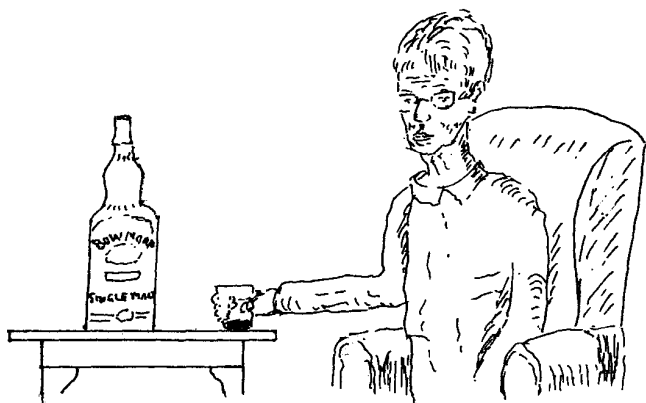
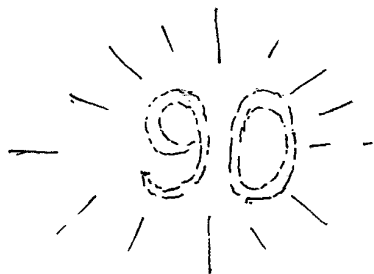


ORWELL ASTRONOMICAL

SOCIETY IPSWICH

Charity No 271313

MAY 2003



EXCUSE ME FOR NOT DRAWING A PROPER CARTOON
BUT I'M A LITTLE CONFUSED!

Many thanks for the unexpected but welcome gift.

*Mr. G. Lamb
 4/03*

Society News

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Events for 2003

Meeting	Venue	Date
Mercury Transit		Wednesday 7 th May
Astronomy Workshop	Radio Propagation Presented by Paul Whiting	Wednesday 7 th May
Web Society Annual Meeting	Sackler Lecture Theatre Institute of Astronomy Cambridge	Saturday 17 th May
BAA Exhibition Meeting	The Cavendish Laboratory Madingley Road Cambridge	Saturday 28 th June
Summer Excursion	No destination yet decided	No date yet decided
Summer Barbecue	Ken Goward's garden Tuddenham	Provisional date Saturday 19 th July
National Astronomy Week	No programme yet arranged	23 rd to 30 th August
Joint meeting with the SPA	This meeting is still in the planning stage Venue :St May Magdalene church hall in Highfield Approach Ipswich	Saturday afternoon 4 th September
Equinox Star Party	Thetford	26 th to 28 th September
Joint meeting with the SPA	St May Magdalene church hall in Highfield Approach Ipswich.	Saturday 4 th October
Christmas Meal	Provisional dates 10 th or 17 th December	No venue decided

2 Joint Meeting with the SPA to Commemorate Their 50th Anniversary

The lecture programme for this event has now been finished.

What is now needed is a selection of displays to help fill the hall If you have any displays for this event please contact me (Roy Gooding)

The venue is at St Mary Magdalen Church Hall, in Highfield Approach Ipswich Highfield Approach is off the Norwich Road, 2nd right after the railway bridge going out of town.

Sun The sun will be rising approximately between 04:30 to 03:40
 The sun will be setting approximately between 19:30 to 20:10

Moon

New Moon	1 st Quarter	Full Moon	3 rd Quarter	New Moon
1 st	9 th	16 th	23 rd	31 st

Mercury Mercury will be at inferior conjunction on the 7th.

Transit of Mercury on the 7th May (Source BAA handbook)

	hr	m	s	Position angle
Ingress exterior contact	5	12	53	15.3
Ingress interior contact	5	17	19	14.5
Egress interior contact	10	27	15	291.6
Egress exterior contact	10	31	42	290.8

The observatory may be open for this event. Please confirm during the evening meeting on Wednesday 30th

Venus Venus remains in the pre-dawn twilight. It will be rising about an hour before the sun this month.

