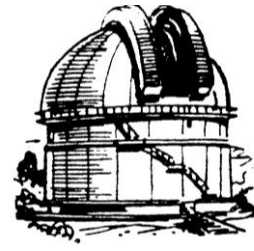


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# Journal

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## Nottingham Astronomical Society

November 2005

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*Inside this issue*

- Sky Notes for November
- Diary Dates
- Agenda for the AGM
- Proposed new subscription rates
- Local meteorites
- Advertisements
- E-Services
- Membership application form
- Society Information

**Thursday November 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
7.45 p.m.

*at the Djanogly City Academy*  
*(doors open at 7.30 p.m.)*

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

followed by an ordinary meeting

### **SEEING RED**

Do take the opportunity to observe Mars in the early days of this month if you can. It will not appear as large again for another 13 years. The planet will be at opposition ( $180^\circ$  from the Sun) on November 7<sup>th</sup>, but because of the eccentricity of planetary orbits it is actually closest to Earth on October 29<sup>th</sup>.

It is currently late summer in Mars' southern hemisphere, and so the south polar ice cap is melting. It is in fact the southern hemisphere of Mars that is tilted toward Earth, and so the north polar cap will not be visible.

For further details see this month's Sky Notes.

# Sky Notes

## 2005 October

Compiled by Roy Gretton

*All times quoted are U.T.*



### PHASES OF THE MOON

New Moon occurs in the early hours of November 2<sup>nd</sup>  
First Quarter occurs in the early hours of the 9<sup>th</sup>  
Full Moon occurs shortly after midnight on the 16<sup>th</sup>  
Last Quarter occurs in the late evening of the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

This month the Moon is closest to Earth on the 10<sup>th</sup>, and furthest from Earth on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### THE PLANETS

**Mercury** reaches greatest eastern elongation on November 3<sup>rd</sup> (which happens to be the date of our AGM) when it will be 23° from the Sun. However, in spite of this it will be extremely difficult to observe, because it will be a mere 3° above the southwestern horizon at sunset. (See also comments about Venus).

**Venus**, the brightest planet, will shine at magnitude -4.3 when it reaches greatest eastern elongation on November 3<sup>rd</sup> (the same date as Mercury's greatest elongation), but in spite of being 47° from the Sun, most people will not even spot it. This is because of the planet's very southerly declination (-27°) at this time, which results in it being only 8° above the southwestern horizon at sunset. When, as is the case this year, Venus is at greatest eastern elongation in November, it is in a similar part of the zodiac to where the Sun will be at the winter solstice, and so will be very low in the sky when viewed from the latitude of the U.K. On this occasion Venus is even further south than the Sun will be in late December, hence the difficulty in observing it.

**Mars** is the planet of the moment. In the first week of this month it is better placed for British observers than it will be at any time until 2018, so make the most of the opportunity, particularly if you have a telescope. Just over two years ago there was a lot of interest in Mars because it was at its nearest to Earth for many thousands of years. However, this month's apparition is probably better for us, because the planet is much higher in the sky than it was in 2003. Opposition to the Sun occurs on November 7<sup>th</sup>, when Mars will be about 16° north of the celestial equator, and will therefore have an elevation of about 53° above the southern horizon at midnight. But be aware that the most favourable conditions are short-lived: Mars will have an apparent diameter of 20 arcseconds at the beginning of November, but this will have already shrunk to about 17 arcseconds by the end of the month. Mars is a bright

orange object (magnitude -2.3 at opposition) in the constellation of Aries, and will be observable for about 14 hours each night, weather permitting.

**Jupiter** will begin to be observable again toward the end of this month, having passed through conjunction with the Sun on October 22<sup>nd</sup>. It is in the constellation of Virgo, but we shall have to wait until later in the winter to have good observing conditions for this planet.

**Saturn**, in the constellation of Cancer, will be rising in the northeast before 10 p.m. in the middle of November, and will be due south about two hours before sunrise, so useful observation can take place if you are willing to stay up after midnight to do it (or if you rise sufficiently early!). The Moon joins Saturn in an area of sky close to the Beehive cluster on November 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Uranus**, a pale greenish disc shining at magnitude 5.7 in the middle of the constellation of Aquarius, is fairly low in the south each evening during this month.

**Neptune** lies about 23° west of Uranus, and so is also an evening object, but less favourably placed and fainter than Uranus.

*Summarising the situation, we can say that Mars is the only planet worthy of much effort this month. It represents an observing opportunity better than all the others combined. Let's hope for clear skies at the right times!*

## **METEORS**

Conditions are unfavourable for the famous **Leonids** this year, the expected maximum occurring close to Full Moon. The **Taurids** have much better conditions, with their maximum predicted for November 3<sup>rd</sup>, but you are unlikely to observe more than ten events per hour.

## DIARY DATES

### Meetings of the Nottingham Astronomical Society

Our programme of meetings over the coming months is below.  
Don't forget to check our website: <http://beehive.thisisnottingham.co.uk/nottinghamastro>  
for the latest updates and details of Observatory work sessions.

