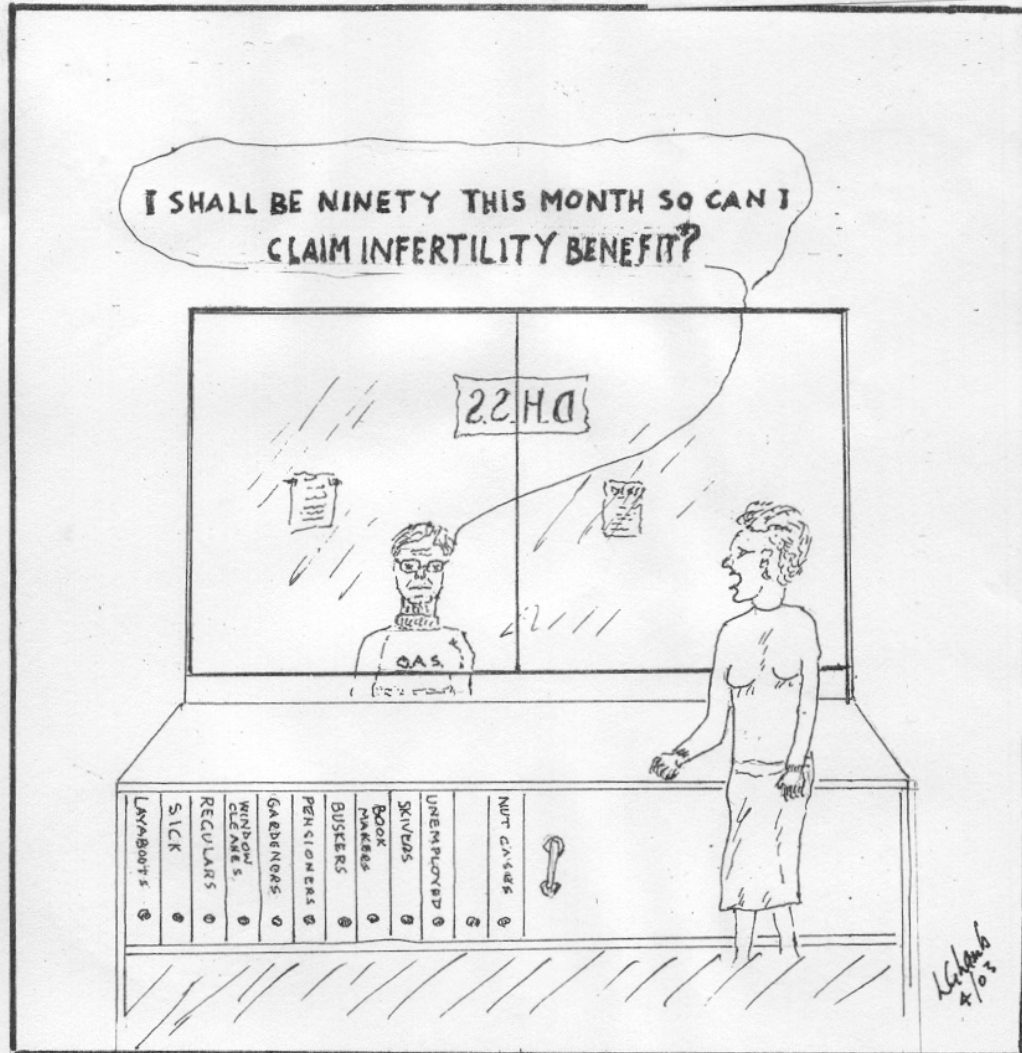


ORWELL ASTRONOMICAL

SOCIETY IPSWICH

Charity No 271313

APRIL 2003



Society News

1 Next Committee Meeting

The next committee meeting will be held on Saturday 26th April at 19:30 in the clubroom. This is an open meeting and any one who is interested is invited to attend.