Mars Mars will be rising at about 00:30 by the end of the month. Magnitude 0.6

Jupiter Jupiter will be setting at about midnight by the end of the month. Magnitude -2.0

Saturn Saturn will be setting about 21:30 by the end of the month Magnitude 0.1

Uranus Uranus is in Aquarius, will be rising about 01:00 by end of the month Magnitude 5.7

Neptune Neptune will be rising at about 00:00 at the end of the month. Magnitude 7.8

Meteor Showers Meteor source is the BAA Handbook

Shower	Limits	Maximum	ZHR
η Aquarids	April 24 th to May 20 th	May 4 th	40
α Scorpid	April 20 th to May 19 th	April 27 th & May 12 th	5

Total Eclipse of the Moon on the 16th May

The Moon enters the Earth's umbral shadow at 02:03

Mid eclipse occurs at 03:14, but will be in a brightening twilight morning sky

Annular eclipse 31st May

This Annular eclipse will be visible from NW Scotland and the Orkney and Shetland islands. Mid eclipse is at 03:35 There will be a good partial eclipse visible from Suffolk

Time	Time	
12:00	Access to hall set up hall	
13:00	Doors Open Start videos Refreshments open Displays available	
13:30 - 14:00	Possible time for short SPA talk	
14:00 - 15:00	1 st lecture Martin Mobberley	Imaging comets
15:00 - 15:30	Break	
15:30 - 16:30	2 nd lecture Martin Lunn	Pre Telescope Astronomy
16:30 - 16:50	3 rd Lecture (short lecture) Neil Morley	Millennium Telescope
16:50 - 17:10	4 th Lecture (short lecture) Paul Whiting	Australia eclipse
17:10 - 17:30	5 th Lecture (short lecture) Nigel Evans	Australia eclipse
17:30	Doors close	
17:30 - 18:00	Hall clean up time	
18:00 - 17:30	Evening pub meal ?	
17:30 - 21:00	Observatory open	

3 Year Three of the Library Rebuild

The Observatory will not be closed during the summer.

But

Its that time of year again when the observatory refurbishment commences. Work will restart on completing the new society Library. When you attend Wednesday evenings any helping hand would be appreciated.

Help is requested to man (or woman) the power tools, hammers, and paint brushes.



Once the walls have been finished the new library cabinets will assembled

I will be resuming the observatory painting in May,

Probably starting with the walls of the room at the base of the stair well.

Members who attend will be encouraged to lend a hand. If you intend to come along to the observatory during summer period please come in old clothes.

A work rota will be started

The History of Orwell Park

The Vernon's at Orwell Park from c.1727 to 1848

Orwell Park is in the manor of St. Peters. It had connections between St.Peter's Parish in Ipswich and for a time with Cardinal Wolsey.

The Vernon family lived at Orwell Park for three generations. The order of succession was:-

Name	Relationship	Time at Orwell Park
Edward Vernon		c. 1727 to 1757
Francis Vernon	Edward's nephew	1757 to 1783
John Vernon	Francis's nephew	(1797) to 1818
Arethusa Vernon and Sir Robert Harland	John's sister	1818 to 1848

John Vernon had an elder brother, Henry, who would probably have inherited Orwell Park had he lived, Henry Vernon died at the age of twelve. Assuming the John Vernon was not able to take legal ownership of Orwell Park until he was twenty one, he could not have moved in until 1797. Robert Harland assumed ownership of Orwell Park after the death of John Vernon, having married John's sister Arethusa.

