



The Newsletter

of the
Orwell Astronomical Society (Ipswich)



Registered charity No 271313
www.oasi.org.uk

2007 November

No 424

WE HAVE A GO TO LAUNCH TOWARDS NEW HORIZONS



Lift-off from Cape Canaveral at the Kennedy Space Centre
Image courtesy of NASA www.nasa.gov

On 2006 January 19th NASA Launched its New Horizons mission to explore into the Kuiper Belt region of our solar system and make a close pass of the Dwarf Planet Pluto and its sister object (Moon) Charon in a mere 2,820 days* from now.

On 2007 October 20th OASI launched towards its own New Horizons when at its first ever Extraordinary General Meeting, members voted unanimously to adopt the agreed terms of a new Orwell Park Observatory Operating Licence and to pave the way towards cooperation with the Orwell Park School for a fund raising venture to bring about a full and faithful restoration of the Observatory and its tower, hopefully in somewhat quicker time than NASA. *See message from the Chairman inside...*

* As of 2007, Wednesday 24th October – for the pedants amongst you!

Society News from the Secretary

(Roy Gooding)

1 Events for 2007

This event list will be updated through out the year

Meeting	Venue	Date
Lecture Meeting Dr. David Whitehouse	Orwell Park School	Friday 16 th November 20:00
Christmas Meal See menu choice	The Lodge Bourne Hill	Wednesday 12 th from 20:00

2 Welcome to New Members

There have been no new members since the last Newsletter issue.

3 Access into the School Grounds and Observatory Tower

Please use the third gate into the school grounds, this is the gate behind the Gym. If the Black door entrance at the base of the observatory tower is locked, you will have to phone someone in the observatory to let you in. My mobile number is [REDACTED]. (Roy Gooding) alternatively the Observatory mobile is [REDACTED] during meeting hours.

4 Lecture Meeting Venue

Our town lecture venue is now at the Methodist Church, in Blackhorse Lane. The church has a car park that can accommodate about 30 cars. Alternatively there is a Park & Display car park at the top of Black Horse Lane, next too the old Town Council Offices. This is about 100 yards form the church. Black Horse Lane has only one entrance, which is from Elm Street. This is just past the Police Station, if you are arriving from Civic Drive. The church car park is on the right, just past the Black Horse pub

5 Christmas Meal Venue

The Lodge Restaurant is at the top of Bourne Hill Wherstead. Go up the road that passes the Oyster Reach, **not the A137**

The menu was in October's newsletter. There are still a few places available. If you would like to come, please contact Roy Gooding. I will stop taking any more bookings in the middle of November.

6 Observing Projects for 2007

Occultation's

Graze

Date	Star	Track Time
Thursday 1 st November	ZC1221	01:53:24
Sunday 30 th December	μ Leo	03:04:37

Pleiades

Date	Time
21 st December	21:00

Meteor Watches

Showers	Maximum Date	Moon Age	Observing Date
Geminids	December 14 th	5 days	Saturday 15 th

Night Sky (November)

The Moon

Last Quarter	New	First Quarter	Full
1 st	9 th	17 th	24 th

Object	Date	Times		Mag.	Notes
		Rise	Set		
Sun	1	06:59	16:37		
	30	07:48	07:48		
Mercury	1	05:29	16:15	-0.5	Is at greatest western elongation on the 8 th
	30	06:55	15:31		
Venus	1	02:33	15:17	-4.3	Venus is unmistakable in the pre-drawn sky
	30	03:35	14:27		
Mars	1	19:47	12:36	-1.2	Mars is very well placed for observations, in Gemini
	30	17:40	10:52		
Jupiter	1	10:44	18:32	-1.8	Jupiter is in Ophiuchus
	30	09:19	17:02		
Saturn	1	01:01	14:56	0.8	Saturn remains in Leo
	30	23:13	13:06		
Uranus	1	14:59	02:00	5.7	Uranus is in Aquarius
	30	13:05	00:05		
Neptune	1	14:08	23:30	7.8	Neptune is in Capricornus
	30	12:14	21:37		

Meteor Showers

Shower	Limits	Maximum	ZHR
Taurids	October 20 th to November 30 th	November 3 rd	10
Leonids	November 15 th to 20 th	November 18 th 05:00	20

Meteor source is the BAA Handbook

OCCULTATIONS DURING NOVEMBER

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.

Date	UT	D R	Lunar Phase	Sun Alt (d)	Star Alt (d)	Mag	Star
18 Nov	19:36:45	D	0.59+	-33	27	6.5	ZC 3313
19 Nov	17:14:14	D	0.69+	-11	28	6.6	ZC 3431
19 Nov	23:31:58	D	0.71+	-57	16	6.3	11 Psc
20 Nov	20:56:08	D	0.80+	-45	41	7.1	ZC 30
23 Nov	16:47:08	D	0.99+	-8	17	4.6	Epsilon Ari

There is one grazing occultation visible from East Anglia during November. The following table provides details of the event.