2

Events for 2003

Meeting	Venue	Date
Astronomy Workshop	Comets, Asteroids and Impacts Presented by Richard Lyzinski	Wednesday 2 nd April
BAA Winchester Weekend	King Alfred College Winchester	Friday 25 th to Sunday 27 th April
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

This meeting is still in the planning stage. I have booked the St May Magdalene church hall in Highfield Approach Ipswich, for the afternoon of Saturday 4th October

Martin Lunn and Martin Mobberley have agreed to give lectures

If you have any displays for this event please contact me (Roy Gooding)

3 FAS (Federation of Astronomical Societies) Newsletter

The FAS distributes a quarterly newsletter to all member societies. As we are classified as a large society we receive 30 copies. In recent months these Newsletters have been left at the observatory for interest members to take. This still leaves the majority of members with out access to a copy, unless they visit the observatory on a regular basis.

The FAS are now proposing that Paid Up Societies and their members can have these Newsletters emailed to them in PDF format (an Adobe Acrobat reader will be required to read these).

If this option is taken up we will receive fewer printed copies.

The FAS Newsletter co-ordinator & distributor is Dave Doc Sutton

His email address is doc@tmslws.fsnet.co.uk

If you do email him please mention that you are a member of the Orwell Astronomical Society

Night Sky

All times GMT

Sun

The sun will be rising approximately between 05:40 to 04:40
The sun will be setting approximately between 18:30 to 19:30

Moon

New Moon	1 st Quarter	Full Moon	3 rd Quarter
1 st	10 th	16 th	23 rd

Mercury Greatest eastern elongation on the 16th at 20^o Mercury will be at magnitude -1.4 at the start of the month.

Venus Venus will be rising about an hour before the sun this month. As it is now in a bright morning twilight sky it will be difficult to see. Magnitude - 3.8

Mars Mars will be rising at about 02:30 in mid month. Magnitude -2.3

Jupiter Jupiter will be setting by 03:00 in mid month. Magnitude -2.3

Saturn Saturn will be setting before mid night by the end of the month Magnitude 0.1

Uranus Uranus will be rising about 03:00 by end of the months end. Magnitude 5.7

Neptune Neptune will be rising at about 02:00 at the end of the month. Magnitude 7.8

Meteor Showers

Shower	Limits	Maximum	ZHR
Lyrids	April 19 th to 25 th	April 22 nd	10
η Aquarids	April 24 th to May 20 th	May 4 th	40
α Scorpids	April 20 th to May 19 th	April 27 th & May 12 th	5

Meteor source is the BAA Handbook

I have a Newtonian 8in. reflector telescope for disposal against a donation to a charity, e.g St Helena's Hospice, Colchester. The mirror may need re-silvering. If any of your members are interested, please contact me at the above, or by telephone on [REDACTED].

Contact : John Kimerley

[REDACTED], Langham, Essexm C045NY

One Down More to come...

"Oh what a night" Opening words from some largely forgotten pop song by some even more forgettable pop group – but most apt to describe the first Presidential lecture to our society by Dr Allan Chapman on Friday 7th March...

Held in the school hall, Dr Chapman's long awaited lecture on the 'Victorian Amateur Tradition' drew a large audience from OASI members, along with staff from Orwell Park School, members of Clacton AS and other invited guests including descendants (Gt Gt Granddaughters Nicole and Kristian) of the 7th Astronomer Royal, Sir George Biddell Airy KCB. For the best part of two hours Allan held us spellbound as he painted a comprehensive picture of Victorian astronomy, of the true nature of Amateur status in context of those days and of colourful and sometimes dubious characters from all walks of life indulging in the master science. It was obvious to all that Allan has an absolute mastery of his subject and at the conclusion of his talk he was given an extended and well-deserved bout of applause from an appreciative audience. Following his talk, Allan presented OASI's former Chairman, David Payne, with an engraved¹ Pewter Tankard to commemorate David's extraordinary 21-year term of office.

Orwell Park School had generously laid on a splendid Cheese & Wine reception after the lecture – along with a large pot of tea for Allan, whose capacity for tea is the stuff of legends! The reception was a jolly affair, enjoyed by all who came.

Afterwards, Allan and the Airy family were invited up to the observatory and treated to a tour of the night sky by Martin Cook, David Payne and Roy Gooding. Jupiter and Saturn were the main targets, but the Whirlpool (M51) also provided a fine show for our guests. Allan's observing ability was self-evident and the Airy family, who had never previously looked through an astronomical telescope, were enthralled by the views. So much so, that it was almost midnight before we made our way back downstairs!