Edward Vernon 1684 – 1757

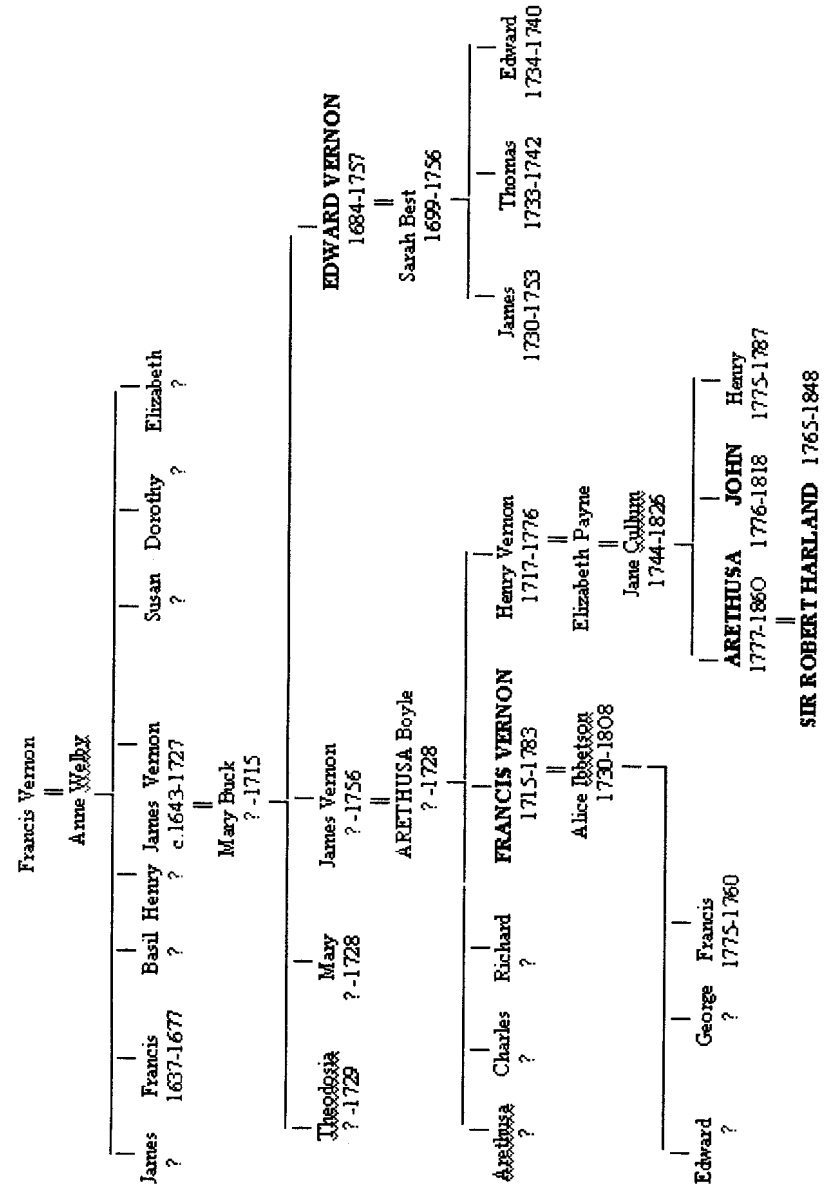
Edward Vernon was born at Westminster on 12th November 1684 and was the second son of James Vernon. Edward started his school life at the age of 7, when he attended Westminster School, where he was taught Latin, Greek Mathematics and Astronomy. From an early age he acquired the nickname as the Admiral due his ability for telling nautical stories.

On the 10th May of 1700 Vernon volunteered for the Navy, entering as a midshipman. His initial naval training lasted a little over two years. During this period he spent time in four ships. The first ship he joined was the Shrewsbury, this was followed by the Ipswich and the Mary. The fourth ship he joined sailed, with the Fleet off Cadiz in 1702. No information has been found relating to its name.

At the age of 17, Vernon was promoted to the rank of lieutenant on 16th September 1702

5

THE VERNON'S FAMILY TREE



6

His first appointment after his promotion was to the Lennox. As a lieutenant Vernon was involved in two naval actions. After serving on the Lennox he was transferred to the Barfleur, in the following March, on which he was involved in the Battle of Malaga in the Mediterranean. He was re-appointed to the Britannic, in December of that year, and was present at the capture of Barcelona in 1705.

Edward Vernon must have made a favourable impression with the higher naval commanders, as less than three years later he was promoted again. This time, on 22nd January 1705, he was promoted to the rank of Captain. His first command was on the frigate Dolphin. This post was very short lived, as ten days later he was transferred to the Rye. Captain Vernon commanded three ships in 1707. The year started with his continuance with the Rye, changing ships to command the Vintu and finally transferring to the Jersey on 21st November 1707. Vernon spent the following four years in the West Indies, not returning to England until 1712. The principle action he was in during this period was the braking up of a Spanish squadron off the coast of Carthagina. Vernon forces received help from a contingent of American colonists during the bombardment of Carthagina

At this time Edward Vernon became friendly with a Laurence Washington. Laurence tried to obtain a midshipman-ship for his younger half brother George. This never came to fruition, as their mother was strongly opposed to the scheme. George Washington did not forget Vernon's services to the American Colonies and his brother Laurence named Mount Vernon on the banks of the Potomac river after him. Mount Vernon became the home of George Washington whilst he was the Commander-in-chief of the American armies during the War of Independence. George Washington became America's first President after independence.

From March 1715 he commanded the Assistance, a vessel with the Baltic Fleet The following year he received new orders to take command of the Grafton. Four years later he was appointed as captain to the Mary, a ship in which he had previously server as a midshipman during part of his training. During the summers of 1719,1720 and 1721 Vernon spent time with the Baltic Fleet

Edward Vernon's time was not taken up completely as a full time naval officer, though he did remain on the active list for any eventualities receiving half of his naval pay. During the periods that his services were not required as a naval officer, Vernon followed his father and pursued a second career as a Member of Parliament. In 1722 he was elected for two constituencies, Dunwich in Suffolk and his father's former seat, Penryn in Cornwall. His father James Vernon had held the Penryn seat for 15 years from 1695. He later dropped his Suffolk seat and concentrated on his Penryn constituency.