Date	UT	Lunar Phase	Sun Alt (deg)	Star Alt (deg)	Star Az (deg)	L	Mag	Star
01 Nov	02:06	0.58-	-42	43	109	S	6.0	9 Cnc

The graze track is as follows: Chevington (SW of Bury St Edmunds), Elmswell, Worlingworth, S of Heveningham, S of Bramfield and out to sea at Walberswick.

Observation Report

Paul Whiting *FRAS*

2007/09/07 23:00 to 2007/09/08 05:00 local

North Beach, Dunk Island, Australia

146° 8' E 17° 56' S

Seeing very good, very transparent sky initially, progressively deteriorating towards dawn. Negligible light pollution.

The most notable thing we noticed during this 6 hour observation period was the blindingly bright Milky Way, with very pronounced dust trails. This was quite possibly the best view I have ever seen of the Milky Way.

The southern circumpolar constellations proved a little difficult to identify, as most of them consist of only 2 or 3 naked eye stars, however the Celestron SkyScout proved invaluable in identifying these southern stars and constellations.

Scorpio was incredibly prominent overhead, with Jupiter sitting right next to the bright red star Antares. Finding the "teapot" of Sagittarius enabled the zodiacal constellations to be identified. The southern cross pointers (alpha and beta Centaurus) leading to Crux, were prominent, which in turn points to the southern celestial pole.

5 Piscid meteors were observed during the session (a bit early, but they are a long drawn out shower), plus one sporadic, possibly an Aurigid.

The following is a list of individual objects viewed with either naked eye or 18x50 stabilised binoculars.

- Small Magellanic Cloud
- 47 Tucanae, 4th mag globular cluster
- M42 / M43 Orion Nebula (Orion upside down!)
- M45 Pleiades

- Sigma Octantis (the South Pole star)
- Mercury - evening object
- Venus - morning object
- Mars
- Jupiter
- Uranus (identified via SkyScout and identification map) - binocular
- Neptune (seen as being one of several objects in the field of view) - binocular

The Moon was a nice 26 day old crescent "smile", with incredibly bright earthshine. The "bunny rabbit" (or the man in the moon) was clearly seen by earthlight. In fact the next day Venus was very close to the really thin crescent, see picture.



A Message from the Chairman

For the first time in its 40 year existence, I felt compelled to call an Extraordinary General Meeting of our society on 2007, Saturday 20th October. This came about as the result of protracted negotiations with the management of Orwell Park School over our occupancy of the Observatory and because the jointly arrived at proposals have implications for a wholesale revision of our practices there and for our partnership with the school. By an amazing twist, the event coincided with an unexpected surge of interest in the TV screening of the world Rugby Cup Final for which England had qualified quite against the prevailing form, but despite this an encouraging twenty members attended and submissions were read out from a further five who had previous engagements.

You will know that our access hours have been altered in light of stringent new security requirements for all schools with pupils actually resident on the premises and that the new operating licence has been simplified into a plain English form, which is renewable on an annual basis. There is an inbuilt presumption of renewal and either side has the option to withdraw from the arrangements after a 12 month notice period if some unforeseen/unlikely event should occur. The bad news was that the big hurdle for OASI is the revised annual payment, which would rise from £100 to £500 and – *obviously* – that's a significant financial hit for a small charitable learned society with a relatively tiny annual turnover like ours. The good news is that we would have a secured future there and, working in partnership with the school, begin to bring about the professional refurbishment and restoration of the whole of the Observatory tower to a very high standard of repair internally and externally - listed building status being a long-term goal.

There was a frank, forthright and constructive exchange of differing views at the meeting –by any standard surely the mark of an open and healthy non-hidebound group. The end result being the proposal and seconding of the below resolution, which was adopted by a unanimous vote:

- We will sign up to the proposed new licence.
- We will create a committee post to coordinate an examination of the possibility of leaving Orwell Park and re-forming OASI elsewhere.
- The committee will keep the licence under review with a view to renegotiating it in future if necessary.

The resolution means that subject to our operations at Orwell Park running well under the new occupancy terms (licence) we shall stay there. However, with a view to the future we will look at alternative means of continuing OASI away from Orwell Park if those arrangements are deemed unworkable after the first year. That DOES NOT mean to say that our intention is to quit, rather it means that we will consider other options which may upon detailed investigation prove to be either more or less appropriate to our needs - fit for purpose if you prefer buzz phrases. The general feeling was that OASI and the Orwell Park Observatory are more or less inseparable so far as it is possible to predict, but common sense dictates that we should think long-term.