The following morning and at the kind invitation of Andrew Auster, the Headmaster, our guests returned to the school and were given a guided tour of the clock tower by Mrs Auster and Martin Cook. To round off the morning before catching their respective trains home they were taken on to Playford for a visit to St Mary's Church to see the Airy family monuments and pay their respects at the Airy & Biddell graves in that most serene of churchyards.

OCCULTATIONS DURING APRIL

The following 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 Apr 19:21	0.20+	-7	38	ZC 688	6.8
D	07 Apr 22:35	0.30+	-29	18	ZC 835	7.0
D	12 Apr 02:28	0.71+	-21	11	ZC 1393	6.5
D	12 Apr 19:37	0.79+	-8	53	30 Leo, eta Leo	3.5
R	20:32		-15	55		
D	13 Apr 23:03	0.88+	-28	45	ZC 1612	7.3
D	16 Apr 01:41	0.99+	-24	27	46 Vir	6.0
D	18 Apr 00:08	0.98-	-27	21	9 Lib, alpha 2 Lib	2.8
R	01:08		-25	22		

James Appleton

5

6

We are grateful to our Hon President for taking time from his very busy schedule to come along and honour us with a lecture and without doubt all who attended can't wait for his return². We are also most grateful to the Orwell Park School for their exceptional hospitality throughout Allan's visit.

**Here's looking forward to another Presidential lecture –
18/24 months from now.**

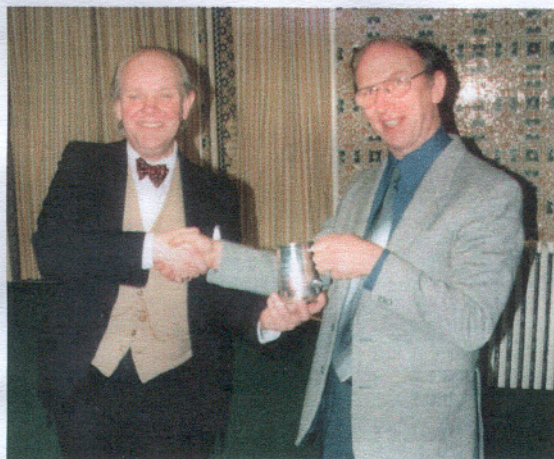
Kenneth J Goward FRAS
Chairman OASI

¹ The engraving on the Tankard reads;

*David Payne
Chairman OASI
1981 – 2002*

Thank you from the members

² Dr Chapman's long awaited TV series '**Gods in the Sky**' is almost ready and likely to be transmitted on Channel 4 within the next three months. So pleased are the programme makers with the series, that initial talks are taking place with a view to filming a follow-on series. Allan will also be appearing with Sir Patrick Moore in his May '**Sky at Night**' programme – on the subject of historical Transits of Mercury.



Dr Allan Chapman presents retiring OASI Chairman, David Payne, with an engraved Pewter Tankard in appreciation of his long service to the society.

John Issac Plummer (Tomline's Astronomer)
Roy Gooding

I have had this article for a very long time. So it is time to give it a more public airing.

John Plummer was born in either 1844 or 1845, (the date is some doubt), at Deptford in Kent. His family lived in Kent street. Nothing is known about his early life.

Plummer began his astronomical career as an assistant astronomer at the Glasgow observatory. His first known paper was published in the Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society (M.N.R.S.), on the observations of the meteors of November 13-14, 1866. This shower was probably the Leonids. Plummer's stay at Glasgow was quite short, lasting for less than two years. By the end of 1868 he had moved to Durham Observatory, where he observed the Transit of Mercury on November 4th 1868.

Plummers Reports from Glasgow and Durham

Title	Report Date	MNRAS volume	Observatory
Observations of the Meteors of November 13-14 1866		27	Glasgow
The Transit of Mercury November 4 th 1868		29	Durham
Occultation's of Stars by the Moon, November 1867	May 1868	29	Durham
Note on an Aurora Borealis, April 2nd 1869	6 th April 1869	29	Durham

John Plummer also wrote a guide to astronomy titled "Introduction to Astronomy", which was published in 1872.

