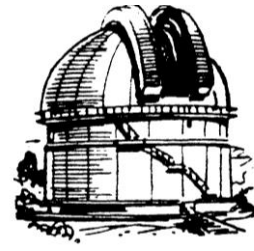

Journal

of the



Nottingham Astronomical Society

November 2002

Inside this issue

- A message from our new President
- Sky Notes for November
- Diary Dates
- Advertisements
- Membership application form
- Society Information

Thursday 7th November
Djanogly CTC
Doors open 7.30pm

HISTORY OF THE CONSTELLATIONS

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

Madeleine Cox
of Bassetlaw Astronomical Society

Some words from the President

At the Society's AGM in October a new Committee – and a new President – were voted into office by NAS members. I must admit that when I joined the NAS, I never imagined that I would become President! But I am delighted to take on the role, particularly at such an exciting time for the Society. I am also delighted that our previous President, Dave Lukehurst, is our Curator of Instruments and will be continuing with the work on the Society's large telescope project.

Continued on page 2

An introduction

So, at the start of the 2002-03 “term” for the NAS, let me introduce myself. I have been interested in astronomy as a hobby since childhood. A youthful fascination with all things to do with space led me to acquire my first astronomical telescope in 1972. I then joined the British Astronomical Association and all these years and two telescopes later I am still learning about astronomy. It is of course impossible to “know everything” about the subject, which is one of its many joys. As a self-taught amateur astronomer I am well aware of the gaps in my knowledge. My long-suffering family are certainly very tolerant of my obsession with the mysteries of the universe.

I moved to Nottingham in the early 1990s. One evening in 1998, I came along to a meeting of the NAS and joined there and then. I had never joined a *local* astronomical society before but I liked what I saw at the NAS and felt it would be a good way to get to know people in the Nottingham area who shared my interest. Additionally, the large telescope project looked rather promising. Thanks to the NAS, I have attended some excellent talks and have “got involved” with the work of the committee, most recently as Journal editor.

The future

Over the next couple of years as NAS President, I would like to try and raise the profile of the NAS a bit more so that we can continue to attract new members. If you have any ideas on how the Society can better make its presence known, I would welcome your thoughts.

An obvious attraction to new members will be the Society’s 24 inch reflector telescope, which will soon be under construction. We shall have an instrument of which we can be proud, but there is much to be done before the telescope can become operational. The observatory dome needs a mechanism to rotate it and the shutter also needs a mechanism for safe operation. And the observatory has lacked power since the theft of the wind generator and solar panel...

These issues and others will be concentrating the minds of the committee over the coming months. The committee welcomes the views of members, so do please come along to the NAS ordinary meetings at the CTC. There’s a great line-up of guest speakers and you can find out how things are going with the telescope and observatory. If you feel that you can help with the work at the observatory, or by contributing to the observatory/telescope fund, your help will be much appreciated!

I look forward to seeing you on the first Thursday of each month.

Paul Stocks

Sky Notes

2002 November

Compiled by Roy Gretton

All times quoted are U.T.



THE MOON

New Moon	4d 20h 34m
First Quarter	11d 20h 52m
Full Moon	20d 01h 34m
Last Quarter	27d 15h 47m

THE PLANETS

<i>Positions on November 12</i>			
	R.A.	Dec.	Mag.
Mercury	<i>Too close to Sun</i>		
Venus	13h 54.4m	-14°54'	-4.2
Mars	13h 05.8m	-5°56'	1.8
Jupiter	9h 19.7m	16°13'	-2.2
Saturn	5h 52.3m	22°06'	-0.2
Uranus	App. 21h 50m	app. -14°	5.8
Neptune	App. 20h 43m	app. -18°	7.8

Mercury: Superior conjunction takes place on 14 November, and the planet then enters the evening skies.

Venus: After inferior conjunction on 31 October, Venus enters the morning skies to become visible above the southeastern horizon from around November 7 onwards. Through a telescope it will be seen as a large crescent with an angular diameter of nearly 60 arcseconds. Venus gradually shrinks in apparent size, though retaining the same brilliance as its crescent widens, until at the end of the month the planet rises about 3½ hours before the Sun.

Mars: Mars is a morning object and moving through Virgo. Telescopes will reveal no detail on its disk—Mars' apparent diameter is far too small for that. On 18 November the planet passes within 1 arcminute of the 9th magnitude star TYC 4965-93-1.

Jupiter: This planet is well placed for observation in the morning skies. At the beginning of this month Jupiter begins to rise before midnight. On November 23 it moves from Cancer into Leo.

Saturn: This planet occupies the northernmost corner of Orion until 22 November, when it moves into eastern Taurus. Saturn's rings this winter are wide open at 46 arcseconds in apparent diameter, and being high in the sky, conditions should be ideal for observing the planet.

Uranus and Neptune are early evening objects, both planets lying in Capricornus, about 15° apart. Neptune is difficult to identify because of its faintness; however, at the beginning of this month it lies very close to the 7th magnitude star BL Capricorni, so this could be an opportunity to locate Neptune through a small telescope.

