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SUMMER NEWSLETTER JULY 2017

Dear friends,

It's *that* time of year again! Time for me to bring you the news for the coming CaDAS season.

I've managed to complete the programme of speakers in time for this newsletter, apart from one where the speaker is known, but his title is "t.b.d.". I'm pleased to say that we have three new guest speakers, visiting us for the first time, as well as three old friends. The September meeting sees the welcome return of our favourite jovial Scotsman, Dr. Colin Steele, with "Coronal Conundra and Prominence Puzzles". (To put it more simply, he's talking about the Sun!)

As many of you will know, I'm still working away from home (away from my adopted home of Derby, that is) as a contractor, and living in two places at once. I'm now working in Dorset yet again. Fortunately, I've still been able to make it to most of the meetings in the past season, and hope to do so again in the coming season – apart from September, when as always, I'll be at Horncastle Astronomy Weekend.

We continue the theme of having "practical astronomy" talks in January and February, when we have dark skies and the chance of taking out telescopes after the meeting, with two of our members, Jürgen and Keith, kindly volunteering.

Next month, I'll be in the US of A, (hopefully!) observing the "Great American Eclipse" from Jackson, Wyoming. This is my sixth total eclipse trip; my track record so far is three successes out of five. This one is the next in the same saros series as my first successful one in 1999. Having already achieved the unenviable record of *not* seeing two successive eclipses of a saros, I now hope to achieve the opposite!!! (And if you don't know what a saros is, come to the December meeting!)

So in December, I'm giving a talk on eclipses in general and this year's trip in particular, and – again, hopefully! - showing my images. I just hope I don't have to rename it to "The Best Laid Plans of Mice and Astronomers, Part 4"...

If you have any queries about any of our events, please contact me; my details are given above. I have a laptop and mobile dongle at my "weekday address", so I can usually respond to e-mails within a day or two.

Alternatively, contact Julia Goudge, our General Secretary, at general-secretary@cadas-astro.org.uk

1. Monthly Meetings 2017-18

The following are the details of this season's monthly meetings. As usual, all meetings are on Friday evenings, starting at 7.15 p.m., at Wynyard Planetarium.

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| 8 September 2017 | “Coronal Conundra and Prominence Puzzles”
by Dr. Colin Steele of Manchester University |
| 13 October | “Molecules in Space”
by Dr. Catherine Walsh of Leeds University |
| 10 November | Title t.b.d.
by Rod Hine of Bradford A.S. |
| 8 December | “The Great American Eclipse”
by Neil Haggath FRAS of CaDAS |
| 12 January 2018 | “Planetary Imaging with Winjupos”
by Keith Johnson of CaDAS |
| 9 February | “How to Permanently Set Up Your Telescope”
by Dr. Jürgen Schmoll, Chairman of CaDAS |
| 9 March | "Gravitational Lensing"
by Prof. Michael Brown of Manchester University |
| 13 April | “Massive Starbirth”
by Dr. Katharine Johnston of Leeds University |
| 11 May | “The Dark Side of the Universe”
by Prof. Christine Done of Durham University |
| 8 June | AGM plus members' short talks. |

Any queries, please call Neil on 07900 653213, or e-mail meetings-secretary@cadast-astro.org.uk. Please allow a few days for replies, as I'm working away from home during the week.

2. No More Quizzes!

Following yet another embarrassing debacle last year, we have decided that there will be no more quiz competitions!

Two years ago, we scrapped the old Thomas Wright Trophy contest, and replaced it with a pub quiz style event, where everyone present could form teams and take part, without it being a contest between societies any more. The first time this was done, hosted by Durham, we had a very encouraging turnout, with eight teams, and a highly enjoyable evening.

Then came last year's event, which we hosted at the (as some of us call it) Hertzprung Russell pub... The total turnout, from all three societies, and excluding myself as quizmaster, was all of twelve people...

Apart from the many hours' work which I put into preparing the quiz, I "bust a gut" to get there on the day! It was my second week in a new work contract, so I could hardly ask for a day off so soon – so I drove 220 miles on the day from Stevenage, after a morning's work. After a six-hour drive, battling multiple traffic jams, and a rushed sandwich as my main meal of the day, I arrived at the venue with 15 minutes to spare... to be met by that embarrassing turnout!

So after that, I regretfully have to say that I'm no longer willing to put in all that effort!

Even worse, the once-prestigious Yorkshire Astromind contest has gone the same way! Last year, as always, I put in something approaching 100 hours of work preparing it... and then the contest didn't happen! Even Mexborough and Swinton, who have been the most stalwart supporters of the quiz for decades, were unable to provide a contestant this time; we were left with only two contestants, so the event was cancelled.

Again, this was the final straw; the organiser and I have agreed to let the event die with whatever little dignity it had left!

</moan>

4. Scarborough Summer Star Festival – not!

Unfortunately, there is no Scarborough Starfest this year! Apparently, it will be back to normal next year.

5. Wynyard Observatory and Planetarium

For details of Planetarium shows and public observing evenings, visit www.wynyard-planetarium.net. You can also call the Planetarium on 01740 630544; messages are currently being read remotely.

6. Telescopes for Loan

CaDAS owns two telescopes, a 10-inch Dobsonian and an 8-inch Meade Schmidt-Cassegrain, which are available for loan to Society members. A 4-inch Newtonian, owned by the Planetarium, can also be made available for loan.

If you would like to borrow one of the telescopes, please contact Peter Hanna. You will be able to collect it at one of our meetings, and return it at the next. All the telescopes can be transported by car.

It hardly needs stating that the telescopes must be properly looked after, and stored indoors when not in use. The Meade in particular needs to be handled with care.

7. Transit

As we are all aware, there hasn't been a *Transit* magazine for quite some time! The reason is very simple – lack of material!

Since Jon Mathieson took over as Editor, he has tried – quite rightly – to make it a magazine produced by our members, and has avoided the practice of copying and pasting material from the internet for the sake of filling space. But he can't do so without material! So if we want to revive our magazine, it's up to us to write enough stuff to put in it!

If anyone (besides me!) wishes to contribute anything – an article, observing report, images, etc. - please send it to Jon; his contact details are:

12 Rushmere, Marton, Middlesbrough. TS8 9XL.

E-mail: jon.mathieson@jonm.net.

8. The CaDAS Web Site

Just in case anyone hasn't yet seen it, we have an excellent society web site:

www.cadas-astro.org.uk.

The Webmaster is Don Martin, a long-time stalwart of the Society, who has done a splendid job of setting up and maintaining the site. Don can be contacted at webmaster@cadas-astro.org.uk.

9. And Finally...

And finally, I hope you won't mind me indulging in a little self-promotion. I have recently self-published a science fiction novel, *Moonsafe Red*, which I'm selling for £7.99. For details, and how to order a copy if anyone is interested, see www.spaceandsanity.com/moonsafered.html. You can also read a couple of reviews by the first people to read it.

Alternatively, of course, I'll be selling copies in person at the October and subsequent meetings.

That's all for now, folks. See you all soon. Wishing you clear skies.

Neil M. Haggath