In 1872 John Plummer wrote to the Astronomer Royal, Sir George Airy, inquiring about an assistant's job. It is not known if this was an application for an actual job or just a speculative approach. Plummer did not obtain an appointment.

The Orwell Park Observatory was probably completed towards the end of 1873. George Tomline now began making inquiries about the appointment of a professional astronomer to operate the observatory. The route Tomline took in employing John Plummer is not known. However it may be surmised that Tomline may have sought advice from Wilfrid Airy, and by way of his father been told about John Plummer. He left Durham Observatory and commenced working at Orwell Park Observatory in June 1874. Upon leaving Durham the university awarded him with an honorary M.A. degree. Tomline had a house built for Plummer with in sight of the observatory. The house was named Orwell Dene and is situated across the valley from the observatory on the Levington road. The house still exists.

The first known local reference of Plummer at Nacton is recorded in the minute book of the Ipswich Science & Gossip Society. Members from this group visited Orwell Park on July 11th 1874. The name of the society was subsequently changed in, 1875 to the

Ipswich Science Society. They were guided round the mansion and the grounds and introduced to John Plummer who showed them round the observatory. Plummer must have given a good account of himself as this meeting proved to be the start of an association with the society. In ensuing years Plummer gave several public astronomy lectures in Ipswich.

John Plummer's lectures in Ipswich

Title	Date
The Cometary System	2 nd December 1874
The Aurora Borealis	5 th June 1878
Meteors	3 rd March 1880
Stars	3 rd December 1890

John Plummer was elected to the RAS on 11th February 1876 and made an honorary member of the Ipswich Science Society in 1880

The reports in the local newspapers (Suffolk Chronicle and the East Anglian Daily Times), on Plummer's lectures make interesting reading. Many of his ideas on various topics are very similar to our present ones. The study of comets was Plummer's speciality. He believed that the importance of understanding comets would increase compared to what was known about them in the second half of the nineteenth century. In this he has been proved right, culminating in the observations of the 1986 apparition of Halley's comet with his telescope. Plummer also held strong beliefs on the association of comets with meteor streams.

John Plummer claimed to be the first person in England to investigate the Aurora Borealis with a spectroscope. He was only a few months behind such well known scientists as, Angstrom in Sweden and Struve in Russia. Plummer found that the spectrum was simple and puzzling. It consisted in most cases of a single line in the green part of the spectrum. This did not coincide with any known line of oxygen or nitrogen, nor any other line of other known elements. It is now known to belong to oxygen.

After settling in Nacton Plummer began to finalise the direction that his principle research effort. He chose to study comets. In the next sixteen years Plummer observed 43 Comets. His observations concentrated only on their movements across the sky. No magnitude estimates were made. John Plummer published all of his cometary observations. From 1874 to 1886 in the *Astronomische Nachrichten* and in the *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*, from 1886 to 1890.

Nothing is known of this wife except that her name was Marion. They had a daughter, Beatrice Mary born on 9th August 1876 and a son, John Archibald born on 19th January 1878.

The Transit of Venus on December 6th 1882

Venus transits the sun twice within an eight year gap and then not for another 130 years. Transits occurred in 1874 and 1882, and will not occur again until 2004 and 2012. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries expeditions were sent out to observe these phenomena. At the time this was the most accurate method of determining the distance of the sun, by timing the passage of Venus across the sun's disc.

Three expeditions were sent out for the 1882 transit. The first expedition went to the Cape of Good Hope and Madagascar. The transit here would begin in mid afternoon. The second expedition went to the West Indies. This group would resume the observation after the sun had set in South Africa. The third expedition had the furthest to travel, they went to Australia and New Zealand, where the end of the transit would be observed.

John Plummer volunteered to go on the expedition to the West Indies, as an observer. The expedition was split between three observing sites, to be stationed at Jamaica, Barbados and Bermuda. This gave a greater chance of at least one party having clear skies. Plummer was part of the team that was stationed on Bermuda. The West Indian Expedition had booked passage on a Royal Mail Steamer, leaving Southampton on October 17th. A bright pre-dawn comet was seen during the voyage. This was probably Barnard 1882 III. The expedition took him away from Nacton for about four months. An account exists for the Jamaican site, which probably serves as a guide for the other two locations. The equipment at each observing site was as follows: -

- Two 6" equatorially mounted refractors.
- A transit telescope
- One or two sidereal clocks together with several chronometers.