METEORS

It is thought that the **Leonids** may produce their last storm rates for a century or more at about 04h and 10h 40m UT on 19 November. Another possible peak, of probably much lower rate, may happen around 20h UT on 17 November. Only the 04h UT maximum on 19th November is favourable for observers in the UK, as the Leonid radiant rises around 23h, but moonlight will seriously interfere. Leonids are swift, often bright meteors, commonly leaving trails.

ASTEROIDAL OCCULTATION

A good opportunity for observers in central and northern part of the U.K. to witness the occultation of a star by an asteroid occurs on 3 Nov 2002 at 01:43 UT. The 60 mile diameter asteroid 431 Nephela will pass in front of the magnitude 5.9 star ZC593 in Taurus. Nephela has a magnitude of 13, so the star's brightness will apparently drop by 7 magnitudes (but only for a few seconds – blink and you may miss it!). ZC593 is fairly easy to find between the Hyades and Pleiades.

DIARY DATES, by Carl Brennan

FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE NOTTINGHAM ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY 2002

November 7th Djanogly C.T.C.

Doors open from 7.30pm

HISTORY OF THE CONSTELLATIONS

Madeline Cox, Bassetlaw Astronomical
Society

December 5th Djanogly C.T.C.

Doors open from 7.30pm

SUNSPOTS

Dr. Paul Mathews, University of Nottingham
T.B.C.

OTHER EVENTS

Saturday November 30th - Leeds

Astromeeet. Doors open 9.00am, Convention
starts 10.00am, ends 18.30pm, price £7.00.

You might like to visit

<http://www.leedsastronomy.org.uk/>

where you will find details. Note the change
of venue, and increased price this year - but I
think when you've had a look at the venue and
the speakers it is still good value for money.

6th to 8th December SPA Astronomy

Weekend to be held at Preston Montford
Field Centre, Shropshire. A great list of
speakers including Dr Ian Morrison. A £15
deposit is needed by September 20th, full
weekend cost £95 (full board). For more
information contact Frank Tobin, 16 Penton
Hook Road, Staines, Middx. TW18 2PF

10th May 2003 Eclipse 10.30am to 4.15pm
National Maritime Museum. A simple day
course to look at this natural phenomenon and
the science we can learn. Interesting collection
of speakers. Cost £28.00 (£16 concessions).
More information on 02083126747/6648, E-
mail openmuseum@nmm.ac.uk ,
lstone@nmm.ac.uk or visit ww.nmm.ac.uk

6th June 2003 Extraterrestrial Life 10.30am
to 4.15pm National Maritime Museum. Cost
£28.00 (£16 concessions). More information
on 02083126747/6648, E-mail
openmuseum@nmm.ac.uk ,
lstone@nmm.ac.uk or visit ww.nmm.ac.uk

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>>.

Nottingham Astronomical Society Provisional Programme 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

**LARGE-SCALE STRUCTURE AND EVOLUTION
OF THE UNIVERSE;** Dr. Steve Maddox, School
of Physics and Astronomy, University of
Nottingham

September 4th

MARS ODYSSEY; Andy Lund, The Planetary
Society, UK Regional Coordinator

October 2nd

OBSERVATORY MEETING NIGHT

November 6th

A.G.M.

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.

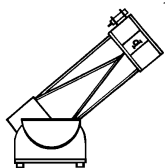
For more information about the Nottingham
Astronomical Society please send a C5 SAE to the
Secretary Carl Brennan at
40 Swindon Close, The Vale, Giltbrook,
NOTTINGHAM, NG16 2WD. Telephone 0115 854
8687

E-mail carl.stella@virgin.net

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**

The Widescreen Centre

18, LADY BAY ROAD ,Nottingham, NG2 5BJ

0115 945 5459 FAX: 0115 945 5362

WebShop: www.widescreen-centre.co.uk

www.telescopes-direct.com

eMail: call@widescreen-centre.co.uk

Stockists for:

MEADE

ORION

CELESTRON

KONUS

HELIOS

BINOCULARS

EYEPIECES

BARLOW'S

FILTERS

BOOKS

ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY OUTFITS

CCD CAMERAS

You are always made welcome at our shop or a telephone call to Lynda will bring you our latest catalogue

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:

Paul Stocks

Tel: 0115 914 8185

e-mail: stocks_paul61@hotmail.com

VICE PRESIDENTS:

Peter Davison

e-mail: pebarwb@ntlworld.com

Dr Roy Gretton

e-mail: roy_gretton@peoples.ac.uk

Alan Heath (Ex. Dir. BAA Saturn Section)

HONORARY SECRETARY:

Carl Brennan

40 Swindon Close, The Vale
Giltbrook, Nottingham NG16 2WD

Tel: 0115 854 8687

e-mail: carl.stella@virgin.net

TREASURER:

Dr Mike Provost

e-mail: mike.provost@ntlworld.com

JOURNAL EDITOR:

Dr Roy Gretton

e-mail: roy_gretton@peoples.ac.uk

or: roy@gretton.surfonwater.com

CURATOR OF INSTRUMENTS

David Lukehurst

e-mail: gildor@ntlworld.com

CAMPAIGN FOR DARK SKIES:

Greg Eisenhauer

ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBER:

Richard Evans

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, 2002-03

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

(Full time student, UB40, Senior Citizens)

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 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.
