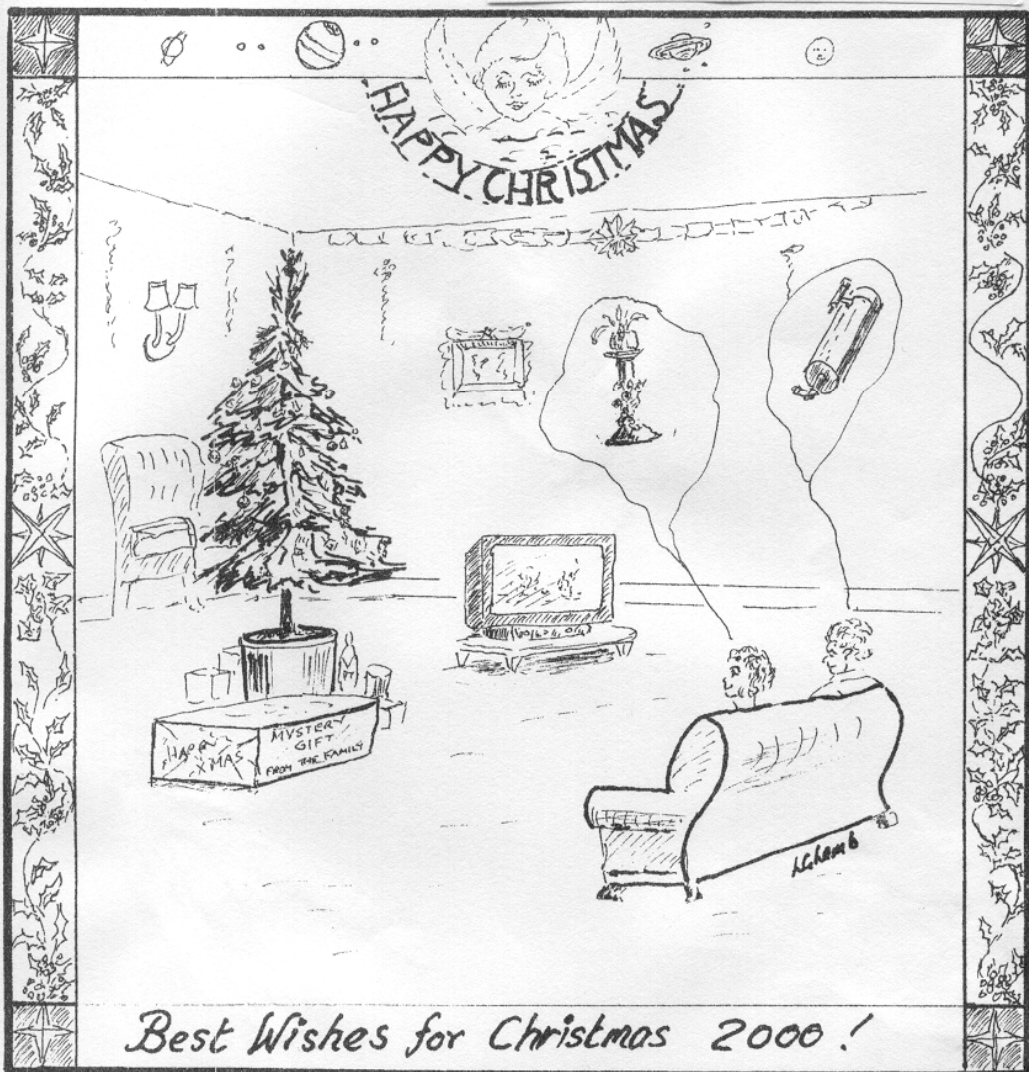


ORWELL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY IPSWICH

Charity No 271313

DECEMBER 2000



Society News

Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held on Saturday 13th January 2001, with a 20:00 start. All members are invited to attend.

The principle items covered will be:

- Report on last year's society activities
- Election of the new committee for 2001
- A provisional list of events for the 2001.
- Members will also be able air any ideas they may have on society activities.

The meeting will be held either in the classroom behind the school library or in one of the rooms around the courtyard.

2 Proposals for new committee members for 2001

Have you any time to devote to help in the running of the society?

Would you like to be proposed to stand for the 2001 committee?

If the answer to both of these questions is yes, then ask a member to propose you to stand for the 2001 committee. All present committee posts are up for re-election.