Each group consisted of two observers, who would make independent measurements of the transit, and an assistant who was a soldier from the Royal Marine Artillery. On his return, the following year, John Plummer gave a lecture on the Transit of Venus at Harwich.

John Plummer probably left Orwell Park either in late 1890 or early the following year. His last known engagement was on 3rd December when he gave a talk on Stars to the Ipswich Scientific Society.

After John Isaac Plummer M.A. F.R.A.S. left Orwell Park, he faded into obscurity. In 1894 his name was removed from the R.A.S. fellows list, probably for not paying his subscription. The last known work Plummer did was in 1910 when he published a book in Hong Kong entitled "The Origin of Typhoons". Perhaps the poor British weather frustrated his sky watching so much that he spent his last days studying that which had always hindered his observational work at Orwell Park

John Plummer died at Oxshott, Surrey, on 6th February 1925, aged 80. To this day the prolific observations that he made with the Orwell Park telescope are still on record at Burlington House, Piccadilly London.

List of Comets Observed by John Plummer

Comet Name	Catalogue Number	Dates Observed		Perihelion Date
		From	To	
Coggia	1874 III	?	?	July 9 th
Coggia	1874 V	23-8-74	14-11-74	July 18 th
Borrelly	1877 I	27-2-77	17-3-77	January 19 th
Winnecke -Swift	1877 II	12-4-77	17-5-77	April 18 th
Swift- Borrelly-Block	1877 III	3-5-77	17-5-77	April 27 th
Temple	1877 V	4-10-77	14-10-77	June 27 th
Coggia	1877 VI	3-10-77	6-10-77	September 11 th
Brorsen	1879 I	29-3-79	19-5-79	March 31 st
Swift	1879 II	26-6-79	24-7-79	April 27 th
Hertwig	1879 IV	8-9-79	15-9-79	August 29 th
Palisa	1879 V	10-9-79	15-10-79	October 5 th
Schaeberle	1880 II	30-4-80	9-9-80	July 2 nd
Hartwig	1880 III	18-10-80	25-11-80	September 7 th
Pechula	1880 V	21-12-80	31-1-81	November 9 th
Tebbutt	1881 III	24-6-81	17-11-81	June 16 th
Schaeberle	1881 IV	27-7-81	28-8-81	August 22 nd
Wells	1882 I			June 11 th
Barnard	1882 III	22-9-82	22-9-82	November 13 th
Brooks-Swift	1883 I	3-3-83	9-4-83	February 19 th
Pons-Brooks	1884 I	8-9-83	28-1-84	January 26 th
Wolf	1884 III	25-9-84	7-3-85	November 18 th
Encke	1885 I	18-2-85	1-3-85	March 8 th
Barnard	1885 II	17-7-85		August 6 th
Fabry	1886 I	30-1-86	11-3-85	April 6 th
Barnard	1886 II	8-3-86	27-4-86	May 3 rd
Brooks	1886 V	6-5-86	20-5-86	June 7 th
Finley	1886 VII	18-11-86	25-2-87	November 23 rd
Barnard	1886 VIII	13-2-87	20-5-87	November 28 th
Barnard-Hartwig	1886 IX	22-10-86	10-1-87	December 16 th
Brooks	1887 II	12-2-87	23-4-87	March 17 th
Barnard	1887 III	28-2-87	10-4-87	March 28 th
Barnard	1887 IV	9-6-87	28-7-87	June 17 th
Olbers-Brooks	1887 V	12-9-87	10-2-88	October 8 th
Sawerthal	1888 I	3-4-88	10-8-88	March 17 th
Brooks	1888 III	29-8-88	8-10-88	July 31 st
Barnard	1888 V	13-11-88	25-5-89	September 13 th
Barnard	1889 I	11-9-88	22-7-89	January 31 st
Barnard	1889 II	5-9-89	31-10-89	June 11 th
Davidson	1889 IV	29-8-89	13-11-89	July 19 th
Brooks	1889 V	29-8-89	12-2-90	September 30 th
Swift	1889 VI	11-12-89	24-12-89	November 30 th
Borrelly	1890 I	25-12-89		January 26 th
Brooks	1890 II	16-4-90	24-5-90	June 2 nd

