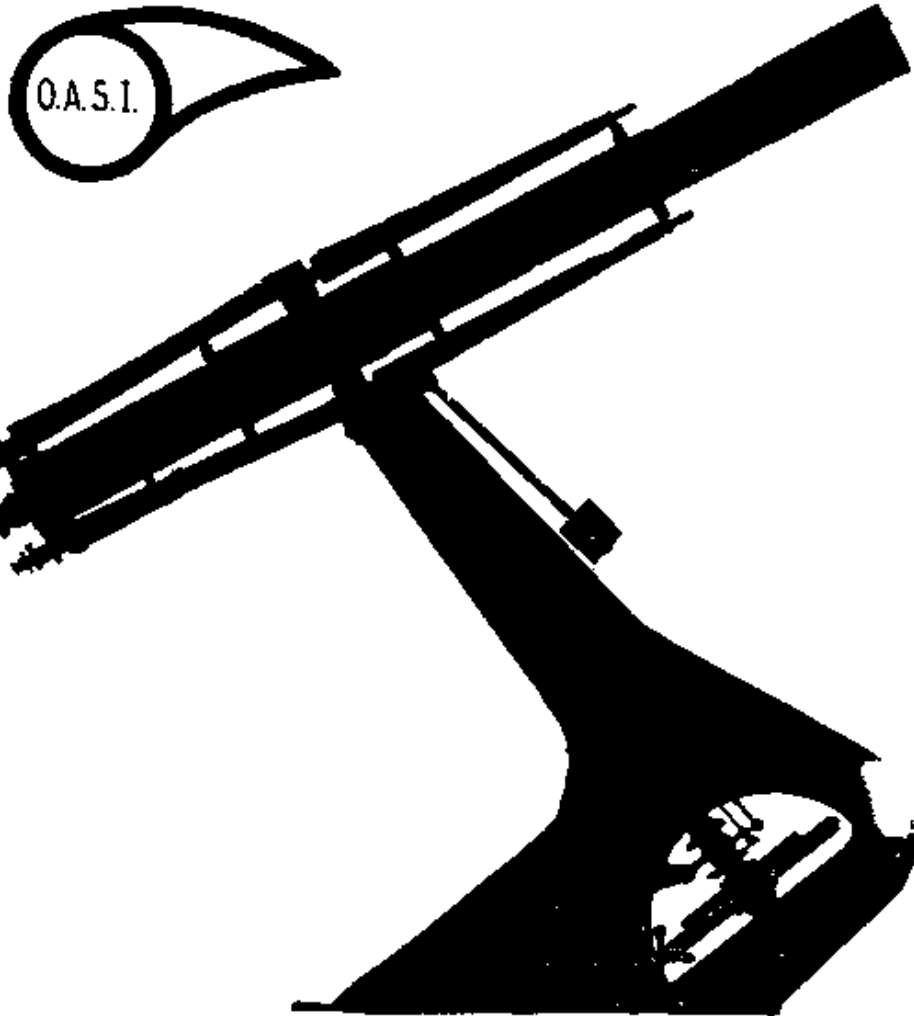


JULY 1985



The Orwell Park Observatory 10 inch Astronomical Telescope at Hexton near Ipswich

SOCIETY NEWS

1. The annual F.A.S. Convention Meeting at Herstmonceux will be on Saturday, 5th October. More details when they are available.
2. Our annual open weekend this year will coincide with National Astronomy Week. The observatory will be open to the public on November 13, 14, 15, 16th. The principal aim will be to observe Halley's Comet.
3. Next committee meeting will be on August 3rd, 7.30 p.m. in the observatory club room. This meeting is open for any member to attend.

NIGHT SKY

Constellations (all times G.M.T.)

The principal summer constellations of Lyra, Cygnus and Aquila will be due south in the early evening this month.