There are usually 5 or 6 committee meetings during the year. They are held at the observatory on Saturday evenings. Every committee member will be assigned a task. To see the current list of committee jobs see the back of the newsletter. A separate committee nomination form is included with this newsletter.

3 Membership Subscription for 2001

Subscriptions for 2001 will be due from 1st of January. If you have already paid please ignore this request.

The rates for 2001 are:

Junior & Concessionary	£10.00
Adult	£14.00
Family	£16.00

A renewal form will be included with the January newsletter. It would be appreciated if you could return this so that the society membership records can kept up to date.

Please make cheques & P.O.'s payable to the: -

ORWELL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY (IPSWICH)

Please return all subscriptions to

Martin Cook

Ipswich
IP4 5PZ

4 Events for 2001

Event	Details	Date
Allan Chapman Talk on Airy	Orwell Park School	18th May 2001

A new list of events for 2001 will be published in January

Night Sky

All times GMT

Sun

The sun will be rising approximately 08:10
The sun will be setting approximately between 16:00 to 15:50

Moon

1 st Quarter	Full Moon	3 rd Quarter	New Moon
4 th	11 th	18 th	25 th

Mercury Mercury moves back into the morning sky this month. It will be at superior conjunction on the 25th at greatest western elongation on the 15th (19°).

Venus Venus is very prominent in the evening sky this month. By the end of the month it will be setting at about 2:00. Magnitude -4.3

Mars Mars will be rising at about 02:30 at the end of the month. Magnitude 1.6

Jupiter Jupiter will be observable all night. It sets about 05:00 at the end of the month. Magnitude -2.7

Saturn Saturn will be observable all night as well. Setting at about 04:30 at the end of the month. Magnitude -0.0

Uranus Uranus will be setting at about 19:00 by the end of the month. Magnitude 5.7

Neptune Neptune will be setting at about 18:30 by the 31st. Magnitude 7.8

Meteor Showers

Shower	Maximum	Limits	ZHR
Geminids	December 13 th	December 7 th to 16 th	100
Ursids	December 22 nd	December 17 th to 25 th	10

Meteor source is the BAA Handbook

Roy Gooding

Articles For Journal

Every month I am looking for articles for the journal. If you can help in any way it would be very much appreciated. What we need is any items of astronomical interest that you have had while observing, events you have been to, things you have planned for the future, or even what you would like to do no matter how impossible it might seem at the moment.

Building your own telescope, building an observatory, improving on the equipment that that you already have or just getting more use out of what you have.

Meeting your heroes in the astronomical world who could be inventors, scientists, astronauts, or any one of thousands of people who have contributed to our knowledge and interest in things astronomical.

As we move into the next millennium (which won't really start until 2001 if you think about it) almost anything is possible. Holidays abroad could be anywhere in the universe. The only thing holding you back is your imagination.

As you can see we need more people to help keeping the journal in articles as the more of you that contribute, it would make it so much easier on the few who have given so much of their time in the past.

So now I hope to hear from a lot more of you in the future which makes my job much easier and the journal much more interesting.

All entries need to be in A5 format which will save me having to retype any articles and stop me making any mistakes or misinterpretation of anything I don't understand.

Journal co-ordinator
E. Sims

THE FOUNDING OF THE ORWELL PARK OBSERVATORY

Part 1

By Ken Goward

Introduction

The purpose of this narrative - the first of a series of articles - is to re examine the origins of the Orwell Park Observatory through a fresh pair of eyes. It comes about by way of spin-off, having recently subjected our archives to fine toothed comb examination, following an invitation from the editor of the BAA Newsletter to produce an article on the history of the observatory (due for publication in their 2000 December edition).¹ At the outset it must be stressed, however, that I am fully cognisant that many members have carried out exhaustive research on the subject over the thirty plus years of the society's existence and, apart from one or two fresh aspects lately uncovered, much has already been written. However, from many a chinwag in the clubroom over recent months, it occurs to me that many members have but a passing knowledge of the history of the observatory and its founder. One may best articulate the intention by quoting Herbert Butterfield. *'Old hunches are confirmed by fresh applications of the evidence or by unexpected correlations between sources. New matter emerges because things are joined together which it had not occurred to one to see in juxtaposition. New details are elicited, different details become relevant, because of a fresh turn that the argument has taken.'*²

Colonel George Tomline

The bulk of our knowledge of this multi faceted figure is derived from obituaries and personal accounts of him published in the newspapers of the day, ferreted out from public archives by our Secretary, Roy Gooding. One might caution against equating a Victorian era press with its modern manifestation. Page three in those days contained 'news' and the reverse of our times was true, insofar as the truth *WAS* allowed to get in the way of a good story.