#### Thursday 3 November 2005

Djanogly City Academy 7.30pm

### **NAS Annual General Meeting 2005**

Please do come along and have your say in the running of your society.  
An AGM agenda and notice of the proposed membership fees for 2005-06 are included in this issue of  
the Journal.  
We will also be discussing plans for future observing sessions with the large telescope.

#### Thursday 1 December 2005

Djanogly City Academy 7.30pm

**"Cosmic Collisions"**

**Dennis Ashton**

Director, Sheffield Hallam University Star Centre

#### Thursday 5 January 2006

Djanogly City Academy 7.30pm

**Members' Evening**

Please note: This meeting may be at the observatory, not Djanogly. To be confirmed.

#### Thursday 2 February 2006

Djanogly City Academy 7.30pm

**"The Discovery of Pluto"**

**Martin Lunn MBE**

A selection of astronomy books will also be on display to browse and buy if you wish.

## DIARY DATES (2) Other Events

A slight clash of dates in November with TWO astronomy events in Yorkshire on the same day!

**Saturday, 12 November 2005**

### **Leeds Astromeet**

Doors open 9.00 am

First speaker 10.00 am, Last speaker 5.10 pm

Tickets on the door: **£8.00**

Venue: **Rupert Beckett Lecture Theatre, Leeds University**

see <http://tldynamic.leeds.ac.uk/leisure/detail.asp?ID=193>

(a 350 seat auditorium with every type of lecture aid)

The 10th Anniversary of the 'Leeds Astromeet', which is justly regarded as one of the premier events in the national amateur astronomy calendar.

#### **Speakers:**

Professor John Dyson "Starburst Galaxies"

Professor Lionel Wilson "Recent findings on the Interaction between Volcanoes and Water on Mars"

Professor Sir Arnold Wolfendale "Albert Einstein: a Scientific Genius"

Professor Carl Murray "Cassini Views the Solar System"

Dr Allan Chapman "Thomas HEC Espin (1858-1934): Grand Amateur Astronomer, Philanthropist and Eccentric"

Further details can be found on the Leeds Astronomical Society website:

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

**Saturday, 12th November 2005**

### **The British Astronomical Association 'Back To Basics' Workshop**

The Regent Hotel, Regent Square, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN1 2DS, Tel 01302 364 180

The cost of this event is **£10.00 per head** (including lunch and refreshments). Booking in advance is necessary as places are limited. Bookings and remittance must be sent to the British Astronomical Association Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0DU. Email

[office@britastro.org](mailto:office@britastro.org) by

**30th September 2005.**

Booking forms can be found on the BAA web site (in PDF format) at

[http://www.britastro.org/news/items/workshop\\_doncaster\\_booking.pdf](http://www.britastro.org/news/items/workshop_doncaster_booking.pdf) or can be obtained from the BAA office.

The aim of this event is to help everyone who has recently become interested in astronomy learn some of the basic techniques and develop the interest to its full potential. During the day experienced people will be on hand to help answer any questions. There is a programme of talks and practical sessions plus retailers attending this event.

Solar Observing – Lyn Smith

Naked eye & Binocular observing of the Moon and Planets – Paul Money

Simple Variable Star Observing – Karen Holland

Touring the autumn constellations - Paul Money

Deep Sky Observations using simple equipment – Dr Stewart Moore.

# Nottingham Astronomical Society Annual General Meeting 3rd November 2005

## Agenda

- 1 Meeting open
- 2 Minutes of the 2004 AGM
- 3 Arising from minutes
- 4 President's report
- 5 Secretary's report
- 6 Treasurer's report
- 7 Telescope and observatory work
- 8 Journal Editor's report
- 9 Campaign for Dark Skies report
- 10 Election of Committee 2005-06

### **President**

Fred Hopper has been nominated by our outgoing President, Greg Eisenhower, to be the new President of the NAS for a two-year term.

### **Vice-Presidents**

Candidates: Dr Roy Gretton, David Lukehurst

### **Secretary**

Candidate: Paul Stocks

### **Treasurer**

Candidate: Dr Mike Provost

### **Journal Editor**

Candidate: Dr Roy Gretton

### **Curator of Instruments**

Candidate: David Lukehurst

### **Campaign for Dark Skies**

Candidate: *A candidate is needed for this post*

### **Ordinary Committee Members**

Candidates: Dorothy Sowerby, Joe Sowerby, John Hurst

*Other candidates from the membership are welcome!*

- 11 Subscription fees for 2005-06
- 12 Any other business
- 13 AGM close

The AGM will be followed by a short ordinary meeting, as time permits.

**Nottingham Astronomical Society**  
**Membership subscriptions: Proposed rates for 2005-06**

For the year to 30 September 2006, the NAS committee propose the following membership fees:

Adult members	£25
Junior member (under18) and adult full-time students	£12.50
Concessionary rate (for those on basic state pension or other benefits)	£12.50

**New members joining after 1 April**

A new member joining after 1 April is charged half the appropriate annual fee, to cover the remainder of the Society's year to 30 September.