Sun Rises approx. between 04.00 to 04.20

Sets approx. between 20.10 to 20.00

Moon ○ 2nd      ◐ 10th      ● 17th      ◑ 24th      ○ 31st

Occultations

13th	ZC 497	mag. 6.5	R	1hr. 54.3m
23rd	1874	" 7.5	D	21hr. 10.1m
25th	2111	" 7.0	D	21hr. 2.9m
27th	2411	" 6.6	D	21hr. 49.8m
28th	2554	" 4.4	D	20hr. 37.3m

Mercury Greatest eastern elongation 27° Sets about 1 hour after sunset. Difficult to see.

Venus Rises at 01.00 in mid month. Mag. -3.7

Mars Conjunction on the 18th.

Jupiter Rises about 20.40 in mid month. Mag. -2.3

Saturn Rises at about 01.00 in mid month. Mag. 5.8

Neptune Rises at about 02.00 in mid month. Mag. 7.7.

URANUS

R. Gooding

## HALLEY'S COMET

Halley's Comet has a journey of about 76 years before it returns near the Earth. Records of its observation go back in history to 690 B.C. It has been wrongly recorded, like so many other comets, as being a harbinger of doom and destruction.

The head of Halley's Comet could expand in size, as it did in the 1910 apparition, to over 300,000 miles and the tail could reach over 20 million miles in length.

This apparition of Halley's Comet will be the first one which will not only be observed from space but also be observed using all the modern sciences available to astronomy. It will also be observed by ground based professional and amateur astronomers throughout the world.

Observing from space we have:-

VEGA 1	(U.S.S.R.)	encounter	6th	March	1986
VEGA 2	(U.S.S.R.)	encounter	9th	March	1986
MS-TS	(Japan)	encounter	8th	March	1986
PLANET A	(Japan)	encounter	8th	March	1986
GIOTTO	(European Space Agency)	encounter	13	March	1986.

Ground observations of the Comet from the Northern Hemisphere will not be very good, as it will be at its brightest during the early

part of April, 1986 when it will be in the Southern Hemisphere skies. At the end of April 1986 the Comet will again appear in our northern sky as it returns into deep space.

### Observing Halley's Comet.

Halley's Comet is important as it is the only bright comet which we can predict as it goes around the Sun in a fairly short period of only about 76 years.

The closest approaches of the Comet to the Earth will be on 27th November 1985 and on the 11th April, 1986. From the northern hemisphere we will be able to see the Comet travelling at about 60,000 miles per hour on its way to swinging around the Sun. After going around the Sun on 9th February, 1986 the Comet will increase its speed to over 100,000 miles per hour and will be best visible from southern latitudes. In the United Kingdom we might only be able to see the tail rising above the horizon until the end of April. About the middle of April we have a 'Full Moon' which will interfere with observations of the Comet.

The best time to observe the Comet will be during the first few days of April, 1986 when the Comet will be at its brilliant best but only if you live in very southern latitudes of the Earth. The best places to observe the Comet will be from Southern Africa, Australia, New Zealand or in the ant-Arctic circle.

### SOCIETY EXCURSION TO GREENWICH

The last society excursion to the Old Greenwich Observatory was in 1979. Since then several attempts for arranging a return visit have been discussed. These have all been abandoned due to lack of support. At the beginning of this year it was decided to go at any cost. A date of Saturday, 15th June was unanimously agreed. A request for a guided tour of the observatory and 28" refractor, unfortunately did not come to fruition.

Two groups travelling in separate cars met on a garage forecourt at Copdock. It had been decided beforehand to travel to Greenwich via the Dartford Tunnel. The journey was uneventful until some 5 miles from the Tunnel, when a motorway hazard warning light was passed, flashing away merrily a large 60. Nothing untoward was assumed at this time, with everyone travelling at a speed consistent with the warning. About 1 mile further on a second warning light present an equally large 50 was observed. Visibility was good, 1 A.U. at least so it could not be fog. A few seconds later a 30 was seen flashing our way. Something nasty was lurking ahead, but what? Then from out of the heat haze emerged a traffic jam, stretching for as far as the eye could see. Martin, who was driving the advance party had what was to be the good temerity to cross over to the near side lane. The distance from home was about 60 miles which was covered in under an hour. In the next 30 minutes we were to travel the astonishing distance of under 75 feet.

