK, with atmospheric turbulence apt to play havoc with our view of the planet. By the end of May it will be shining at magnitude 0.1 and the ring system will appear nearly 42 arcseconds across.

Uranus (in the constellation of Pisces) and **Neptune** (in Aquarius) are both morning objects, but extremely difficult to observe this month.

METEORS

May isn't a great month for meteor showers. Some weak activity may be observed from southern radiants: the **Scorpiids** peaking on May 13th, and a few **Ophiuchids** putting in an appearance late in the month.

DIARY DATES 2017

Monthly Meetings of the Nottingham Astronomical Society

1) Meetings at the British Geological Survey, Keyworth

Nicker Hill, Keyworth, Nottingham, NG12 5GG

Held on the **FIRST** Thursday of each month except **August**

Doors open at 7:30pm for 8pm start.

These events are normally centred around a talk by a visiting speaker, except Opening Evenings, when NAS members provide the activities.

*Normally we have a **Library** and a **Helpdesk** open at each meeting.*

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Topic</u> | <u>Speaker</u> |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| May 4 th | Juno: Exploring the Mysteries of Jupiter | Prof Emma Bunce University of Leicester |
| June 1 st | Charles Messier | Dr Allan Chapman, FRAS |
| July 6 th | Gravitational Waves | Dr Ed Daw University of Sheffield |
| August 5 th (SATURDAY) | BBQ at the Observatory (members and guests only) | |
| September 7 th | Galaxy Evolution revealed by the Hubble Space Telescope | Dr Clive Tadhunter University of Sheffield |
| October 5 th | Space Stations from Salyut to the ISS | Dr Mike Leggett, FRAS |
| November 2 nd | Annual General Meeting | |
| December 7 th | Voyager 40 Years On (Part 1) | Paul Money, FRAS |

Check our website: www.nottinghamastro.org.uk
for the latest information about the Society's meetings
and for further information about the talks and speakers.

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.

*Members and their guests are welcome. Membership cards **not** required.*

The next meeting will be on May 18th

Further dates for your diary

School of Physics & Astronomy, The University of Nottingham

["Adventures in the Goldilocks Zone: the search for other earths"](#)

Thursday 18th May 2017

Open Dome Event, Nottingham Trent University

[A Mission to Jupiter - JUNO](#)

Thursday 25th May 2017

[Webb Deep-Sky Society Annual Meeting](#) in Cambridge

Saturday 3rd June, 2017

[BAA Comet Section Meeting](#) in Northampton

Saturday 17th June 2017

[International Astronomy Show](#), Stoneleigh Park, near Leamington Spa

Friday and Saturday 13th and 14th October 2017

Social and Practical Astronomy, Plumtree

The **April** meeting at Plumtree was "Ask an Astrophysicist" and we were honoured to have Professor Mike Merrifield and Dr Julian Onions in attendance taking our questions and providing answers and engaging in debate. It was a great evening and chaired by Richard Severn. The three can be seen in the attached image (left to right: Mike Merrifield, Julian Onions, Richard Severn). The highlight of the evening for me was the practical demonstration of the Moon's orbit around the Earth and why from Earth we only see one face of the Moon. We are all very grateful to Mike and Julian for taking the time to come and talk with us.



The **May** meeting is going to be "Members' Practical Astronomy Activities" and will be chaired by Gareth Davies. Gareth has several volunteers who will each be giving short talks on some aspect of their own amateur astronomy; topics so far include building a observatory, and an astrophotography set up to image the Rosette Nebula - the titles of other talks have yet to be finalised.

The next meeting is on Thursday 18th May; the doors will open at 7:30pm for tea and coffee and the session will start at 8pm. If it is clear bring your binoculars and we can try and do some observing.

The **June** meeting (Thursday 15th June) will focus on the night sky during the summer months.

James Dawson

NAS Helpdesk

helpdesk@nottinghamastro.org.uk

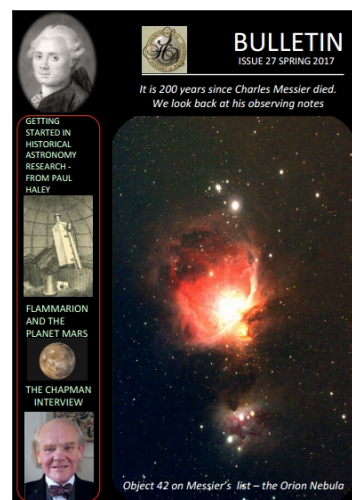
70 years of Nottingham Astronomical Society

Readers of the Journal will recall a short article in the [September 2016 issue](#) where I touched upon some of the history about the Society. Brian Griffin and I have since written a more comprehensive account of our 70th birthday celebrations from last year and also added some more detail about the history of the Society. This has just been published by the [Society for the History of Astronomy](#) in their Bulletin. A link to this publication can be found [here](#), and the article on NAS starts on page 56.