John Plummer's Published Papers and Reports From Orwell Park Observatory

Papers In the Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society

Title	Publication date	MNRAS volume
On the Proper Motion of Bradley's Star	January 1876	36
Photometric Experiments Upon the Light of Venus	June 1876	36
On the conjunction of Venus and λ Geminorum	January 1877	37
On the collection of Light and Distribution of the Fixed Stars	June 1877	37
On the Supposed Influence of a Mass of Brickwork upon the Errors of a Transit Instrument in its Neighbourhood	May 1878	38
The Transit of Mercury May 6 th 1878	June 1878	38

Yearly Observatory Reports Published in the Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society

Report Year	Publication date	MNRAS volume
1874	February 1875	35
1875	February 1876	36
1876	February 1877	37
1877	February 1878	38
1878	February 1879	39
1879	February 1880	40
1880	February 1881	41
1881	February 1882	42
1882 / 1883	February 1884	44
1884	February 1885	45
1885 / 1886	February 1887	47
1887	February 1888	48
1888	February 1889	49
1889	February 1890	50

Cometary Reports Published in the Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society

Publication date	MNRAS volume
November 1887	48
December 1888	49
April 1889	49
November 1890	51

Cometary Reports Published in the Astronomische Nachrichten

Date Submitted	Volume
17 th March 1875	2034
15 th November 1878	2237
6 th February 1880	2301
29 th November 1881	2411
19 th December 1881	2415
13 th February 1882	2424
14 th March 1884	2592
4 th September 1884	2623
25 th March 1886	2723
27 th September 1886	2754

Other Published Papers

Title	Publication	Date Published
Personal equation in the tabulation of thermographs	Nature	Vol. 12 1875
The Nebular Hypothesis: its present condition	Popular Science Review	Vol. 12 1875
Height of Aurora	Nature	Vol. 22 1880

Reports on John Plummer's Lectures

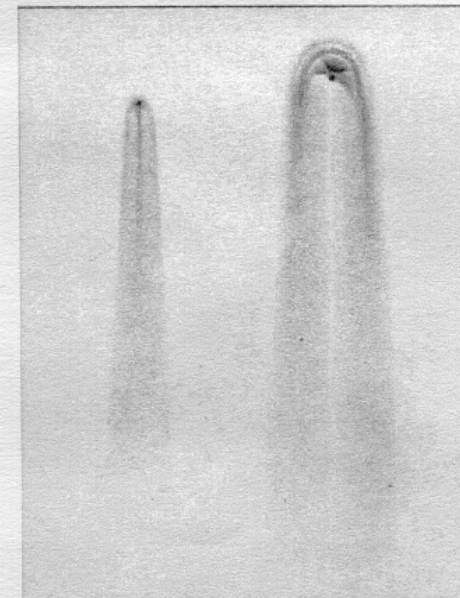
Lecture Title	Lecture Date	Date Published	Publication
The Cometary System	2 nd December 1874	5 th December 1874	Suffolk Chronicle
The Aurora Borealis	5 th June 1878	8 th June 187 6 th June	Suffolk Chronicle East Anglian Daily Times
Meteors	3 rd March 1880	4 th March 1880	East Anglian Daily Times
Stars	3 rd December 1890	4 th December 1890	East Anglian Daily Times

COMET COGGIA, (C/1874 H1=1874 III).

This is an account by James McLauchlan of one of the comets observed by Plummer. His account was published in the 1889 version of a British Encyclopaedia. This was found via a Web search.