An escape committee was quickly convened. The first meeting was initiated with much flapping of maps and several communications between the two cars, with David acting as a foot messenger. Our current position on the motorway was as follows:- 3 lanes of traffic for 2 miles in front and probably more to our rear. To our left was a 'lane' (hard shoulder) which was surprisingly free of any traffic. 50 yards behind us was a slip road which led to the A13 and the Blackwall Tunnel, while 100 yards further back was a parked police range rover which appeared devoid of any life. Quite suddenly a car took up temporary residence in the empty lane, was this car reversing? Or was the jam all moving synchronously forward? Yes, it was the car and not us that was moving.

No reference concerning the next manoeuvre would be found in any edition of the Highway Code. 30 minutes later we were travelling under Old Father Thames, with the south bank beckoning in the distance. Arrival time at Greenwich Park was 10.45.

The first hour and a half were spent in the old observatory before adjourning for lunch. Lunch was eaten at the top of Greenwich Park Hill which gave a fine view of the National Maritime Museum and the Thames, with St. Paul's in the distance. Before lunch had been finished, the Red Arrows just happened to fly past, leaving a red, white and blue smoke trail over the West End. This was not for our benefit, but was connected with the Queen's official birthday and the Trooping of the Colour Ceremony.

In the afternoon every one walked down to the National Maritime Museum with the exception of Mary whose aspirations were more nautically inclined. She went for a river trip along The Thames. Every one met back at the cars at about 5 p.m. for a quick tea, eating up any left-overs from lunch. Greenwich Park was left at about 5.30 p.m. when a course for the Dartford Tunnel was set. No hold-ups were experienced on the return trip.

On the way home we stopped at a pub for some 40 minutes where Martin, David and Eric endeavoured to impress each other with their skills on the Pool table. After this the two car parties bid each other farewell, making their separate ways home.

Members on the trip were Martin Cook, Judith Herring, David Payne, Mary Edwards, Eric Sims and family and myself.

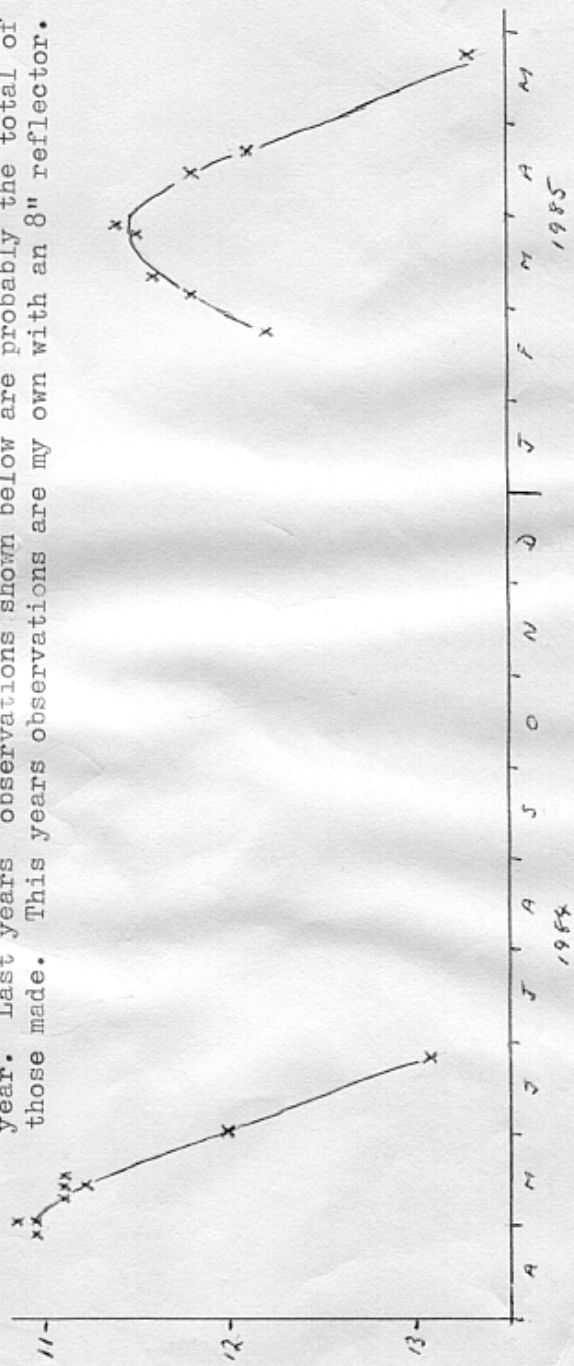
As a postscript, Roy Cheesman who had intended meeting us at Greenwich, had a quick change of mind when he saw the jam that we had experienced, and returned home. According to Roy, a bus had shed a wheel inside the South bound tunnel.

