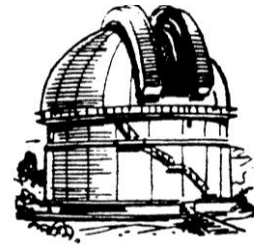


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# Journal

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## Nottingham Astronomical Society

October 2003

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### Inside this issue

- Society News
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**Thursday October 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Tonight's meeting is at the

## Observatory Site

Mount Pleasant, near Cotgrave,  
starting at 7.30 pm

### **TWO OF THE SMALLEST MOONS OF URANUS DISCOVERED**

The International Astronomical Union announced on September 25<sup>th</sup> that the Hubble Space Telescope has discovered two new satellites of the planet Uranus. The new moons are about 8 to 10 miles across (12 to 16 km). They are so faint that they eluded detection by the Voyager 2 spacecraft, which discovered 10 small satellites when it flew by the planet in 1986. The newly detected moons are orbiting even closer to the planet than the five major Uranian satellites, which are several hundred miles wide. The two new satellites are the first inner moons of Uranus discovered from an Earth-based telescope in more than 50 years. Hubble telescope observations also helped to confirm the discovery of another tiny moon that had originally been detected in Voyager images.

### **CHANGING CLOCKS**

British Summer Time ends on the 26<sup>th</sup> of this month.

## **Society news for October**

Our October meeting will be held at the NAS Observatory on Thursday the 2<sup>nd</sup> – a good way to escape the Goose Fair traffic! Do please come out to our Observatory and do dress warmly, as the site can get very cold. The large telescope is not there yet, but we will have some smaller telescopes available and, weather permitting, plan to do some observing.

### **Observatory work**

After a short delay to work on the dome shutter mechanism, things are starting to progress again. Everything we need will be either made or bought by mid-October. Two weekends will then be needed to install the mechanism. The first weekend will be devoted to the low-level work (installation of the motor/gearbox mechanism at the base of the dome), while the second weekend will focus on the high-level work (which needs tower scaffolding), plus putting right any glitches found during the first weekend.

Volunteers will be needed to help on these two weekends, so once we have confirmed the dates we will publicise them on the NAS Observatory Group website. The telescope is expected to be ready for installation soon after the shutter mechanism is completed. We should, at last, then have an operational observatory.

### **BAA Meeting in Nottingham, April 2004**

One other item of news I am pleased to announce is the British Astronomical Association “Out of London” meeting which will be held in Nottingham on Saturday, 24 April 2004.

Plans for this meeting are still being made, but a venue in Nottingham has now been booked and I am looking forward to hearing from the BAA with details of the programme for the day. More about this nearer the date!

Paul Stocks  
NAS President

# Sky Notes

## 2003 October

Compiled by Roy Gretton

*All times quoted are U.T.*



### THE MOON

First Quarter	02d 19h 09m
Full Moon	10d 07h 28m
Last Quarter	18d 12h 32m
New Moon	25d 12h 50m

### THE PLANETS

**Mercury** can be seen, especially in binoculars, above the eastern horizon before dawn in the first week of this month (magnitude  $-1$ ). The planet reaches superior conjunction on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Venus** is moving away from the Sun in the evening sky, and by the end of the month will be at an eastern elongation of 20 degrees (magnitude  $-3.8$ ).

**Mars** will continue to be a bright object low in the evening sky throughout October, although it will have faded to little brighter than magnitude  $-1$  by the end of the month. (Remember, it was almost as bright as magnitude  $-3$  in late August). Also by the end of October the angular diameter will be 15 arcseconds (down from 25 arcseconds only two months previously). Mars will be 1 degree north of the Moon on October 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Jupiter** is a morning object, moving away from the Sun in the pre-dawn sky. By the middle of the month it will be at magnitude  $-1.8$ , with an angular diameter of 32 arcseconds. Jupiter will be 4 degrees south of the Moon on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Saturn** will be rising at 21 hours by mid-October, and so will be visible for much of the night, magnitude approximately zero.

**Uranus** (magnitude 5.7) is visible in Aquarius and **Neptune** (magnitude 7.8) is in Capricornus. Both are evening objects.

### METEORS

The **Orionids** are expected to reach their maximum activity on October 20<sup>th</sup>, with a zenithal hourly rate of 25.

## DIARY DATES, by Carl Brennan

### MEETINGS OF THE NOTTINGHAM ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

**October 2<sup>nd</sup>**

#### **OBSERVATORY MEETING NIGHT**

Can members who do not know their way to the site, or need transport there and back please get in touch with me.

**November 6<sup>th</sup>** Djanogly CTC Meeting. Doors open from 7.30pm

**A.G.M.**

**December 4<sup>th</sup>** Djanogly CTC Meeting. Doors open from 7.30pm

#### **UNDERSTANDING THE LARGEST EXPLOSIVE VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS ON EARTH (TBC)**

Dr M J Branney BSc, PhD, Department of Geology, University of Leicester

**January 1<sup>st</sup> 2004** No Meeting

## OTHER EVENTS

**October 13<sup>th</sup>** will be the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the **British Interplanetary Society**. So watch out for events etc.

**Derby University Wed.15th.Oct.2003 6.15pm.**

### **The Flamsteed Lecture**

This year the speaker is Professor Colin Pillinger the talk

#### **BEAGLE 2 - SEARCHING FOR LIFE ON MARS**

followed by light refreshments, and a chance to meet the speaker.

Booking essential by Oct.3rd.

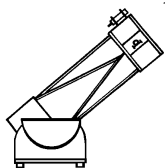
Tickets are FREE from

Angela Drinkwater, Marketing Dept., University of Derby, Kedleston Road  
Derby DE22 1GB

## Small Advertisements

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*Astronomical Telescope Maker*



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[gildor@ntlworld.com](mailto: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](http://www.widescreen-centre.co.uk)

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

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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

### The Journal

To register for your FREE Journal, just E-mail the secretary at [carl.stella@virign.net](mailto:carl.stella@virign.net) - You don't have to be a Society member to take advantage of this service.

### Observatory Group

A web group page and message service has been set up at <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/nottinghamastronomicalsociety/>

It will be used for circulating information about the observatory construction and projects, large telescope up-dates, and use of the site by members of the Observatory Group. Please visit the web site and E-mail on line if you wish to join (NAS Members only)

### Minute Reports

If you wish to receive E-copies of the draft minutes of the committee let the secretary know at [carl.stella@virgin.net](mailto:carl.stella@virgin.net) . This service is open only to Society members.

#### 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.*

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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

# 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:**

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**Dr Roy Gretton**

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

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

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Tel: 0115 854 8687

e-mail: [carl.stella@virgin.net](mailto:carl.stella@virgin.net)

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e-mail: [roy.gretton@peoples.ac.uk](mailto:roy.gretton@peoples.ac.uk)

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## **CURATOR OF INSTRUMENTS**

**David Lukehurst**

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

## **CAMPAIGN FOR DARK SKIES:**

**Greg Eisenhauer**

## **ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBER:**

**Richard Evans**

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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, 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.**

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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, 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.**

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