

ORWELL ASTRONOMICAL

SOCIETY IPSWICH

Charity No 271313

AUGUST 2003 SEPTEMBER 2003

OBSERVATORY
ORWELL SCHOOL.



Society News

1 Next Committee Meeting

The next committee meeting will be held on Saturday 11th October at 19:30 in a classroom in the court yard. This is an open meeting and any one who is interested is invited to attend.

2 Events for 2003

Meeting	Venue	Date
National Astronomy Week	No programme arranged	23 rd to 30 th August
FAS Autumn Convention	Venue: Cambridge Institute of Astronomy .	20 th September
Equinox Star Party	Thetford	26 th to 28 th September
Autumn Astro Meeting	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

3 Autumn Astro Meeting

The SPA will be joining us at this meeting as part of their 50th Anniversary year celebrations

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.

**Other Societies who receive our Newsletter are invited to attend this event.
If you wish to have a display area please contact me (Roy Gooding)**

Email [REDACTED]

Autumn Astro Meeting Programme

Time	Time	Lecture Title
12:00	Access to hall set up hall	
13:00	Doors Open Start videos Refreshments open Displays available	
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 Update
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	Orwell Park Observatory open	

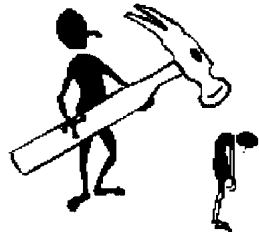
4 Year Three of the Library Rebuild

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 Volunteers are needed for the following jobs

Observatory Maintenance Jobs for 2003

Location	Jobs	Names	Progress	Completed
Computer room	New eyepiece cupboard	Neil Morley		
	Stain floor	Neil Morley	Ongoing	
	Mount either a new or the old heater on the wall			
Transit room	Paint door panels	Pete Richards Kathryn Gerry		Yes
	Wash walls	Monica Lustig		Yes
	Drill ventilation holes in stairs	Gerry Pilling		Yes
	Rebuild telescope pillar			
Observatory	Construct new RA drive control			
	Grease shutter	Martin Cook		Yes
	Replace shutter rope	Martin Cook		Yes
	Repair gutter			
	Paint door frame at the top of the stairs			
	Ladder modification	Garry Coleman Gerry Pilling		Yes
	Build set of mobile stairs for telescope	Martin Cook		
Belvedere	Paint all balcony doors. Use white Ranch paint			
	East balcony Paint balcony door, inside and outside.	Mike Whybray	Started	
	South east balcony Paint balcony door, inside and outside.			
	South balcony Paint balcony door, inside and outside Door needs repairing.	Garry Coleman	Started	
	South west balcony Paint balcony door, inside and outside.			
	West balcony Paint balcony door, inside and outside.			
	Complete painting the stone work			
Library	Complete the library reconstruction	Martin Cook Ken Goward	Started	
	Install new electric circuit	Martin Cook Dave Payne	Started	
Bottom room	Varnish door	Roy Gooding		
	Make good room walls, stabilise and paint	Roy Gooding		
Entrance	Install door bell	Eric Sims Roy Gooding		Yes
Entrance	Obtain entrance direction signs & fix to walls	Roy Gooding	Collected	

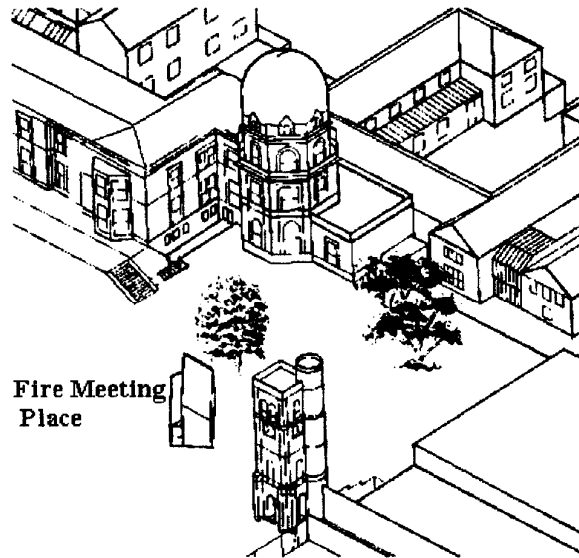
If you wish to help by adopting a balcony door please contact either Martin Cook or Roy Gooding.