It was in this period that Vernon began looking for a suitable home. He finally decides to purchase a house in Nacton on the site of what is now Orwell Park. The earliest reference

to Vernon living at Nacton is in 1727. He had married Sarah Best, a daughter of Thomas Best of Chatham. She was fifteen years his junior, but died a year before him. There is a plaque in the church at Nacton, that Vernon had commissioned, to commemorate her. They had three sons, all whom died young. Their sons were named James, Thomas and Francis. They were born respectively on 29th November 1730, 29th April 1733 and 4th June 1743.

What was to prove Vernon's finest hour had its origins in the West Indies in 1731. A British merchant captain, Robert Jenkins, who traded in West Indies, claimed that a Spanish Coast Guard vessel had boarded his ship, and though no prove of any smuggling had been found, had been tortured. Resulting in his ear being torn off. Jenkins produced the supposedly severed ear to the House of Commons in 1738. This incident forced Sir Robert Walpole, the then Prime Minister, into the war of Jenkins Ear. A decision he was not to recover from as he had always opposed any foreign war.

Vernon was a member of Parliament at this time, acting as an independent member specialising in naval matters. He showed concern for the safe passage of British merchant ships that had to sail through areas patrolled by the Spanish Fleet, on their passage from the West Indies. He persuaded Parliament that the Spanish Colony at Portobelo could be easily destroyed with just six ships. On 9th July 1739 Vernon was recalled to the navy, being promoted to Vice Admiral of the Blue, and was ordered to command a force of six ships to the West Indies. War was declared on Spain on 19th October 1739. Four days later Vernon set sail with eight ships of the line and one frigate. Three ships left the squadron to patrol off Portugal. The five remaining ships carried on to the West Indies, being joined by the Hampton Court before arrival on the 20th November. Vernon took two days to capture the Spanish Colony of Portobelo and to destroy all military installations.

The news of the capture reached London with great jubilation. Both Houses of Parliament paste a vote of thanks to Vernon, and he was granted the freedom of the city of London. Numerous medals were struck; the British Museum has a collection of over 100 variations. Many public houses were named after Vernon. In Ipswich three public houses were named after Vernon's victory

Vernon's Arms	33 Vernon Street
Admiral Head	2 St Margaret's Street
Portobello	39 Lower Orwell Street

The Admiral's Head public house in Bealings may also had its origins from Vernon's success in the West Indies

Many villagers were named after this naval victory including one in Scotland. A village on the shore of the Firth of Forth was named Portobello. It is now part of Edinburgh.



Bust of Admiral Vernon on display at the National Maritime Museum London

On 4th August 1740 Vernon addressed a general order to Captains and naval surgeons. He stated that the navy was run on a harsh discipline and that drunkenness was rife throughout the service. The only solace -For the ordinary sailor was the daily rum ration. He proposed diluting the rum ration 50% with water to stop the drunkenness. This proposal was soon adopted throughout the navy. Vernon's nickname was Old Grog, a reference to the cloth that his coats were made from. Grogram, a material made from silk and mohair. The diluted rum ration was known as Grog, a tradition that remained active in the navy up to 1970.

In 1743 Vernon entered Parliament again, representing Penryn and Ipswich, preferring Ipswich. Vernon lasted for only about one year.

By 1744 Vernon was one of the most experienced serving naval officers. The Admiralty requested Vernon to write a report on how best to run the navy. He was not known for his finesse of report writing and would state his mind openly. On 23rd June he received a letter on naval promotions. The letter was addressed to Vernon Vice-Admiral of the Red, a rank higher than that of the Blue. However, Vernon's name had been left off the promotion list. Some members of the Admiralty had evidently changed their mind. Vernon replied with a strongly worded letter over his name being removed from the naval list.

In the following year the Admiralty board was changed. The Duke of Bedford became the 1st Sea Lord and he immediately reinstated Vernon, who was promoted to Admiral of the White, in April 1745. Thus jumping a rank higher than the Red. His new command was in the North Sea.

Admiral Vernon's naval career however would soon end. He wrote two letters to the Admiralty, which were not well received. The first was titled "A Specimen of Naked Truth from a British Sailor" and the second "Some Seasonal Advice from an Honest Sailor". On 4th April 1746 Vernon was called before the Admiralty Board to give an official explanation over these publications. A week later King George II was asked for his opinion, deciding to advise the Admiralty to remove Vernon's name from the navy list.