**Non members attending NAS meetings**

The first attendance of a non-member is free of charge. After that, any non-member attending our meetings is asked to pay a fee of £2.50 adults, £1.25 juniors/concessions. Invited guests may attend meetings free of charge.

**METEORITES: A REQUEST**

Carl Brennan has received a request from a Mr Robinson of County Durham, who is researching meteorites. He understands that one fell in the Beeston area around April 1780, and that another one was reported at Colston Bassett (year unknown).

If any member of the Society has information on either of these events, please contact the enquirer at the following address:

Mr James D Robinson  
8 Simpasture Court  
Newton Aycliffe,  
Co. Durham  
DL5 5JZ

If there was indeed such an event at Colston Bassett it would be of interest to us because of its proximity to our observatory.

## Small Advertisements

### 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**

### For Sale

**8¾-inch Newtonian telescope on  
Dobsonian mount**

Built by David Lukehurst.  
65x and 250x eyepieces, finderscope.  
3 years old.  
Hardly used, very good condition.

**£375** or near offer

**Telephone Terry Naylor  
on 0115 9815968**

## The Widescreen Centre

18, LADY BAY ROAD ,Nottingham, NG2 5BJ

0115 945 5459 FAX: 0115 945 5362

WebShop: [www.widescreen-centre.co.uk](http://www.widescreen-centre.co.uk)

[www.telescopes-direct.com](http://www.telescopes-direct.com)

eMail: [call@widescreen-centre.co.uk](mailto:call@widescreen-centre.co.uk)

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CCD CAMERAS

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



## The Nottingham Astronomical Society: E - SERVICES

### 'Beehive' Website

Whether or not you are a NAS member, you can now keep up to date with details of the Society's meetings and other events by visiting the NAS 'Beehive' website:

<http://beehive.thisisnottingham.co.uk/nottinghamastro>

### NAS Journal e-mailing list

To register for your monthly e-mailed copy of the NAS Journal, just e-mail

[nottinghamastro@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nottinghamastro@yahoo.co.uk)

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

### NAS Observatory Group

A web group page and message service (for NAS members only) is available at

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/nottinghamastronomicalsociety/>

It is used for circulating information to members about work at the observatory and use of the large telescope. If you are a member of the Society, you can join this online group by visiting the website and clicking on "Join this Group".

#### 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, its Committee or Members.*

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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 Paul Stocks, Hon. Secretary, **Nottingham Astronomical Society**, 22 Killerton Park Drive, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7SB

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 £24
- Junior (17 years or under) £12
- Concession (*full time student, UB40, etc*) £12

# 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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## **PRESIDENT:**

**Greg Eisenhauer**

Tel: 01949 875857

e-mail: [greg.eisenhauer@ntlworld.com](mailto:greg.eisenhauer@ntlworld.com)

## **HONORARY VICE PRESIDENT**

**Alan Heath** (Ex. Dir. BAA Saturn Section)

## **VICE PRESIDENTS:**

**David Lukehurst**

e-mail: [gildor@ntlworld.com](mailto:gildor@ntlworld.com)

website: [www.dobsonians.co.uk](http://www.dobsonians.co.uk)

**Dr Roy Gretton**

e-mail: [roy@gretton.surfonwater.com](mailto:roy@gretton.surfonwater.com)

## **HONORARY SECRETARY:**

**Paul Stocks**

Tel: 0115 914 8185

e-mail: [nottinghamastro@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nottinghamastro@yahoo.co.uk)

## **TREASURER:**

**Dr Mike Provost**

e-mail: [mike.provost@ntlworld.com](mailto:mike.provost@ntlworld.com)

## **JOURNAL EDITOR:**

**Dr Roy Gretton**

e-mail: [roy@gretton.surfonwater.com](mailto:roy@gretton.surfonwater.com)

## **CURATOR OF INSTRUMENTS**

**David Lukehurst**

e-mail: [gildor@ntlworld.com](mailto:gildor@ntlworld.com)

## **CAMPAIGN FOR DARK SKIES:**

**Greg Eisenhauer**

## **ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

**Joe Sowerby**

**Dorothy Sowerby**

**Fred Hopper**

email: [fwmh@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:fwmh@nerc.ac.uk)

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## **Meetings**

Formal monthly meetings, with speakers, are held on the first Thursday of each month (except August, and occasionally other months as announced) at

*Djanogly City Academy*

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.

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## **Annual Subscriptions, 2004-05**

Full Adult:	£24
Junior ( <i>17 years or under</i> )	£12
Concessions	£12

(*Full time student, UB40, etc*)

Subscriptions become due on 1 October. Half-price subscription is charged if joining after 1st April. Please make cheques payable to:  
**Nottingham Astronomical Society.**

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If you would like further information about the **Nottingham Astronomical Society**, or would like to become a member, please contact the Honorary Secretary, Paul Stocks, 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.

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