5 New Fire Drill Meeting Place

The new meeting place when the School's fire alarm is heard, is in front of the sports pavilion on the Schools playing field

The playing field is accessed by the double doors at the base of the observatory tower.

The School's fire control meeting place is also on the playing field



Fire Meeting Place

Night Sky (August)

All times GMT

Sun

The sun will be rising approximately between 04:20 and 05:00
The sun will be setting approximately between 19:40 and 19:00

Moon

1 st Quarter	Full Moon	3 rd Quarter	New Moon
5 th	12 th	20 th	27 th

Mercury Mercury will be at greatest eastern elongation on the 14th. However the planet remains to low down in a bright evening sky to be seen this month.

Venus Venus is at superior conjunction on the 18th It is not observable this month.

Mars Mars will be at opposition on the 28th. It is presently in Aquarius, at a magnitude of -2.8

Jupiter Jupiter is in conjunction with the Sun this month on the 22nd and will not be observable this month.

Saturn Saturn will rising at about midnight at the end of the month. It will be at magnitude 0.1.

Uranus Uranus is also in Aquarius, and will be at opposition on the 24th. Magnitude 5.7

Neptune Neptune is in Capricornus, and will be at opposition on the 4th. Magnitude 7.8

Meteor Showers

Shower	Maximum	Limits	ZHR
α Cygnids	July 21 st to August. 21 st	July to August	5
Capricornids	July 8 th July 15 th July 26 th	July to August	5
δ Aquards	July 29 th August 6 th	July 15 th to August 20 th	20 10
α Capricornids	August 2 nd	July 15 th to August 20 th	5
ι Aquarids	August 6 th	July to August	8
Perseids	August 13 th	July 23 rd to August 20 th	80

Meteor source is the BAA Handbook

Sun

The sun will be rising approximately between 05:20 and 05:50
 The sun will be setting approximately between 18:40 and 17:50

Moon

1 st Quarter	Full Moon	3 rd Quarter	New Moon
3 th	10 th	18 th	26 th

Mercury Mercury will be at inferior conjunction on the 11th. It reappears in the morning sky, reaching greatest western elongation on the 27th. Mercury will be rising about 2 hours before the sun at the end of the month

Venus Venus will not be observable this month

Mars Mars remains in Aquarius this month at magnitude -2.2. By the end of the month it will be setting at about 02:00

Jupiter Jupiter moves back into the early morning sky this month. It will be rising at about 03:00 by the end of the month. Magnitude -1.7

Saturn Saturn will be rising at about 22:00 by the end of the month. It will be at magnitude 0.1.

Uranus Uranus is also in Aquarius, and will be setting at about 02:30 at the end of the month. Magnitude 5.7

Neptune Neptune will be in Capricornus, and will be setting at about 01:00 at the end of the month. Magnitude 7.8

Meteor Showers

Shower	Maximum	Limits	ZHR
Piscids	September 8 th September 21 st October 13 th	September to October	10 5 ?

Meteor source is the BAA Handbook

OCCULTATIONS DURING AUGUST

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	08 Aug 21:08	0.87+	-12	10	ZC 2634	7.2
D / R	20 Aug 23:15 23:54	0.41-	-25 -26	7 13	67 Tau, kappa 2 Tau	5.3

James Appleton

OCCULTATIONS DURING SEPTEMBER

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 / R	Date & Time (UT)	Lunar Phase	Sun Alt (°)	Star Alt (°)	Star	Mag
D	06 Sep 19:50	0.84+	-12	11	60 Sgr, A Sgr	4.8
D	10 Sep 00:23	0.99+	-32	23	71 Aqr, tau 2 Aqr	4.1
D / R	19 Sep 01:49 02:56	0.47-	-31 -23	36 47	139 Tau	4.8

James Appleton

The May Annular Eclipse

Paul Whiting

The last interesting eclipse in the UK for many years prompted us to pay a visit to the Orkney Islands towards the end of May this year.