Colonel George Tomline was born at Riby Grove, Lincolnshire in 1812. He was the eldest son of William Edward Tomline (MP for Truro) and Frances Tomline (nee Amley). William and Frances had a second son, William, who later married the daughter of Lord Gage. The estate at Riby was entailed upon both sons, but George eventually bought out William's share. His considerable fortune came down from both sides of his family, his mother was a joint heiress of John Armley of Ford Hall, Shropshire and, in 1827, his father inherited considerable properties from Tomline's grandfather, George Pretyman Tomline, Bishop of Winchester. Pretyman was the original family surname until one Marmaduke Tomline (original

owner of the Riby Grove estate and entirely unrelated to the Pretymans) without any heirs, bequeathed the estate and fortune to the Bishop, which he duly inherited upon his benefactor's death in 1803. The Bishop assumed the Tomline surname as 'the right thing to do in the circumstances'. Bishop Tomline was well connected, having at one time been the tutor at Cambridge University to the Rt Hon William Pitt and had been promoted through the church hierarchy by Pitt's influence.

Little is recorded of Col Tomline's youth and, perhaps, the most graphic illustration of the young Tomline may be drawn from the following newspaper passage; *'The greater part of Colonel Tomline's youth was spent in Lincolnshire. Riby Grove is situated close to the great fishing metropolis of Grimsby, where (writes a correspondent who knew him as a young man) the Colonel was greatly esteemed for his genial manners and kind and cheerful disposition. At this time he was somewhat of an athlete, and the following anecdote is related with reference to his extraordinary strength. Old Matthew Cunningham, a noted character in the neighbourhood of Grimsby, had taken a load of grain and flower to Riby, in sacks. As he was about to unload, the young squire appeared on the scene. "Hullo, Cunningham," was the greeting, "Do you want a man?" And not heeding the old fellow's expostulations, the squire seized hold of sack after sack and carried them to their separate places, as though they had been 20lbs. Weight instead of 20st.'*³ Tomline was educated at Eton, where he first came to know William Ewart Gladstone who was a year above him and both pupils were spoken of as 'very clever boys'.⁴

The date of the passing of Colonel Tomline's father and his inheritance of the family fortune is unclear but at an early stage, the Colonel had purchased a second home (in addition to Riby Grove) at the prestigious address of 1 Carlton House Terrace - adjacent to the Mall. As a very eligible bachelor, athletic, dapper and of impressive stature he indulged in London society and - in common with most well heeled young men of the time - went on the obligatory 'Grand Tour'. It is said that he was let down in affairs of the heart at about this time and that disappointment seems to have been carried upon his shoulders for the rest of his life. London society gossip of the day linked him romantically to Lady Flora Hastings and/or lady Clementina Villiers. A more plausible story - very much in the Jane Austen genre - comes to us from a descendant of the Pretyman family.⁵ That version has it that Tomline fell in love with Louisa Stuart, the second daughter of his London neighbours, but her parents scotched the blossoming romance because they wanted Louisa to marry into a title - the one thing NOT

¹ The BAA article is less detailed due to column space considerations.

² Introduction to 'The Sleepwalkers' Author A Koestler 1959

³ Lincolnshire Chronicle 1889 August 30th

⁴ Notes from 'a friend who knew the Colonel well' EADT 1889

⁵ 'Orwell Park' by Gillian Bence-Jones, 1995.

possessed by Tomline. They eventually fixed her up with Lord Waterford and the deed was done. Whatever the truth, the outcome forever changed Tomline from the young man 'greatly esteemed for his genial manners and kind and cheerful disposition', and he never married.