Of course, we now have to deal with the thorny issue of subscription levels and you have my assurance that we are NOT out to sting members for all we can grab. My hope is that you will agree OASI membership fees are extremely reasonable and offer excellent value in today's climate? However, mention was made at the EGM of a general malaise – for want of a better description – within OASI when it comes to swelling our financial coffers. There is no getting away from the notion that we do need to up the anti, as it were – especially with a weather eye to the future. As I type this it is too early to say how that might reflect upon 2008 subscription levels and there has been no opportunity to consult either our Treasurer or the wider Committee – something that we shall have to address expeditiously.

Wearing my Optimist's hat and looking towards a rosy future, the UNESCO/UN/IAU designated International Year of Astronomy (IYA2009) comes inexorably closer and in very early stage informal discussion with the school's Business Manager, Simon Dodsworth, we sense an opportunity to launch under the school's aegis a fund raising appeal for the aforesaid Observatory restoration project which will need to generate a significant sum to realise our joint ambition. IYA2009 marks the 400th anniversary of the first use of the telescope for Astronomical purposes and the 40th anniversary of the first manned lunar landing.

Forgive me for closing this message with a quotation from the sage wisdom of USA President Abraham Lincoln, laid before the EGM. It comes from Lincoln's second address to the US Congress in 1862, December and although meant in the context of a background of more than a year of bloody civil war in which the Confederate States of America looked to have the decisive upper hand over the old union, it has a peculiar and distinctive resonance to the situation in which OASI presently finds itself. Lincoln said;

"The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew, and act anew".

Given that Lincoln was assassinated immediately after the close of that awful conflict – I'd best leave it there!

Best wishes

Ken

Kenneth J. Goward FRAS

Chairman, Orwell Astronomical Society (Ipswich)

NB. I would be happy to send a copy of the meeting minutes to any member upon request – see contact details inside back page.

Small News Letter

As you can see from the size of the newsletter articles are a bit short on the ground. All I need is for a few of you to put together a few lines of words, add a few pictures of your experiences, then you will have created an article to help expand the newsletter.

The main idea in the production of our newsletter is that every article is the product of a member of the Orwell Astronomical Society, not information gleaned from other publications.

So now I will have to leave it up to all our members To think up some way of helping to expand the newsletter and make my job a bit easier.

If too many articles turn up at the same time I can always save some for the following months.

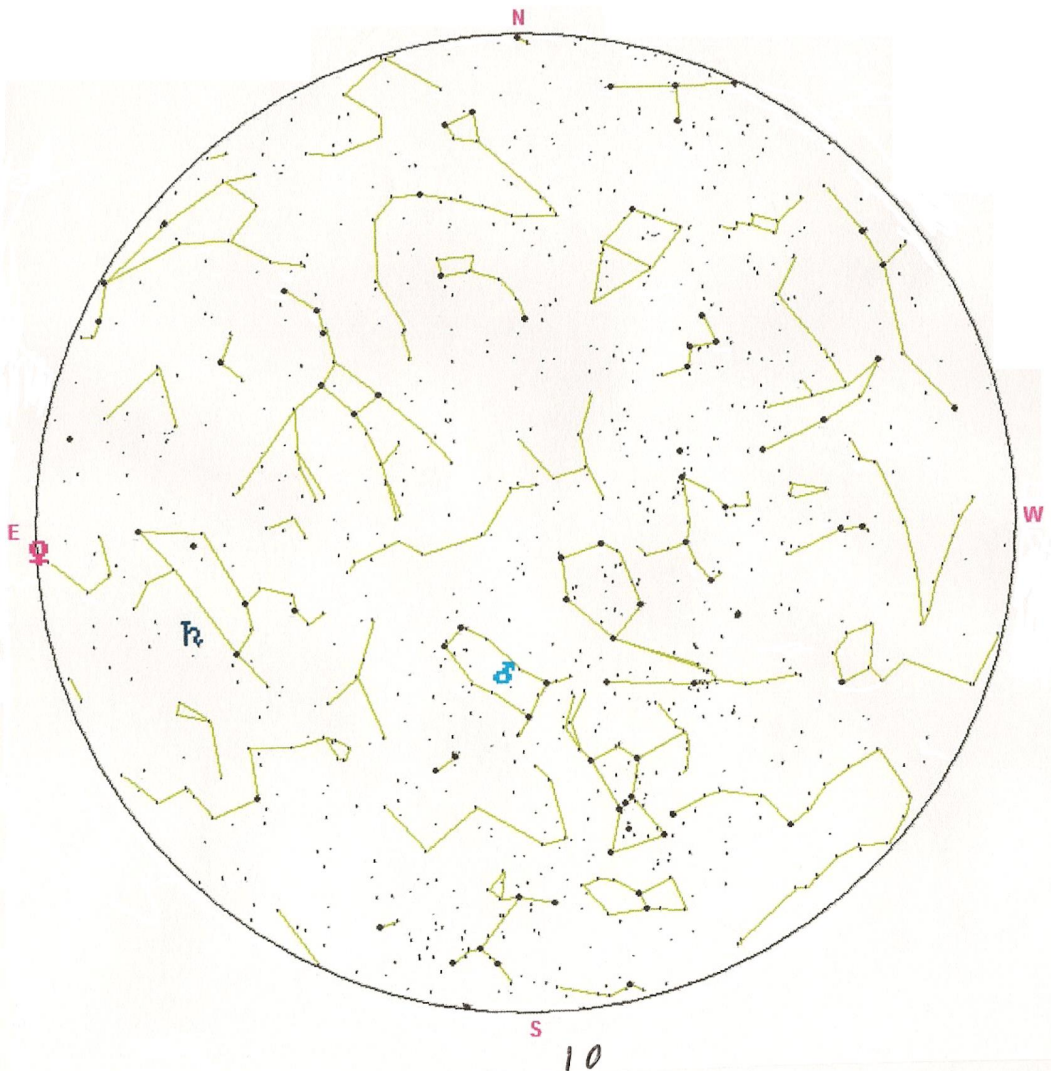
The format needed for all articles is A5. Articles can be sent direct to me at [REDACTED] as an attachment.