As is becoming a (pleasant) habit we met up with Mike and Sue Harlow in our hotel bar a few days before the eclipse. The main topic of conversation was where were we going to view the very (very!) early eclipse from. For the last year or so we had planned to drive up Wideford Hill, a relatively high area just outside Kirkwall – the chief town on Orkney. After reccyng the site we thought yes this would do nicely.

The build up to the eclipse by the local populace was starting to warm up – the local tourist information office got in a supply of 1999 Cornwall eclipse goggles! But wait – what's this advert in the local rag? Heather Couper and Nigel Henbest were giving a talk out at Deerness, in the extreme east of the island. The venue was the brand new village hall proudly being shown off to the gathering crowds. The talk was to be followed by an eclipse party and then the eclipse itself at sunrise overlooking the wild North Sea, with a loan piper and (of course) the all-night liquor licence.

Come the eve of the eclipse the clouds rolled in, and owing to various bouts of apathy and illness, Sue and I left our respective companions behind and drove to the talks. Francisco Diego gave an excellent background talk on eclipses, followed by Heather and Nigel selling their new book "Mars" – about how NASA discovered life on Mars 20 years ago and covered it up. To be fair it must have been an interesting talk as I shelled out for a copy of the book!

It was now 3am on the 31st May, time to make tracks to the viewing site. The total overcast sky caused some low spirits, but when we couldn't see the top of Wideford Hill through the thick fog this was a real downer. So on the spur of the moment a handbrake turn and we went to join the Deerness eclipse party at the other end of the island. After driving around several lumpy fields following folk who also didn't know where they were going, we arrived at the site. It would have been ideal if it hadn't been for the still stubborn clouds. The eclipse came and went to the doleful strains of the lone piper and the chink of whisky glasses being drained by the locals, but nothing was seen at all. At least the BBQ and bar were doing great business. I don't know where Sue & Mike ended up, but given the weather I wouldn't think they fared any better than us.

The first failure in 5 eclipses. At least it wasn't too far to travel. Where next? Antarctica in the autumn? A bit too expensive I fear.

Some notes from the Chair

It's been a busy time for the society of late and there is quite a bit going on, not least manifest by the recent ever more weighty and interesting monthly volumes of this newsletter. School is out and before many of us dash away on holiday, it seems appropriate to bring members up to speed on a number of matters...

On Saturday 19th July we held another splendid and well-supported **Summer Barbeque**. Our hosts this year, Mike and Andrea Whybray, worked very hard to make the event a great success, for which we are most grateful. What more can one want - a balmy summer's afternoon in genial company and with the heady smell of various 'delicacies' cooking over charcoal make for a delightful cocktail. One can be less sure about the desirability of barbecued Banana, however! If you missed this year's event, sadly it was your misfortune and I very much hope you will want to join us next year.



*OASI members enjoying a good old nosh 'n natter at the Summer Barbeque.
Mike Whybray's 4" Newtonian Reflector with solar filter in foreground.*

Photo by Ken Goward

Progress on the **Millennium Telescope** project has been rapid. Mike Harlow is working on the final figuring before the mirror is ready for coating. Many parts have manufactured or bought by Neil Morley, Paddy O'Sullivan, Martin Cook and Garry Coleman. Paddy tells me he is currently painting the superstructure, so all in all we are coming towards our goal of first light some time later this year...