Vernon now resumed his Parliamentary career, representing Ipswich up to his death. He had first stood for the Ipswich while representing his Penryn constituency, about six years earlier. Preferring the Ipswich seat, Vernon relinquished his connection with Cornwall.

Admiral Vernon died at Nacton on 30th October 1757. Leaving no heirs, Vernon's Nacton Estate passed to his nephew Francis Vernon.

Francis Vernon (1715 – 1783)

Francis Vernon was born 1715, probably at the family home at Great Thurlow in West Suffolk.

He held various Governmental posts, Clerk to Privy Council from 1738 to 1757 and Lord of trade between 1762 and 1765. From 1762 to 1768 he also held the Parliamentary seat for Ipswich, continuing the family tradition of holding this seat started by his uncle, Edward Vernon

On the 14th January 1747 he married Alice Ibbetson. They had three sons, all of whom died young. Francis Vernon's third son, Francis was eight years old, when he died a Nacton on 14th April 1760.

Francis Vernon, inherited his uncle's Nacton estate after his death, in 1757. During this period if you had sufficient funds, it was fashionable to purchase titles. Irish titles seemed to be readily available. Vernon was no exception to this, acquiring three.

Francis Vernon's Titles

Title	Date Created
Baron Orwell of Newry County Down	7 th April 1762
Viscount Orwell	21 st July 1776
Earl of Shipbrook County down	8 th February 1777

On his death all three titles became extinct.

In the mid 1770's Francis Vernon rebuilt his uncle's house and enclosed it within the grounds that he called Orwell Park. Francis Vernon died at Orwell Park on 15th October 1783 and was buried at Nacton. His wife moved to Brighton, till her death in 1808 at the age of 78.



Orwell Park Mansion as built by Francis Vernon

John Vernon 1776 to 1818

John Vernon was born on 8th June 1776, at Lille in Flanders. He was educated at Eton, before pursuing a military career. He reached the rank of Lieutenant of the 1st Regiment of East Suffolk Militia.

His older brother Henry Vernon would have normally have inherited the estate, had he not have died in 1787, at he age of twelve. Assuming that Francis Vernon could not have taken ownership until he was twenty-one, he would not have taken up residence until 1797.

Very little information has been found about John Vernon`s life. He remained single all of his life and held the post of High Sheriff of Suffolk in 1808. He died on 25th May 1818 at Brighton. Ownership of Orwell Park was transferred to his brother-in-law Robert Harland.

Sir Robert Harland 1767 to 1848

Again very little information is known about Sir Robert Harland and his wife Arethusa Vernon. Arethusa Vernon was born on 1st July 1777 and Sir Robert Harland was born twelve years earlier on the 16th October 1777. They married on 26th May 1801.

Before they moved to Orwell Park they had lived at Wherstead Lodge. In 1882 Harland was appointed the Sheriff of Suffolk.

Sir Robert Harland died on 18th August 1848 and Orwell Park estate was purchased by George Tomline.

Arethusa Harland died on 30th March 1860, and is buried at Wherstead.

References

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Admiral Vernon in the Navy by Douglas Ford Pub about 1907 Ref. S92

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The Compact Edition of the Dictionary of National Biography Vol. II.

Whites Directories
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Supplement to the Suffolk Traveller Pub. 1844

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Ref. S1/10/1.6(1) Ed Vernon
1 Evidence of titles and papers
Ref. HA34 50/21/3.3
1 Office copy of Will & Probate of Edward Vernon Nacton 1757

Nacton Parish Records

Kelly's Directory 1879

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Manors of Suffolk
Manors of Suffolk by Copinger Vol. III

Mercury in Transit

'My wife, who assisted me at the observation, first detected the planet against the solar corona, though I had previously looked for it in vain'. A quotation from John Isaac Plummer's May 1878 report in the Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society, of a transit of the planet Mercury across the solar disk observed at Orwell Park. To her considerable credit, Marion Plummer had pulled off something rather special by spotting the planet against the solar Corona before first contact. The sighting was verified by her husband; 'On taking my station at the telescope a minute later I also detected it, dimly visible, but sufficiently so to direct my attention to the exact point where contact was to take place, and to lead me to suppose that, but for the clouds through which the observation was made, it would have been fairly conspicuous'.

On Wednesday 7th May the phenomena will be observable again from Orwell Park – the first Transit of Mercury visible from the UK for 30 years – and we will be opening the Observatory to enjoy this comparatively rare event...