The comet was visible to the naked eye from January to the end of August

Date	Description
Mid June	5 th magnitude
End of June	3 rd magnitude
July 6 th	2 nd magnitude with a 10° tail
July 9 th	Conjunction with the sun. Was north of the sun and visible all night in Lynx
July 13 th	Brighter than Capella. Tail 20° to 30° long.
July 18 th	Comet head lost in twilight. Tail about 48° long
July 20 th	Tail up to 63° long. Passed into the southern hemisphere
July 23 th	Passed near to Procyon and of similar magnitude
End of July	2 nd Magnitude and passed close to Sirius
Mid August	4 th to 5 th magnitude. Close to Canopus



Coggia's Comet as seen at
June 10th and July 9th

Summary of Committee Meeting Held 2003 February 15

Present: Ken Goward, Garry Coleman, Paddy O'Sullivan, Ted Sampson, Roy Gooding, Eric Sims, Martin Cook, Paul Whiting, James Appleton, Mike Whybray

Apologies: Peter Richards

Chairman's Report – Ken Goward

The following table lists the areas of responsibility of committee members for 2003.

Name	Post	Responsibilities
Kenneth J Goward	Chairman	Press publicity. Open Weekend.
Roy Gooding	Secretary	Main point of Society contact. Observatory decoration. Visits by potential new members.
Garry Coleman	Treasurer	
James Appleton	Committee	Committee meeting minutes. Web site.
Martin Cook	Committee	Membership. Tomline Refractor maintenance.
Paddy O'Sullivan	Committee	Equipment curator. Security & Safety (jointly with Mike Whybray).
Ted Sampson	Committee	Training – including Workshops & Tomline Refractor tutoring
Eric Sims	Committee	Newsletter
Mike Whybray	Committee	Librarian. Security & Safety (jointly with Paddy O'Sullivan)
Peter Richards	Co-opted	Lecture meetings.
Paul Whiting	Co-opted	Visits by outside groups.

Each committee member will run his area with agreement of the Treasurer for financial matters. Each committee member will report progress at committee meetings and will refer to the full committee any proposals for significant changes of policy or major expenditure.

The committee noted Dave Payne's invaluable service to OASI as Chairman 1981–2002 and agreed to make a presentation to Dave at the Presidential Lecture on 07 March.

Secretary's Report – Roy Gooding

Roy has dealt with various enquiries from prospective new members of OASI. This has resulted in some visits to Orwell Park Observatory and at least two new members joining.

FAS has proposed to offer an email distribution service for its Newsletters. Members of OASI interested in receiving FAS Newsletters electronically should contact Roy.

The committee agreed not to hold an Open Weekend in 2003 but to hold one early in 2004.

Roy is investigating holding an OASI-SPA astronomical convention in Ipswich with a big-name external speaker and speakers from OASI and SPA. The event would be in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the SPA. The likely date would be a Saturday afternoon and/or evening in late September or early October.

Treasurer's Report – Garry Coleman

OASI funds are currently in good shape, with a balance of £2408.92. This should enable expenditure of circa £1400 during 2003 while leaving a healthy reserve.

Garry is assembling a bid to *Awards for All* for funding for presentation equipment. The bid amounts to £5000 towards a total proposed expenditure of £5563.35.

Membership – Martin Cook

OASI currently has 114 members including 7 honoraries. Eighty-eight members are currently paid up with 26 still to pay. Members not renewing subscriptions by March 2003 will be deemed to have resigned from OASI.

Training - Ted Sampson

The 5th series of astronomy workshops is currently under way, with five workshops held to date and three to go. Ted expects to run a 6th series of workshops if there is demand for it and there are volunteers to present topics.

The first Monday “extra” observing night has been held. Fourteen members attended. Ted will host another three Monday “extra” observing nights then review.

Ted will again run Tomline Refractor training sessions for interested members of OASI. Four members have agreed to be trainers: Mike Nicholls, Mike Whybray, Paddy O'Sullivan, Ted Sampson. The main training sessions will held on Wednesday evenings, two per month, in the Dome. Ted will advertise the training schedule in the Newsletter. Any members of OASI interested in training should contact Ted.

Newsletter – Eric Sims

Eric will distribute the *OASI Information for Members* booklet (new, updated version) to all members of OASI with the May Newsletter.

Web Site – James Appleton

The web site is accessible at: <http://www.ast.cam.ac.uk/~ipswich/index.html>

The web site provides a “shop window” into the activities of OASI. It generally attracts a handful of queries every month, some of which translate into new members. Any members with astronomical material or reports that they think might be of general interest should contact James who will add them to the Web site.