The new **Library** is taking shape and we – *expect* – to install the new cabinets by the end of August. This mammoth project, which has involved quite a few members working on all three levels of the observatory tower in sometimes quite arduous conditions, has run for the best part of three years now. At long last we are putting things back, rather than stripping things out! A fully illustrated article will be appear in this organ after completion, detailing the agony and – *hopefully* – final ecstasy of the project.

For many years we have looked forward to the day when our existing bow-fronted glass book cabinet would be replaced. The cabinet has served us well, but the years have caught up with the old girl... Committee members, at various times, have been asked if the cabinet can go to 'such and such' a friend or local organisation when we no longer have use for it. **Now is the time to stake your FINAL claim** (please speak to me, Mike Whybray or Roy Gooding). **After the book stock has been transferred to the new cabinets, we will allow FOUR WEEKS for the old cabinet to be taken away by whatever person or group.** If the cabinet has not gone after that four-week period of grace we shall dispose of it by breaking it up. A bit harsh, perhaps, but that way we avoid cluttering up the clubroom as the observing season returns.

Our book collection, despite its recent nomadic existence, has continued to expand. We have some new titles relevant to next year's long-awaited transit of Venus and two rather special and extremely pertinent to Orwell Park volumes too; The Airy family have been extraordinarily generous and have made a gift to the society of Wilfrid Airy's personal scrapbook, replete with press cuttings about his many works from 'The Engineer'. We have also managed to obtain our own copy of John Isaac Plummer's 1872 book 'Introduction to Astronomy'. Both these tomes will be available for members, but **ONLY** in the library and Mike Whybray will detail access arrangements nearer the time.

Hand in hand with the library work goes the general upkeep of the observatory. Our main effort this year is around the clubroom (Belvedere), particularly the balcony doors, which are in a very poor state. OK, it's a bit twee, but we've come up with a jingo to prompt some volunteers to come forward. Roy Gooding's monthly notes in this newsletter outline our '**Adopt a Door**' scheme. Please support us and take on one of the doors – you get the pleasure (?) of rubbing down, painting and standing back to admire your handiwork – 'we' get the job done with a minimum of fuss!

Time now to look at some forthcoming events over the next month or two:

On **Saturday 6th September** members of the recently formed Crewkerne AS (Somerset) are coming to camp near Ipswich, specifically to visit our society and to see the observatory, which they have taken quite a shine to from pictures and descriptions on our web site! *Incidentally, have you visited our site lately? James Appleton is doing a fantastic job inputting articles from OASI newsletters all the way back to the 80s and there cannot be many Astronomical Societies with such a massive amount of original material available to read.* Anyway, the plan is that we meet the Crewkerne members approx 6pm and have a meal with them at the Shepherd & Dog (Felixstowe Road) before adjourning to Orwell Park. Yours truly will then bore everybody with a talk on the history of the observatory, after which we'll settle down to some observing if the weather is kind. If the weather does its usual dirty on us, then it'll be a trip to the Ship Inn so that these westerners can sample – proper – East Anglian ale from Adnams...

This promises to be a good evening and ALL members are cordially invited to come along. We may even organise a trip down to Crewkerne for a 'return match' next year. **Please let me know if you want a dinner place booked**, email [REDACTED]


Or telephone [REDACTED]

Our sixth season of **Astronomy Workshops** commences on 1st October and Ted Sampson tells me that eight sessions are programmed this time around. Please don't call them 'beginners nights' as the description does not do justice to the content. Whilst so called beginners will not feel out of

place, the quality and range of subjects covered is designed to cater for members of all types – serious amateur or novice. Something for everyone and – surely – one of the most successful aspects of OASI activity in recent years. Going on from that, if you feel like getting to grips with the Tomline Refractor, why not put yourself forward to be trained as an official operator? It’s a nice target to aim for and a feather in anyone’s cap to hold one in good stead for gaining wider experience on other instruments. If you are interested in having a go, please speak to any Committee member.