For those who, quite unlike the author of this article, have any kind of penchant towards the mathematical nitty-gritty of such phenomena there is an excellent article in the April Journal of the British Astronomical Association (non BAA members can read the society copy in our clubroom), which has formulae enough for the ficklest of number Crunchers. Duffers like me only need to know it's all to do with Mercury's orbit being the most elliptical of the major planets, its plane inclined seven degrees to the Earth's and in consequence the way that the orbital nodes cross. On average there would be a transit every seven years or so and they can occur in November or May – November having the greater share of events. However, that average is exactly that and after a 30-year gap further Mercury transits will be observable from our shores in 2006, 2016 and 2019¹. This month's event will see the planet tracking across the NW of the Sun's disk and will last for roughly five hours; timings² in BST are:

Contact 1 <i>Planetary disk begins to enter Solar disk</i>	Contact 2 <i>Planetary disk fully onto Solar disk</i>	Contact 3 <i>Planetary disk begins to exit Solar disk</i>	Contact 4 <i>Planetary disk fully off Solar disk</i>
06.11.26	06.15.51	11.28.26	11.32.50

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The scientific value of observations historically is in the long time the planet takes to enter or leave the solar disk (5 mins), which allows observers to time the contacts and therefore the planet's position to a high degree of accuracy. The first such observation was recorded by Gassendi in 1631, but Edmond Halley is credited with the first of the acceptably accurate observations from St Helena in 1677³.

Our own J I Plummer struggled with his timings in 1878, however, as gradually deteriorating atmospheric conditions hampered contacts 1 & 2 *'For the few minutes during which the contacts were to be observed the clouds were decidedly thinner and the Sun could be well seen through a slightly tinted glass. The definition of the limb was, however, very bad and unsuited for scrutinising the phenomenon of contact, and, although I was prepared to take micrometrical measurements, none were attempted in consequence. The external contact was considered very good, but it is possible it may be 3 or 4 seconds late, as the undulations of the limb were so considerable that a little hesitation could hardly be avoided. The time of internal contact was the moment at which light appeared permanently established in the rear of the planet without any distortion of the Sun's limb. Owing to the violent motion, it is possible that this time is one or two seconds too soon'*.⁴ Ten years earlier he had observed a transit of Mercury from the Durham Observatory under clear skies. For that observation he made use of the observatory's 6.5 inch Fraunhofer Refractor, which was furnished with a wire micrometer and considered his results – reasonably - satisfactory, albeit the Sun was at a low altitude for the transit⁵. This time he was using the 10" Refractor (latterly named the Tomline Refractor) *'Full aperture employed 10 inches, focal length 12 ft 9 in., power 303'*. Previous experience at Durham was obviously useful for his Orwell Park observation as he continued in his 1878 RAS report, *'it is to be noted that my observation of the transit in 1868 left a precisely analogous impression on my mind at the time, namely that there was the reverse of clinging, or that the planet disengaged itself from the limb more suddenly and rather earlier than the progress of the phenomenon led the observer to anticipate. So far as the unfavourable atmospheric circumstances would allow, I note, therefore, no drop or ligament, no bright spot on Mercury, no aureola around the planet, and no distortion of either Sun or planet other than as produced by our atmosphere'*. Unfortunately, John and Marion Plummer were fated not to observe contacts 3 & 4, *'About noon light cirrus cloud overspread the sky, which became gradually denser until towards sunset, when rain fell heavily'*. Well, at least one can take comfort from the knowledge that weather remains as vexatious as ever in Suffolk!

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Despite his best efforts our Secretary, Roy Gooding, has been unable to find any record in the society archive of OASI observing the last UK visible transit in November 1973. This time around we hope to do better, even though the event takes place on a normal working day for many and given the potential weather constraints alluded to in the previous paragraph...

Our intention is to have the Tomline Refractor in operation for solar projection from the time of contacts 1 & 2, thence at intervals through the five-hour progression to contacts 3 & 4. In addition, Bill Barton has kindly agreed to bring along his excellent H-alpha equipment and will be observing from one of the balconies. All members are cordially invited to come along at any time during the event and share our observations – although it has to be pointed out that the school will be in session and we must in no way disturb their routines. At the time of writing this article there remains an outside possibility that we may be joined during the morning by a very well known and hugely respected Astronomer, who will be in the area that day. *You never know whom you may meet at Orwell Park? ...*

Of course, all of this may be looked upon as something of a warming up session for a more visibly appealing event beckoning on June 8th next year, when the planet Venus will transit the Sun's disk (the planet will appear in size like a so-called naked eye sunspot). A considerably less frequent transit, taking place more than a century apart – with a second transit eight years later. There were no such transits in the 20th century. More of this and how a young man from the northwest of England (Jeremiah Horrocks) predicted a Venus transit back in the 17th century and thereby claimed his place in history as a Founding Father of British Astronomy - *nearer the time...*

Kenneth J Goward FRAS

¹ JBAA Vol 113 No 2 'Transits of Mercury. R.L.Stratford.