Probably as a result of 'peer pressure' Tomline entered into politics and, in 1840, was elected to Parliament under slightly dubious circumstances (returned unopposed after some shady background dealings by party agents) for the Sudbury, Suffolk constituency. His party affiliation seems to have been as a 'Liberal Conservative' (whatever that means). At this time his link to Suffolk was via estates owned around the Bacton area since times of yore and passed through the Pretymans⁶ down to him. However, his tenure in the Sudbury Constituency was short lived and he stood for Shrewsbury in the following year with Benjamin Disraeli.⁷ They were duly elected but Tomline grew to dislike Disraeli intensely and, in later years, would refer to him in very un PC terms as 'that old Jew'.⁸ Many years afterwards he related to a close friend the main reason for coming to so dislike the man when he said, *"I may as well tell you all about it. I never forgive anybody who makes me look ridiculous, and he did so, ---him. You know when he was first returned for Shrewsbury it was the custom to "chair" the successful members. That is to say, one had to sit in a chair and be carried round by men like a guy, you know. Now that was sufficiently ridiculous in itself, but my junior colleague must manage to make it still more so. He, as the junior, was carried in front of me, and at every two or three hundred paces they brought out a sort of loving cup, you know, from which we were expected to drink, but, of course, everybody in his senses knew it was a mere matter of form ; one just put the thing to one's lips, you know, bowed, and so up and off again. The Jew took it all seriously, and drank deeply every time. You may imagine the rest. And there was I powerless to help myself, and being tootled all round the town at the fellow's heels, the butt of his vulgar witticisms about the 'Pieriau spring,' and so on, because I did not swill enough to please him. No, I have never forgiven him for that, and I never will."*⁹

⁶ The Pretymans family in Suffolk can be traced back to 1200, owning land in Old Newton and Bacton.

⁷ The Sudbury seat was acrimoniously contested in the general election of 1841 and became a benchmark for political shady dealing – bordering on corruption. Tomline owned a large estate just outside Shrewsbury (inherited from his mother) and that gave him sufficient local 'clout' to be Disraeli's co-candidate at that vital seat (larger constituencies would have more than one member in those days).

⁸ Jewish people were not then eligible to stand for Parliament but Disraeli was allowed to do so as his father had converted to Christianity.

⁹ Reflections from a close friend. EADT 1889.

Tomline was no sort of drinker, other than socially, but he was turned against the problems of alcohol during his days in London society when a member of the aristocracy – a close friend – ruined himself rather publicly through the 'demon drink'.

I do not wish to dwell much more on his political life, other than to say that he served as a member until 1868 and changed his seat to Grimsby after a few short years (local influence again) representing Shrewsbury.

However, I should like to address the matter of Sir Robert Peel's comment on Gladstone and Tomline. The impression is given in the excellent potted history of our observatory¹⁰ that Peel said something like, "the two most intelligent men in Britain were young Tomline of Orwell Park and Gladstone, in that order". May I contend that the comment should be seen against prevailing political circumstances and came just after the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, when he – as Prime Minister – had unsuccessfully fought off a bid to repeal those controversial acts which favoured the landed by keeping the price of grain artificially high. In a turbulent time, Tomline and Gladstone threw in their lot with Peel and were his staunchest supporters as he first tried to argue for the lowering of the duty over a three year period before abolishment. Tomline and Gladstone effectively kept the metaphorical knives out of Peel's back from other members of their party who were not prepared to budge on the issue. In June of that year the laws were repealed and in the bitter after taste of defeat Peel actually said something more like, "The best of my young men were Tomline and Gladstone".¹¹ Tomline mentioned first. However, there is no doubt that the Colonel had a brilliant mind, but that aspect will be discussed in the next part of this series.

Without a shadow of doubt, our founder had an ogre like reputation – which he very much encouraged – but which he really did not deserve. His attitude towards charity, for instance, was completely misunderstood. As Christmas is upon us I would like to close this first part of the series with a seasonal story, told by a life long friend of Tomline's, which – apart from demonstrating that 'junk mail' is by no means a 21st century nuisance - in an almost Dickens like manner amply illustrates the true attitude of the Colonel; *'On the library table at Riby, where I arrived in company with Colonel Tomline one Christmas season, was an enormous number of letters awaiting him. They nearly covered the table, and there must have been some hundreds "Why," I said, "it will take you all day to read them."*

¹⁰ 'A Brief History of the Orwell Park Observatory 1684-1991' By messrs Radley, Cheeseman, Barnard & Gooding, last updated 1992 (given to all OASI members when they join)