R. Gooding.

VARIABLE STAR OBSERVATIONS

by Mike Nicholls

This light curve shows the star NSV14466, which until recently was only a suspected variable. It was discovered in a photographic plate early last year, and the position corresponds to that of a suspected long period variable discovered in 1933 but apparently not observed since. Examination of other photographic plates reveals a suspected variable in this position ranging from magnitude 13 to 15.5. It faded last summer but was recovered in spring this year by myself and a few others. This confirmed it as a true variable in the long period class, and it was renamed V362 Cephei. The period appears to be about 11 months judging from the curves shown, and so I would expect the next maximum about February next year. Last years observations shown below are probably the total of all those made. This years observations are my own with an 8" reflector.



PROGRAMME FOR JULY

MONDAYS from 8pm 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Until April	DOUBLE STAR & PLANETS SECTION Mr N Taylor [redacted], Farlands Trinley Mr T Gillan [redacted], Felixstowe	Tel: Fel. [redacted] Tel: Fel. [redacted]
TUESDAYS from 7pm By Arrangement With Directors	GENERAL OBSERVATION SECTION Mr N Gage, [redacted], Trinley Mr R Newman [redacted], Felixstowe	Tel: Fel. [redacted]
WEDNESDAYS from 8pm 3, 10, 17, 24, 31	NEBULEA & FAINT OBJECTS SECTION Mr M Cook, [redacted], Ipswich Mr D Payne, [redacted] Wickham Market.	Tel: Ips. [redacted] Tel: W.Mkt [redacted]
THURSDAYS from 8pm 11, 25	GENERAL OBSERVATION SECTION Mr R A Lobbett, [redacted] Felixstowe. Mr J Hood, [redacted], Ipswich.	Tel: Fel. [redacted] Tel: Ips. [redacted]
FRIDAYS from 8pm By Arrangement With Directors	VARIABLE STAR SECTION Mr R Gooding, [redacted], Ipswich Mr M Nicholls, [redacted] Capel St. Mary.	Tel: Ips. [redacted] Tel: Ips. [redacted]

1985 COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN	D Payne	[redacted] Wickham Market, IP13 OSD	Work: [redacted] Home: [redacted]
VICE CHAIRMAN	R Cheesman	[redacted] Essex SS17 9BU	Work: [redacted] Extn: [redacted]
SECRETARY	R Gooding	[redacted], Ipswich IP1 6AE	Work: [redacted] Home: [redacted]
TREASURER	M Nicholls	[redacted], Capel St. Mary, Ipswich, IP9 2EX	Work: [redacted] Home: [redacted]
MEMBERSHIP SEC.	D Barnard	[redacted], Ipswich, IP4 5PP	Home: [redacted] Work: [redacted]
P.R.O.	D Barnard	[redacted], Ipswich, IP4 5PP	Home: [redacted] Work: [redacted]
MAINTENANCE	M Cook	[redacted], Ipswich, IP4 5GA	Home: [redacted] Work: [redacted]
FUNCTIONS	E Sims	[redacted], Ipswich, IP1 4HA	Home: [redacted]
LIBRARIAN	F Sims		