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Editorial. It is hoped that Members of the Society will try to submit articles for publication in this Newsletter. Advertisements are also welcome.

Talk by Patrick Moore Cancelled.

At a Meeting of the O.A.S. Committee on Saturday, January 15th 1972, the Secretary (Mr. Martin Topple) telephoned Mr. Patrick Arthur Moore, the famous Astronomer who appears on the BBC Radio and Television. Some time previously, Mr. Moore had offered to give a talk to the Society; however, when the Secretary telephoned him Mr. Moore said that he was not well enough to travel so far as Ipswich (he lives in Sussex), and so a Talk by him will have to be postponed indefinitely.

Telescope out of Action

The 10-inch refractor of the Orwell Park School Observatory is temporarily out of action since the shutter is broken. Please would nobody open the shutter on the dome or it is liable to jam shut, or worse jam close, or worse still fall off. Notification will be given when the Telescope is working again.

Apollo 16

Apollo 16 was originally scheduled to be launched in March, however, it has been postponed until the next launch window on April 16th 1972. The reasons for the postponement are to modify the Lunar Module's batteries, to modify the spacecraft docking collar jettison mechanism which is thought to be faulty, to modify the L.M. Pilot's Space suit and to allow the L.M. Pilot to recover from an illness. The crew for the mission are Charles Duke (L.M. Pilot), Thomas 'Ken' Mattingay (C.M. Pilot) and John Young (Commander).

NASA has selected a mountainous highland region North of the crater Descartes. at Selenographic Latitude 9° East, Longitude 16° South. The site provides two distinct primary sampling objectives which are expected to provide material from which gaps in lunar surface models presently developed can be filled. The first sampling objective, on which the Commander (Young), and the L.M.P. (Duke) will land in the highlands basin fill, is a volcanic appearing material flooding many of the large old highland craters; geological evidence indicates that this material is older than Apollo 11 and 12 landing sites, but younger than Imbrium basin ejecta samples by Apollo 14. Studies of the Descartes site, when combined with Apollo 15 samples from Hadley Apennine will help develop lunar evolution theories more fully.

Near the landing site are two young craters about 0.8 km across where the astronauts will acquire documented samples.

The Second sampling objective is a hilly grooved and furrowed area thought to be volcanic of similar age but of different composition to the highlands basin fill. This uplands volcanic terrain may yield data on interior composition of highlands material. Lunar Roving Vehicle - 2 (LRV-2) will be used by Young and Duke to explore the landing site; And also Lunar Surface Experiments Package (ALSEP) will be deployed, containing an active seismic experiment, a far Ultra violet camera - spectroscope, a cosmic-ray detector, a portable magnetometer and other instruments. The Command Module will also carry orbital sensors in studies of lunar environment, including cameras, geochemical indicators etc.,

Apollo 16 will follow very much the lines of Apollo 15. Apollo 15 was the first fully operational Apollo, using the up-rated version of the Saturn 5 rocket, uprated version of the Lunar Module, and L.R.V., and a Scientific Instruments Bay (Sim-bay) in the Service module. Apollo J is the name for these uprated Apollos. Apollo 16 and Apollo 17 (due to be launched in December 1972 or January 1973) will also be Apollo J missions. It is hoped to include a timetable of the mission in the March or April Edition of the Journal.

Grand Tour Cancelled.

The USA hoped to launch a probe called the Grand Tour in 1977, followed by a second Grand Tour in 1979. GT (Grand Tour) 1 would have gone past Jupiter, Saturn and Pluto. GT 2 would have gone past Jupiter, Uranus and Neptune. However, for financial reasons, this exciting project has been cancelled. Another opportunity for this long journey would not occur for another 180 years. It is unfortunate that NASA has cancelled Grand Tour, but it is very likely that the USSR will try to launch a Grand Tour probe.

In way of compromise, NASA will launch a single probe in 1977 to fly past Jupiter and Saturn only, but it still means that badly needed information on Uranus, Neptune and Pluto (about which we know almost nothing compared with the rest of the solar system) will not be obtained.

Although Grand Tour will be cancelled, preparations are still going on for the launch of the first probe to Jupiter, Pioneer F, details of which will follow in the next Edition of the Journal. Launch date for Pioneer F is set for February 27th 1972. Pioneer G will be launched towards Jupiter in March 1973.

Astronomy Notes for February and March

The Planet Mercury will be visible in the West for about an hour after sunset around the end of February and early March. It is well worth looking for it with binoculars; it will be the only bright star in the area. Do not mistake it for Venus! Venus is very brilliant this month, visible high in the South-west after sunset, the most brilliant object in the sky (other than the sun and moon). The moon will be visible in the West as a crescent after sunset on February 16-19th.

First Quarter occurs on February 21st, and Full Moon on February 29th; Last Quarter will be on March the 8th, though by then the moon will not rise until midnight. The Planet Mars is in the constellation of Aries, moving into Taurus; it is distinctive from its red colour, and dims from magnitude + 1.0 to + 1.5 during February/March. Jupiter is a Morning Star, visible in the East in the dark to twilight sky before dawn in the constellation of Sagittarius. The Planet Saturn is an evening star in Taurus and is a beautiful object to observe. It is a bright yellowish star underneath the Pleiades.

All five naked-eye planets will be visible in early March.

Recent Probes to Mars.

The USSR landed 2 Capsules on Mars in November 1971, and the USA orbited their Mariner - 4 probe about the planet. The USSR also orbited two Spacecraft around Mars. The three orbiters are still functioning and yielding a great amount of data. It is hoped to serialise information on these probes in future Editions of the journal.

Society Meetings.

Meetings of the British Astronomical Association (BAA) are held on the last Wednesday of each month usually - meetings should take place on the 23rd February and 29th March at 23, Saville Row, London W.1. at 17.00 hours G.M.T. in the Scientific Societies Lecture Theatre, Civil Service Commission Building; it should be well worth attending these if you happen to be in London at the time; There is usually an illustrated talk and interesting discussions at these meetings.

Meetings of the Norwich Astronomical Society will be held on the 19th February, 18th March and 15th April at The Lads Club, King Street, Norwich at 7.30 p.m.,

Section meetings of the Orwell Astronomical Society are weekly.

Lunar Section Meetings are on Wednesdays usually, The Lunar Section Director is Mr. R.M. Cheeseman of [REDACTED], Ipswich

People wishing to learn more about astronomy should attend the Tuition ~~or~~ LEARNERS' SECTION.

Tuition Section or Learners Section

~~Tuition~~ Section Meetings held at The Orwell Park School.

For Meeting details contact the Directors: Mr. Martin Toppie, (Telephone Kirton [REDACTED]), and Mr. Spencer Bourden of [REDACTED], Felixstowe.

Meetings of the Planetary Section are held on alternate Thursday evenings at the Orwell Observatory. For details telephone the Director, Mr. David Bearcroft at Ipswich [REDACTED].

If you own a telescope, or binoculars of any size, or a telescope, I would like you to fill in the coupon enclosed with this Volume and send it to me. The information is for publication in a Prospectus of the Society.