¹¹ 'Death of Colonel Tomline' EADT 1889

"Will it?" was his cynical rejoinder, "you will see." And then he slowly walked round the table, pulling them down one by one from their endways position, so that he could see the different handwritings, selecting one here and one there until he had abstracted some couple of dozen from the long rows. With these he retired to an easy chair, and after receiving my permission, commenced to open and read them. While thus engaged, a servant entered the room and was calmly bidden to burn the rest, which he did, with all the method which had evidently come from long usage. I could not conceal that I was shocked,, so when the servant had retired, the Colonel said, "I am afraid you think it rather hard lines for the writers." I admitted that I did, and added by way of apology for apparent meddling, "I was also thinking that perhaps there are cheques in some of the envelopes thus destroyed unopened." "Oh dear no," was the answer, "they don't send me any cheques, they want them, by Jove." "No," he continued, "at this time of year I am pestered out of my life with begging letters from all sorts of people I never heard of, containing the most harrowing narratives of the writer's sufferings, some of them I am afraid quite true, poor devils. When I was a young man and first came into my property, I went into every application seriously, with the result that I could not sleep at night, and my life became an intolerable burden to me. The frightful amount of suffering in the world from poverty appals one, and everybody, no matter what may be the extent of his means, finds out sooner or later that he is powerless to apply any practical remedy. Like a good many more I struggled on with attempts to grapple with the problem, until I was fairly beaten and had to give it up." "And now, I suppose," said I tentatively, "you only subscribe to regularly organised charities instead of sifting the various appeals yourself?" "Not I, by Jove. The plaguy secretaries bag it if you do." Then, after a pause, he went on, "I made a resolution many years ago, that I would scarcely give any money away, but that I would employ as many people as my means would enable me to do in every direction I could discover. And the time I used to spend in thinking how I could directly help the poor devils who confided their woes to me, I now direct to scheming new openings for people to work ; and so indirectly helping many more. You would be surprised if you knew how many hands are busy now nominally for me, but as I hope to be saved, really for themselves and those in the same walk of life. I am reclaiming land from the sea, for instance. Then I keep all my people going on my different estates. I am building houses, and one of these days I mean to make a railway.""¹²

The next article in this series will cover Colonel Tomline's life at Orwell Park, particularly his attitude to the science of astronomy. A further article will discuss aspects of the design and building of the Orwell Park Observatory.

¹² 'Personal Reminiscences of Colonel Tomline' Lincolnshire Chronicle 1889 August 30th

The Delicate Balance

The recent comments by Prince Charles in the context of the severe flooding that has hit Britain and other parts of the world this year, have produced the predictable variety of responses. 'A wake-up call' was how a government minister had earlier warned that we should all take heed of the link between such natural disasters and our treatment of the environment. Others from the scientific community said he should stick to his Princely duties, and not speak on issues of which he knows nothing. To help us ordinary mortals understand the truth on this obviously important issue, the press, TV, and radio, assembled pundits from both sides, who gave equally convincing evidence that there both was and was not reason to link the two. Very helpful. Of course, we can always blame it on the previous government.

Two thoughts crossed my mind as I pondered the necessity to take some responsible action, just in case my own carbon dioxide emissions were adding to the problem - car exhaust, large fridge freezer, non organic gardening.

Firstly: Who are the experts, and how can 'the truth' be discovered and conveyed to the rest of the world?

Several recent situations tell us how difficult it is ever to be sure. BSE, the Millennium dome, the Euro, the American Presidential election. All issues causing endless debate, speculation, claim and counter-claim.

With the ever increasing lampooning of politicians, and the general public belief that every 'expert' has a hidden personal or political agenda, we are left with making up our own mind on the evidence - as we see it. Maybe that is the point: that we make sure we do see it, and try to bring some neutrality and objectivity into our conclusions.

Prince Charles has done that. He will be car sharing next.

Secondly:(before I forget that this is an astronomical journal and not a parish news letter) just how 'delicate' is the balance of nature?

The cosmological side of astronomy tells us that space, both near and far from earth, is a very violent place.

The sun, the very means of life on earth, is a gigantic nuclear reactor. The existence of devices of only a fraction of such power have been campaigned vigourously against in our lifetime, and anything of similar substance is looked upon with great care, and even more suspicion. The sun is prone to periods of great activity - we are in one now. The SOHO space probe has given us information and images of the awesome power within this relatively small - but very near - star.

The forces which keep the earth, the other planets,comets - not to mention much debris - in their places in orbit round the sun are only marginally understood. The work of Kepler, Newton, Einstein tells us much: but there is much more. Will the recently announced asteroid impact, with an explosion '100 times greater than Hiroshima' happen as predicted in 2030?