James Dawson

NAS Helpdesk

helpdesk@nottinghamastro.org.uk

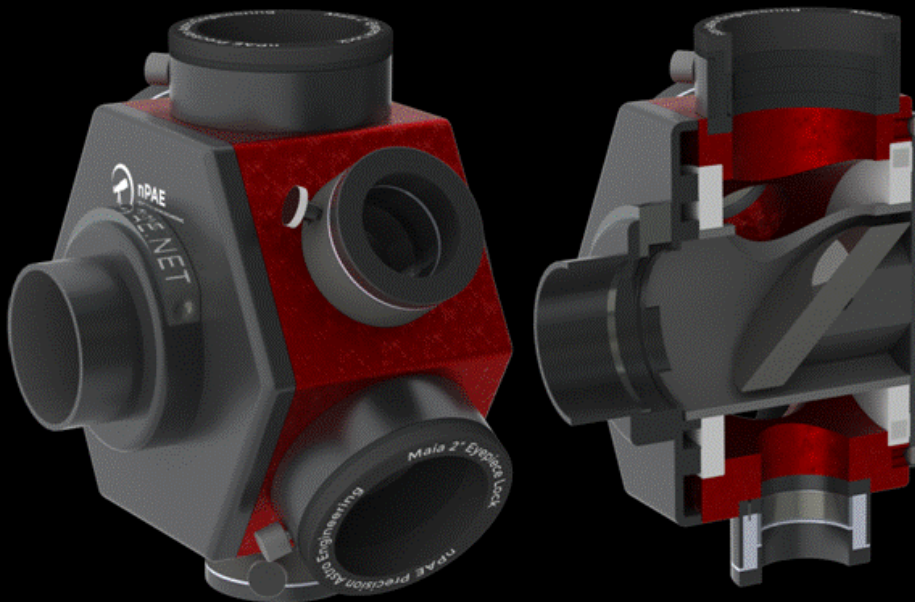


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<http://www.npae.net>

For Sale

1. Celestron Starbright C8 XLT OTA (black tube). As new (with original box), complete with finderscope, 1.25inch diagonal and 25mm eyepiece. Price includes a high quality Antares adaptor for 2inch diagonals and Celestron dewshield, £700.

2. Skywatcher ED100 DS Pro refractor (black diamond tube), complete with 9x50 finderscope, 2 inch diagonal and 28mm eyepiece. Supplied in aluminium carry case, all in excellent condition £500.

Enquiries to Dave Mattison (tel 0115 9260873, Email dave.mattison@btinternet.com)

FOR SALE

| | |
|---|-----|
| Set of four 1¼-inch coloured filters (red, yellow, green, blue) | £20 |
| Celestron lens pen | £2 |
| Micro-fibre cleaning cloth | £2 |

Sam Boote s.boote@bcs.org or at Society meetings

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 meetings and other events by visiting the NAS website:
www.nottinghamastro.org.uk

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 Twitter

The Society has a Twitter account at <https://twitter.com/NottinghamAstro>

NAS Journal e-mailing list

To register for your monthly e-mailed copy of the NAS Journal, just e-mail secretary@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 treasurer@nottinghamastro.org.uk

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 Commission for Dark Skies
Registered Charity No: 1066645

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DIRECTOR OF OBSERVING:

(vacant post; Acting Director: John Hurst)

email: observatory@nottinghamastro.org.uk

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

ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Barrie Chacksfield

Meetings

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

**The British Geological Survey
Nicker Hill
Keyworth
Nottingham NG12 5GG**

Doors open 7.30pm

Meetings start 8.00pm

Meetings end 10.00pm

These meetings are open to the public, and visitors are welcome to attend.

Annual subscriptions 2017

Full £30

Joint rate for partners
living at the same address £45

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 the Secretary secretary@nottinghamastro.org.uk or speak to any NAS committee member at one of the regular monthly meetings. A membership application form is inside this issue of the Journal.

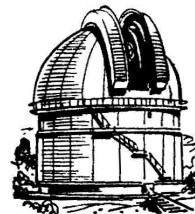
The Nottingham Astronomical Society

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NOTTINGHAM ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

Founded in 1946 for all interested in astronomy
Affiliated to the British Astronomical Association
Member of the Federation of Astronomical Societies

Registered Charity No. 1066645
Member of the Society for Popular Astronomy
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| Subscription rate: | Full | £30.00 | (year) | £15.00 | (half year) |
| | Partnership | £45.00 | (year) | £22.50 | (half year) |
| | Under-18 and full-time students | £5 | | | |

Partnership = two members living together as a couple at the same address

I wish my subscriptions to be eligible for Gift Aid **Yes / No**

Gift Aid declaration

(HMRC reference XR32048)

I want Nottingham Astronomical Society to treat all subscriptions and donations that I make from the date of this declaration as Gift Aid donations, until I notify you otherwise.

I pay an amount of UK Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax that Nottingham Astronomical Society reclaims on my donations in the appropriate tax year.

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