Thanking you in anticipation.

E.W.F. Sims

11/15/2007 10:01:46 PM
London England

	Planet	Azimuth	Altitude
♀	Venus	272° 45' 09.5"	+ 00° 29' 19.7"
♂	Mars	351° 22' 20.3"	+ 62° 14' 50.6"
♄	Saturn	287° 44' 42.3"	+ 25° 57' 08.7"



OASI Committee Contacts & Responsibilities

Kenneth J. Goward FRAS	Chairman	☎	Press & Publicity with Secretary.
Roy Gooding	Secretary	☎	MAIN POINT OF SOCIETY CONTACT Press Publicity with Chairman. Observatory Decoration. Visits by potential new members.
Mike Harlow	Treasurer	☎	Finance. Supervision of Grant Applications.
James Appleton	Committee	☎	Committee Meeting Minutes. Web Site.
Martin Cook	Committee	☎	Membership. Tomline Refractor Maintenance.
Neil Morley	Committee	☎	Equipment Curator.
Peter Richards	Committee	☎	Lecture Meetings. School Lighting liaison. Email Distribution Lists.
Eric Sims	Committee	☎	Newsletter.
Mike Whybray	Committee	☎	Librarian & Workshops.
Paul Whiting FRAS	Committee	☎	Visits by outside groups.
Bill Barton FRAS	Committee	☎	Safety & Security.



We would still like your ideas (STILL NO REPLIES AS YET!) on how OASI might contribute to The International Year of Astronomy, 2009 – 400th Anniversary of the Telescope.

- *What kind of local event or commemoration would you wish to see?*
- *Your opinion counts!!*

Diary for November

Monday 5th & 19th FROM 8.15PM	<u>SMALL TELESCOPE OBSERVING SESSIONS (STONS)</u> Observing Target: Constellations Pisces & Cetus. ☎ Paddy O'Sullivan [REDACTED] ☎ Gerry Pilling [REDACTED]
Wednesdays FROM 8PM	<u>MAIN OBSERVATORY CLUB NIGHTS</u> Primary Observational targets: Nebulae and faint objects. ☎ Martin Cook [REDACTED] (mobile) [REDACTED] ☎ Roy Gooding [REDACTED] (mobile) [REDACTED]
Wednesday 7th FROM 7.30PM NACTON VILLAGE HALL	<u>MONTHLY WORKSHOP</u> <i>Millennium Telescope Observing Night</i> Organised by Neil Morley and the MMT Construction Team. Other telescopes welcome – bring your Binoculars and Sky maps. If cloudy we'll have some alternative activity inside the hall... ☎ Mike Whybray [REDACTED]
Thursday 22nd 7.30PM	<u>OBSERVATORY VISIT BY AN OUTSIDE GROUP</u> 1 st Bramford Cubs. ☎ Paul Whiting FRAS [REDACTED]

Society Primary Contacts

Chairman: Kenneth J. Goward FRAS ☎ [REDACTED] (daytime & evenings)
Secretary: Roy Gooding ☎ [REDACTED] (daytime) [REDACTED] (evenings)
E-Mail queries: Ipswich@ast.cam.ac.uk

Society Trustees

Mr Roy Adams Mr David Brown Mr David Payne

Society Honorary President

Professor Allan Chapman D.Phil MA FRAS

Observatory Telephone Number

Meeting nights only
[REDACTED]