And what of black holes, colliding galaxies, and the expanding universe?

Although it is right and reasonable to be a good steward of ones goods and gifts, and that must include our enviroment, it is possibly also a little arrogant of man to think, in the context of the unimaginnable power and indefinite time span that exists in the universe around us, that our destructive efforts will make that much difference to the future of the planet.

Anyone want a lift to the Observatory on Wednesdays?

Ted Sampson.

//

Open Weekend Quiz

Thank you to all those who returned answers to the quiz. I realise the quiz was quite difficult and did not expect anyone to get a high score without taking it away to do some research.

Congratulations to both **Nick** and **Anna**

AT THE CLOSING DATE Without research and with a score of 23 out of 35 **Nick Sullivan** of Sudbury, Suffolk, was the winner. Nick was offered his prize on 25 October and said he would be giving the Philip's Stargazer pack to his eleven-year-old daughter who accompanied him to the Open Weekend. As for the tour of the observatory, well Nick is a new member and has regular access to the observatory anyway!

NEW DEVELOPMENT **Anna Robinette**, aged nine, did take the quiz away and did do some research. The postmark on her returning envelope was 15 October (before the closing date) but somehow the letter got stuck in the post until 8 November. Anna scored 35 out of 35 – very well done! A Philip's Stargazer pack has been sent to Anna at her home in Tuddenham St Martin, Suffolk, and I shall arrange for her to visit the observatory with her family.

Monica Lustig

OCCULTATIONS DURING DECEMBER 2000

The table lists stellar occultations which occur during the month under favourable circumstances. The data relates to Orwell Park Observatory, but will be similar at nearby locations.

D or R	Date & Time (UT)	Lunar Phase	Sun Alt (°)	Star Alt (°)	Min Dist (rad)	Star	Mag
D R	01 Dec 16:40 17:40	0.27+ 0.27+	-8 -16	18 16	0.69N	eta Cap	4.8
D	04 Dec 17:21	0.55+	-14	27	0.00S	ZC 3458	6.2
D	07 Dec 21:50	0.84+	-53	42	0.71S	ZC 291	6.8
D	08 Dec 01:30	0.85+	-55	18	0.45N	ZC 306	6.8
D	08 Dec 17:20	0.91+	-14	25	0.21S	mu Cet	4.3
D	10 Dec 20:31	1.00+	-43	43	0.32S	ZC 718	6.0
D	31 Dec 18:01	0.29+	-18	24	0.53S	ZC 3413	6.1

James Appleton

AVAILABLE NOW

We have a limited number of **2001 Astro Calendars** for sale. Produced by the Federation of Astronomical Societies, these excellent A5 format 40 page booklets contain monthly sky charts for the year ahead and much other useful information.

They can be purchased direct from the Treasurer (Ken Goward) at the observatory for £1.65 each,

or by post at the address below for £2.12 (inc postage)

Please make cheques payable to

ORWELL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY (IPSWICH)

Mistley
Manningtree
CO11 1LH

Limited stock..... First Come First Served!!!!!!!

2000 COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN	D Payne
SECRETARY & WORK PARTY ORGANISER	R Gooding
TREASURER & PUBLICITY	M Cook
MECHANICS	E Sims
NEWSLETTER CO-ORDINATOR	T Sampson
BEGINNERS MEETING CO-ORD & VISIT CO-ORD	G Coleman
EQUIPMENT CURATOR	J Walsh
LIBRARIAN	J Appleton

