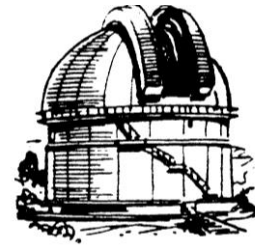


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# Journal

of the



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## Nottingham Astronomical Society September 2003

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### Inside this issue

- News Notes
- Sky Notes for September
- FAS Convention 2003
- Email from ex-member
- Diary Dates
- Advertisements
- E-Services
- Membership application form
- Society Information

**Thursday September 4<sup>th</sup>**

Doors open 7.30pm

This evening we welcome

**Mr. Andy Lound,**  
UK Regional Coordinator of  
The Planetary Society

who will be speaking on

**Mars Odyssey**

### IMAGING MARS

The Hubble Space Telescope took its best-ever picture of Mars, within minutes of the planet's closest approach to Earth in nearly 60,000 years, on August 27<sup>th</sup>. At this time the Red Planet was 34,647,420 miles (55,757,930 km) from Earth. Mars reaches opposition about every 26 months, but the special significance of this year's event is seen when we consider the closest approaches in 2001 (43 million miles), 1999 (54 million miles), 1997 (60 million miles) and 1995 (65 million miles). Not until 2287 will Mars again be as close as it has been this year.

There is still plenty of time to observe Mars this month. Although it is now receding from us (because Earth has "overtaken" Mars in its orbit) it will be visible at earlier times in the evening as the autumn progresses.

# Sky Notes

## 2003 September

Compiled by Roy Gretton

*All times quoted are U.T.*



### THE MOON

First Quarter	03d 12h 34m
Full Moon	10d 16h 36m
Last Quarter	18d 19h 03m
New Moon	26d 03h 09m

### THE PLANETS

**Mercury.** Greatest western elongation takes place on 27 September, when Mercury will be  $18^\circ$  from the Sun and  $16^\circ$  above the eastern horizon at sunrise. This is **the most favourable time to observe this planet in the whole of 2003**. Mercury can be seen in binoculars for about 10 days either side of this date.

**Venus** is practically unobservable this month, having only just emerged from superior conjunction.

**Mars** continues to be the gem of the night sky throughout September, and you will be able to see it earlier in the evening as the month progresses. At the beginning of the month the magnitude will be  $-2.8$ , but by the end of the month it will have faded to  $-2$ . The Moon is less than  $5^\circ$  away from Mars on the evening of the 9<sup>th</sup>. At the end of September Mars will be  $4^\circ$  south of Uranus.

**Jupiter.** It will be possible to catch a glimpse of Jupiter in the pre-dawn sky by the end of the month. It will be  $29^\circ$  from the Sun and located on the underside of Leo. The diameter will be 32 arcseconds and the magnitude  $-1.7$ .

**Saturn** is coming back into view this month, shining at magnitude 0.1. By late September the planet rises at 22:15 and is visible for at least six hours in a dark sky. The rings are now closing, and a sliver of the planet's northern hemisphere is beginning to show above the rings.

**Uranus** (magnitude 5.7) is visible in Aquarius and **Neptune** (magnitude 7.8) is in Capricornus.

# **FAS Annual Convention 2003**

**Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> September**

**Institute of Astronomy, Madingley Road, Cambridge**

## **Speakers**

Dr Robin Catchpole (Old Royal Observatory Greenwich)

*From the Solar System to the Edge of the Observable Universe*

Prof. Gerry Gilmore (IoA Cambridge)

*Towards the Temperature of Cold Dark matter*

Bob Mizon (Well known Campaigner for Dark Skies)

*An A-Z of Astronomy*

Prof. Andy Fabian (IoA Cambridge)

*The Search for Massive Black Holes*

Dr. Andrew Coates (MSSL)

*Looking for Life on Mars with Beagle 2 and Mars Express*

**Doors open 8.30am - Lectures start at 9.00am**

## **Tour the Telescopes**

Tours of some of the telescopes will be available during the lunch break. Numbers are limited; tickets will be on first come first served basis on the day of the convention.

## **Trade Stands and Society Displays**

## **Tickets**

£70 on the door, £6.00 in advance from

John Parratt

73 Woolbarn Lawn, Whiddon Valley, Barnstaple, North Devon, EX32 8PQ

Telephone 01271 372331 E-mail [john@parratt8017.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:john@parratt8017.freereserve.co.uk)

## **Message from Haverfordwest**

Members who know Mrs Gladys Morris will be interested in the following email:

**Sent:** Wednesday, July 30, 2003 6:09 PM

**Subject:** Swansea A.S.

Dear Carl,

Many thanks for your e-mails. We are settling in but there are still some things which remain unpacked!

I have made a contact with the Swansea Astronomical Society, led by Mike Morales. They have an observatory on the coast. It's a bit of a long way from here but I have been twice so far.

We are enjoying visits to the many castles down here but dodging the rain has been a problem recently.

Best wishes to all.

Gladys

## **DIARY DATES, by Carl Brennan**

### MEETINGS OF THE NOTTINGHAM ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

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

#### **MARS ODYSSEY**

Andy Lound, The Planetary Society, UK Regional Coordinator

**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**

#### **September 9<sup>th</sup> Dennis Ashton "Galaxies"**

If you enjoy a good speaker, or are just starting out in Astronomy then do try and get to this talk. It will be held in the Hayloft Meeting room at Erewash Museum. The meeting will start around 7.45pm. Please remember this is Ilkeston & District Astronomical Society's ordinary meeting. There is a small fee for attending (£1.00 I think).

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.

#### **The Jack Newton Lecture**

I was clearing out some shelves recently and re-discovered I am holding the Society's video copy of the Jack Newton Lecture on CCD Imaging from 11.06.95. I think Graham Shepherd (M&SAS) shot the video. It is not great quality, but does capture something of the pleasure and atmosphere of the lecture that evening. It also gives a simple insight in to CCD Imaging from a World Master. Because this part of the Society's historical archive I don't think it would be right to just freely circulate this item. However, if any member wishes to borrow the video can they let me know?

## OTHER EVENTS

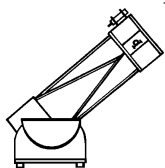
Federation of Astronomical Societies  
Autumn Convention 2003  
Saturday, September 20th  
Institute of Astronomy,  
Cambridge, CB3 0HA

Tickets £8.00 on the day £7.00 in advance. Seating is limited to 180 so booking is advised. Tickets available from John Parratt, 73 Woolbarn Lawn, Whiddon Valley, Barnstaple, North Devon, EX32 8PQ Tel: 01271 372331  
Doors open 8.30am, first lecture 9.00am. Full programme of speakers, trade stands etc. Tours of the Northumberland etc.

## Small Advertisements

**David Lukehurst**

*Astronomical Telescope Maker*



**Large, Highly Portable Dobsonians**

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Large Finders, Low-profile Helical and Rack & Pinion Focussers, Eyepieces, Barlow Lenses, Ronchi Testers, etc.

**For details & price list:**

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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

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[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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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:**

**Paul Stocks**

Tel: 0115 914 8185

e-mail: [stocks\\_paul61@hotmail.com](mailto:stocks_paul61@hotmail.com)

## **VICE PRESIDENTS:**

**Peter Davison**

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

**Dr Roy Gretton**

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

**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](mailto:carl.stella@virgin.net)

## **TREASURER:**

**Dr Mike Provost**

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

## **JOURNAL EDITOR:**

**Dr Roy Gretton**

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

or: [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 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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