Equipment – Paddy O'Sullivan

Paddy recently began cleaning eyepieces with help from St John Robinson.

The Tomline Refractor o/g was cleaned on Wednesday 11 February.

Ken Goward has purchased an electric focuser for the ETX 125.

The committee agreed to allocate £150 to purchase new eyepieces primarily for use with the small telescopes on the balconies.

Maintenance – Martin Cook

The committee hopes to complete library refurbishment during 2003, hopefully in time for the mini-convention with SPA. Work will start again circa May once the main observing season is over.

A forthcoming major piece of maintenance will be the repainting of all the windows on balcony. One window is out of action (closed permanently) for safety reasons and needs to be repaired.

Security & Safety – Paddy O'Sullivan, Mike Whybray

All members of OASI must wear their identity lanyards when visiting the observatory.

Members of OASI should not visit Orwell Park Observatory alone.

Library – Mike Whybray

Mike has not purchased much for the library recently, pending completion of the library refurbishment.

Mike is checking OASI's computer software and will update as necessary.

Visits – Paul Whiting

The committee expressed thanks to Paul for making the OASI visits program such a success and for personally attending every visit of the last season!

Paul has organised a full program of visits for the 2002-2003 season.

Lectures – Pete Richards

Peter will be organising the next series of lectures for Oct/Nov onwards.

Observing Strategy

The committee agreed to put the item *Observing Strategy* on the standard agenda. The recent *Pleiades Observing Project* had been successful and the committee would encourage similar observing projects in the future. The close approach of Mars in August presents itself as a suitable opportunity for another observing project.

Dark Skies

The Science and Technology Committee of the House of Commons is to conduct an inquiry into light pollution and astronomy. The OASI committee agreed to contact Bob Mizon, BAA, to offer our support to a co-ordinated submission to the inquiry.

Any Other Business

The committee agreed to use the Orwell Park science classroom for future committee meetings.

The committee agreed to hold future committee meetings on Saturday nights.

Date of Next Meeting

Saturday 26 April 2003 at 19:30 in the School science classroom. All members are welcome to attend.

Full minutes of committee meetings are posted on the noticeboard in Orwell Park Observatory. Please contact any member of the committee if you require any further information about the above committee meeting or any other aspect of the running of OASI.

James Appleton
08 March 2003

2003 COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN & PUBLICITY
 SECRETARY &
 WORK PARTY ORGANISER
 TREASURER
 MECHANICS & MEMBERSHIP
 NEWSLETTER CO-ORDINATOR
 ASTRONOMY WORKSHOP
 WEB SITE & MEETING MINUTES
 EQUIPMENT CURATOR
 LIBRARIAN

K Goward
 R Gooding
 G Coleman
 M Cook
 E Sims
 T Sampson
 J Appleton
 P O'Sullivan
 M Whybray

Home Phone Work Phone



CO-OPTED MEMBERS
 LECTURE CO-ORDINATOR
 VISITS BY OUTSIDE GROUPS

P Richards
 Paul Whiting

JOURNAL ARTICLES TO
 CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS

E Sims Ipswich Suffolk IP1 4HA
 R Gooding OASI Secretary
 Ipswich Suffolk IP1 6AE

MEMBERSHIP

M. Cook Ipswich IP4 5PZ

Observing Programme For April

Dates	Observing Director	Activities
Monday 7th April	P O' Sullivan	Small Telescopes Night
Monday 21st April	T Sampson	Topic Lep
Tuesday 22nd April	F Flynn	Astronomy Course
Wednesdays 2nd 9th 16th 23rd 30th from 8.00	M Cook D Payne	Nebular & Faint Objects
Thursday 3rd April	St Albans School	Group Visit
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 2nd APRIL

The Astronomy Workshop starts at 7.45pm on Wednesday 2nd April. The topic is " Comets, Asteroids, and Impacts ". The Presenter is Richard Lyzinski.

2. COMMITTEE MEETING 26th APRIL

The next Committee Meeting is to be held on Saturday the 26th April at 7.30pm in the class room at Orwell Park School. All members are welcome to attend.

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/>