Last but certainly by no means least we have our **Autumn Astro Meeting** in association with the Society for Popular Astronomy (SPA) in celebration of their golden anniversary on Saturday 4th October. The venue will be the church hall of St Mary Magdalene in Highfield Approach, IP1 – just off the Norwich Road on the western side of Ipswich up towards the Landrover dealership. Our Secretary, Roy Gooding, has worked/is working his socks off to make this a very special event for OASI members and members of surrounding astro societies. Roy has put together an excellent list of speakers, including former BAA President Martin Mobberley and Society for the History of Astronomy Council member Martin Lunn MBE FRAS. Trade stands will be in attendance, along with the SHA’s superb astro history display and various exhibits from OASI members. Light refreshments will also be available. After the close of the main event and some pub grub, we intend to go over to the observatory in the evening for our members and visitors to – hopefully – have a session on the Tomline. Entry to the meeting is free, but we hope those attending will help with our overheads by purchasing beverages or making a small donation. **AN AFTERNOON YOU SURELY WON’T WANT TO MISS!!**

Well folks, that’s about it from me. Lots done – lots to do – lots to look forward to. I’m off to hitch our caravan onto the car and create some nice tailbacks as we creep down to the West Country - *Bye!*


Kenneth J Goward FRAS
Chairman

Astronomy Workshops – Series 6

It is certainly a surprise to me that we are on the threshold of a sixth series of astronomy workshops, which started so hesitantly that long ago. The original title was ‘Informal Interactive Workshops’ – quite a mouthful, but encapsulating the still existing idea that they are more a forum for discussion than a lecture. Each session is presented by a member of the society on a subject of their choosing, and can be on any astronomy related topic. Members present are invited to ask questions, and make comments on the topic at any time during the presentation.

The first workshop of this series will be on **Wednesday October 1st, at 7.45 – 9.00pm in the school science classroom**, which is in the far corner of the courtyard, and on the ground floor. The topic is ‘**Talking about Telescopes**’. Members with a portable telescope are invited to bring it, and say a little about it. We will doubtless mention the ETX 125, and other society owned scopes. So do come along, and lets hear your news and views. Ted Sampson.

2003 COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN & PUBLICITY

K Goward

SECRETARY &

WORK PARTY ORGANISER

R Gooding

TREASURER

G Coleman

MECHANICS & MEMBERSHIP

M Cook

NEWSLETTER CO-ORDINATOR

E Sims

ASTRONOMY WORKSHOP

T Sampson

WEB SITE & MEETING MINUTES

J Appleton

EQUIPMENT CURATOR

P O'Sullivan

LIBRARIAN

M Whybray

CO-OPTED MEMBERS

LECTURE CO-ORDINATOR

P Richards

VISITS BY OUTSIDE GROUPS

Paul Whiting

JOURNAL ARTICLES TO

E Sims

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS

R Gooding OASI Secretary

MEMBERSHIP

M. Cook

Home Phone Work Phone



Ipswich Suffolk IP1 4HA

Ipswich Suffolk IP1 6AE

Ipswich IP4 5PZ

Observing Programme For August-september

Dates	Observing Director	Activities
Monday		Nothing Booked
Tuesday		Nothing Booked
Wednesdays 6th 13th 20th 27th August 3rd 10th 17th 24th September	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. AUTUMN ASTRO MEETING 4th OCTOBER

The Autumn Astro Meeting will be held on the 4th of October in the church hall of St Mary Magdalene Church in Highfield Approach.

2. COMMITTEE MEETING 11th OCTOBER

The next Committee Meeting is to be held on Saturday the 11th of October at 7.30pm in the class room at Orwell Park School. All members are welcome to attend.

3. ASTRONOMY WORKSHOP 1st OCTOBER

The Astronomy Workshop starts at 7.45pm on Wednesday 1st October. The topic and presenter are still to be arranged.

Society Contact Details

	Home Phone	Work Phone
Chairman	K Goward	
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/>