² Quoted in Sky & Telescope Magazine as predicted to be seen from London. May 2003, page 108.

³ Sky & Telescope, May 2003. 'Mercury Transits the Sun'. Roger W Sinott.

⁴ MNRAS 1878 Page 413 Plummer's observational report to the RAS.

⁵ MNRAS 1868 Page 18, Communicated to the RAS by the Revd Temple Chevallier.

WARNING

NEVER LOOK DIRECTLY AT THE SUN THROUGH ANY OPTICAL AID NOT SPECIFICALLY CONSTRUCTED TO MODERN HIGH STANDARDS FOR SUCH OBSERVATION. OTHERWISE, PROJECTION OF THE SUN'S DISK ONTO WHITE CARD IS THE ONLY SAFE METHOD.
KEEP YOUR FINDER SCOPE CAPPED AT ALL TIMES!!

AT LAST – AN IMAGE OF COLONEL GEORGE TOMLINE



For many years now an image of Colonel George Tomline has been something of a 'Holy Grail' for OASI. Indeed, some time ago a marker was placed on the society web site requesting (pleading for) an image of the colonel, a long-shot that has paid off handsomely as a result of a local historian up in Grimsby trawling the internet for info on Tomline. Seems *WE* had the info *HE* was looking for and *HE* had the picture *WE* were looking for! A framed copy of the image now hangs on the Observatory staircase by the doorway to the clubroom. We have framed another copy for the school and the headmaster has hung that one in the north hall. *Colonel Tomline has returned to Orwell Park!*

In recent years we have been fortunate in obtaining picture images of Wilfrid Airy, the designing engineer and John MacVicar Anderson the architect of the observatory. All that's missing now is an image of John Isaac Plummer – a similar picture request has been placed on our web site – and - *you never know...*

Picture images of former OASI Chairmen have also been placed on the stairwell wall – but – **we do not have a good image of the first OASI Chairman, Mr John Easty.**

CAN ANY LONG STANDING MEMBER HELP OUT ON THIS ONE???

Unfortunately, Mr Easty and his wife have long since passed away, there were no children from their marriage and relatives recently located by us do not have a picture of him.

Kenneth J Goward FRAS
Chairman

Congratulations

- To Leslie Lamb on the occasion of his 90th Birthday – our ‘resident cartoonist’ and a seemingly unstoppable OASI stalwart!
- To Bill Barton and Paul Whiting on their recent election as Fellows of the Royal Astronomical Society.



Leslie Lamb was presented with a bottle of Whiskey and a Birthday card signed by his many OASI friends in the Equatorial Room 16.04.03. **Cheers Les!!**

Imaged by Harold Watters

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Eclipse Corner - May 2003

There are two eclipses this month – one of the Moon and one of the Sun, both visible from the UK.

16/5/03	Total Lunar Eclipse
31/5/03	Annular Solar Eclipse

The solar eclipse is an annular eclipse, whereby the apparent size of the new Moon is not large enough to totally obscure the Sun, leaving a ring or “annulus” of sun around the dark moon. Not as spectacular as a full total eclipse but none-the-less interesting, especially as it can be viewed from the UK – just! Specifically Northern Scotland, the Orkney and Shetland Islands. The ideal viewing location is Reykjavik in Iceland.

The lunar eclipse, visible in Ipswich, is, unfortunately, an early morning event – totality starting at 4:13 am BST (details below) and lasting just under 53 minutes. The point of interest is that totality ends just as the Moon sets. If anyone does get up to view – clouds permitting – take note of the colour of the eclipsed moon. Is it blood red? For discussion at the next club night!

Total Eclipse of the Moon – 16 May 2003 - Circumstances for Felixstowe.

Moon enters penumbra:	2003/5/16	02:05:18 BST
Moon enters umbra:	2003/5/16	03:02:44 BST
Start of totality:	2003/5/16	04:13:42 BST
Maximum eclipse:	2003/5/16	04:40:03 BST
End of totality	2003/5/16	05:06:24 BST
Moon leaves umbra:	2003/5/16	06:17:22 BST
Moon leaves penumbra:	2003/5/16	07:14:49 BST

Duration of total phase:	0h 52m 42s
Duration of umbral phase:	3h 14m 38s
Duration of penumbral phase:	5h 9m 31s

Paul Whiting

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Monday Nights.