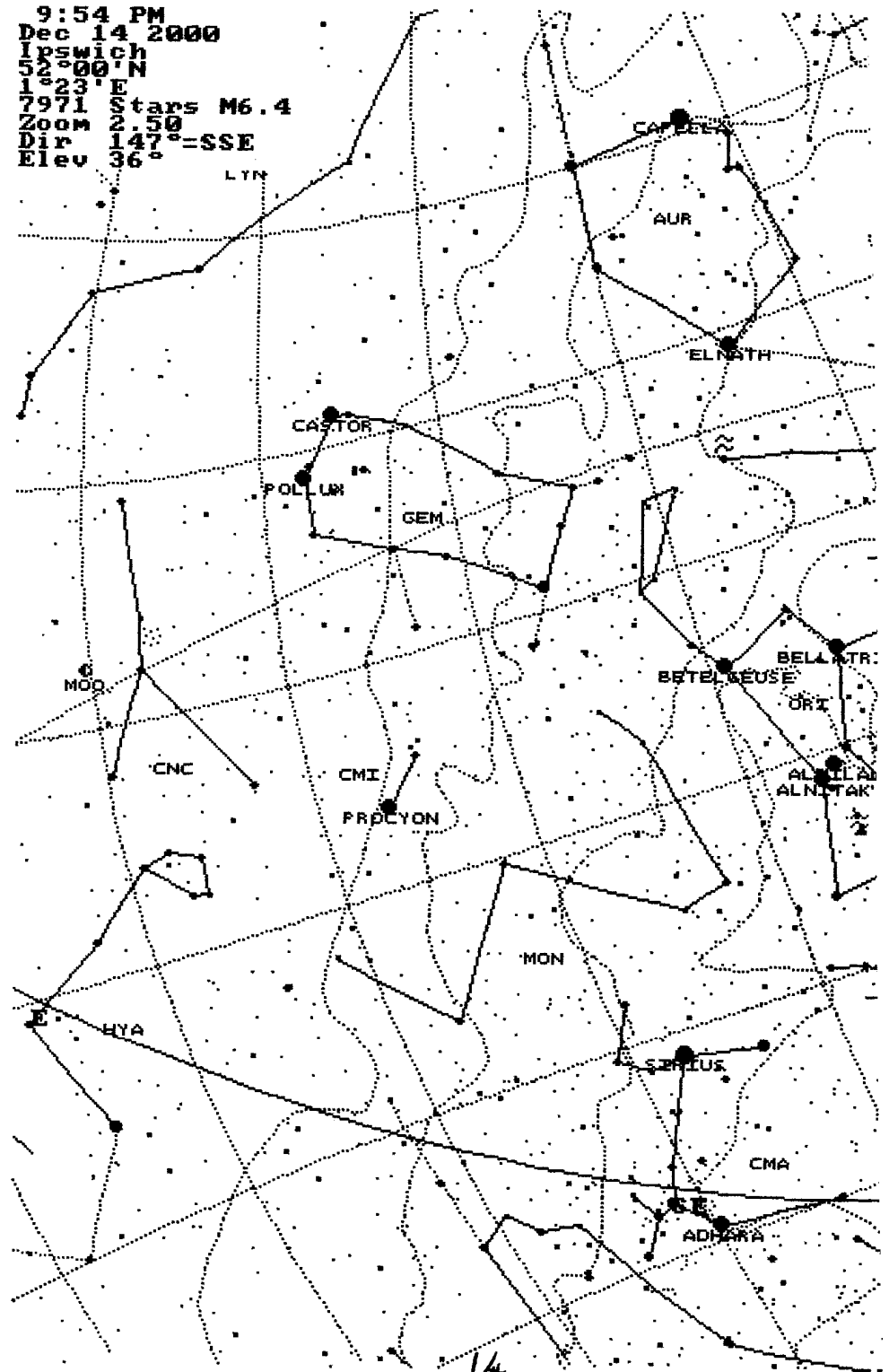
Home Phone Work Phone

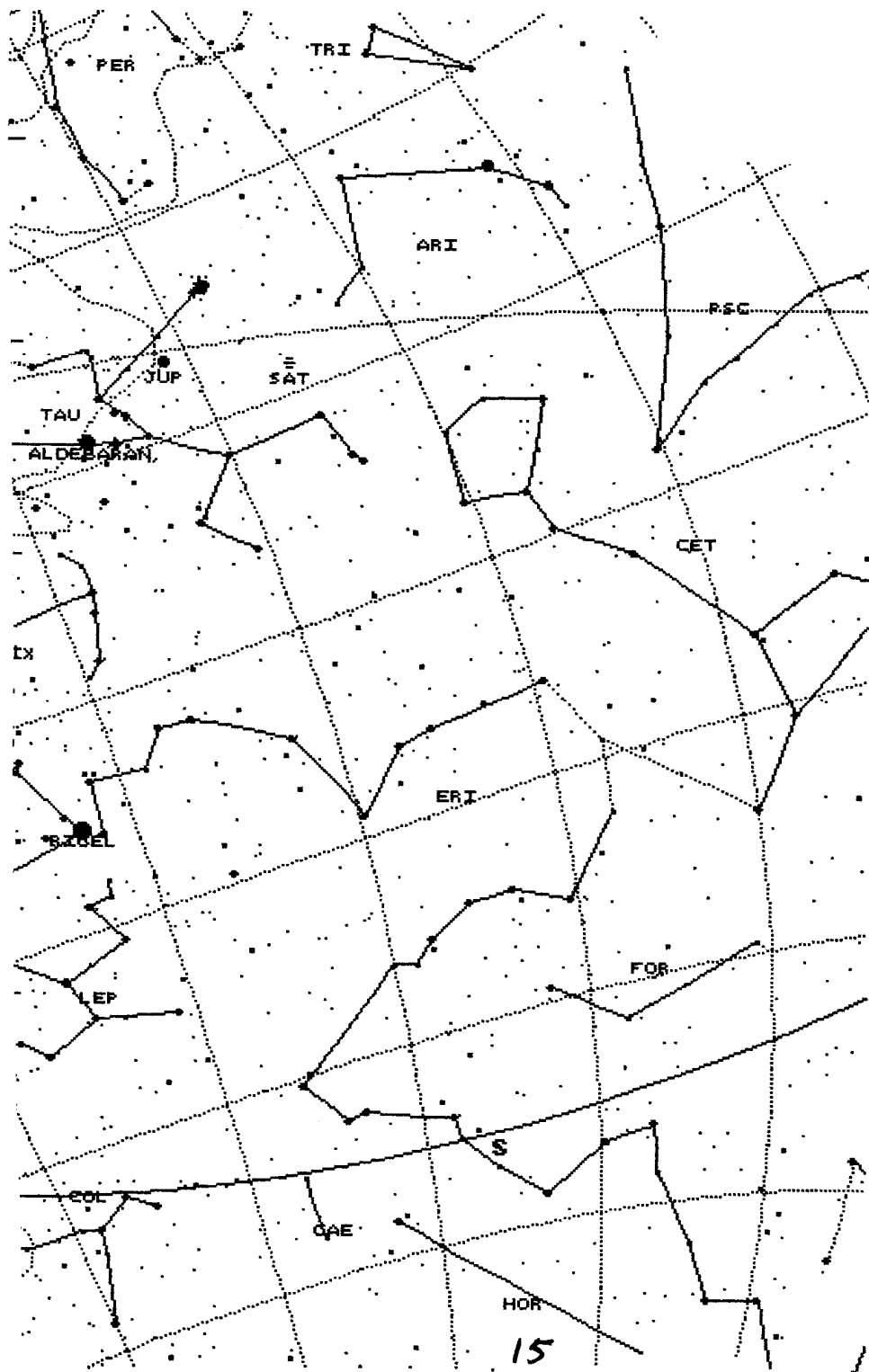
CO-OPTED MEMBER	
LECTURE CO-ORDINATOR & DARK SKIES	P Richards

JOURNAL ARTICLES TO CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS	E Sims	Ipswich Suffolk IP1 4HA
	R Gooding	OASI Secretary

MEMBERSHIP	M. Cook	Ipswich Suffolk IP1 6AE
		Ipswich IP4 5PZ

9:54 PM
Dec 14 2000
Ipswich
52°00'N
1°23'E
7971 Stars M6.4
Zoom 14.59
Dir 147° = SSE
Elev 36°





Observing Programme For December

Dates	Observing Director	Activities
Mondays from 7.30pm	T Sampson	General Observation
Tuesdays from 7.30pm	G Coleman	Group Visits
Wednesdays from 8.00pm	M Cook D Payne	Nebular & Faint Objects
Thursdays from 7.30pm	G Coleman	Group Visits
Fridays from 7.30pm		Miscellaneous

All members are welcome on any night, but on nights other than Wednesday please check with the appropriate director that the observatory will be open.

Special Events

1. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General meeting is to be held on Saturday 13th of January at 8pm in a room near the library. All members are welcome to attend.

2. Christmas Meal

The Christmas meal is to be held at the Wilford Bridge public house Melton near Woodbridge. The meal is booked for 8.00pm on Wednesday the 13th of December.

Society Contact Details

	Home Phone	Work Phone
Chairman	D Payne	
Secretary	R Gooding	
Contact details for the full committee are inside the back page.		

e-mail queries: ipswich@ast.cam.ac.uk
 WWW address: <http://www.ast.cam.ac.uk/~ipswich/>