The observatory has been open for two Monday nights per month this year, adding to the previous small telescopes Monday night which has followed the monthly astronomy workshop. The extra Monday, with an advertised observing programme, has run well, with a suitably small number of dedicated observers making good use of the balcony telescopes, and learning a lot about the noble art of observing. With the light summer nights almost upon us, (not to mention the observatory maintenance programme), the final Monday evening for the season will be Monday May 12th, with plans to start again in September – watch the newsletter for details. It is likely that from September the two Monday nights will follow the same observing theme, which may be linked to the workshop if appropriate. It seems popular to use the balcony telescopes, as this gives more hands on action. The Tomline however will occasionally be used when the observing object demands. Thanks to those who have taken a lead, and set us off on the observing theme of the evening. So far we have looked at objects in the Zodiacal constellations, from Taurus to Leo. Ted Sampson.

Astronomy Workshops – another series??

The fifth series of Astronomy workshops will be completed on Wed May 7th, with a presentation by Paul Whiting on ‘Radio Propagation’.

Will there be another series? The answer, as before depends upon two factors:-

1. Is there a demand for it?
2. Are there sufficient members willing/able to present a topic?

The fifth series has been well attended But one can overdo a good thing. There has been a wide range of topics presented by our members of their own choosing, showing what a versatile society we are. My thanks to all who have made presentations, and to those assisting with the technical side – the standard of which has been excellent.

A list has already been started to answer the above questions, and will be available at the May workshop, where members can record their interest: the list is also displayed on the society notice board. So please look at the list and indicate if you wish to attend another series, and if you have a particular interest in any aspect of astronomy, either simple or complex, and think you would like to try your hand at a presentation, then be bold, and add your name to the list. One thing is for sure; the presenter always benefits in sharpening up on the topic, as well as those who listen. If you have any queries, have a chat with me.

Ted Sampson

OCCULTATIONS DURING MAY

Only one stellar occultation occurs during the month under favourable circumstances. The table provides details for Orwell Park Observatory; these will be similar at nearby locations.

D / R	Date & Time (UT)	Lunar Phase	Sun Alt (°)	Star Alt (°)	Star	Mag
D	03 May 20:18	0.05+	-8	11	Hip 20557	7.1
D	06 May 22:57	0.25+	-20	13	ZC 1085	7.1
D	08 May 21:37	0.43+	-15	37	ZC 1334	7.0
D	10 May 22:47	0.66+	-19	34	ZC 1569	6.9

James Appleton

2003 COMMITTEE

Home Phone Work Phone



CHAIRMAN & PUBLICITY SECRETARY & WORK PARTY ORGANISER	K Goward	
TREASURER	R Gooding	
MECHANICS & MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER CO-ORDINATOR	G Coleman	
ASTRONOMY WORKSHOP	M Cook	
WEB SITE & MEETING MINUTES EQUIPMENT CURATOR	E Sims	Ipswich Suffolk IP1 4HA
LIBRARIAN	T Sampson	R Gooding OASI Secretary
	J Appleton	Ipswich Suffolk IP1 6AE
	P O'Sullivan	M. Cook
	M Whybray	Ipswich IP4 5PZ
CO-OPTED MEMBERS		
LECTURE CO-ORDINATOR	P Richards	
VISITS BY OUTSIDE GROUPS	Paul Whiting	
JOURNAL ARTICLES TO CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS	E Sims	
MEMBERSHIP	R Gooding	

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Observing Programme For May

Dates	Observing Director	Activities
Monday 12th May	P O' Sullivan T Sampson	Small Telescopes Night
Tuesday		Nothing Booked
Wednesdays 7th 14th 21st 28th May from 8.00	M Cook D Payne	Nebular & Faint Objects
Thursday		Nothing Booked
Friday		Nothing Booked

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. ASTRONOMY WORKSHOP 7th MAY

The Astronomy Workshop starts at 7.45pm on Wednesday 7th May. The topic is " Comets, Radio Propagation ". The Presenter is Paul Whiting.

2. COMMITTEE MEETING

The next Committee Meeting is still to be arranged.

Society Contact Details

		<u>Home Phone</u>	<u>Work Phone</u>
Chairman	K Goward		
Secretary	R Gooding		

Contact details for the full committee are inside the back page.

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