



The Newsletter

of the

Orwell Astronomical Society (Ipswich)



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www.oasi.org.uk

2007 December

No 425

*Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a Mouse
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care...
What the 'bleep bleep' was that?*

So might Clement C. Moore's enchanting verses have gone for the residents of the village of Barwell, Leicestershire on Christmas Eve 1965. Shortly before 4.15pm a Fireball flashed across much of England and what remained of the object exploded into small pieces over the village, showering thousands of particles around. One piece landed on a car bonnet, another made a fair sized hole in a driveway and another even entered a house through an open window, coming to rest in a flower vase without breaking same! Luckily nobody was hurt, and to this day local roofing contractors occasionally find small pieces of the object lodged between tiles and in guttering.



A cross section example of a Carbonaceous Chondrite (not from Barwell)

The object - a Carbonaceous Chondrite originating from the Asteroid belt, and around 4.5 billion years old - is thought to have been about the size of a desk when it initially entered our atmosphere and, appropriately, the size of a Turkey when it disintegrated.

We'll refrain from any Bird Flu jokes!

Society News (Roy Gooding)

1 Events for 2007

This event list will be updated through out the year

Meeting	Venue	Date
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**

6 Observing Projects for 2007

Occultation's

Graze

Date	Star	Track Time
Sunday 30 th December	μ Leo	03:04:37

Pleiades

Date	Time
21 st December	21:00

Meteor Watches

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

7 Geminid Meteor Watch

The meeting will be on Saturday 15th December at 20:00

The venue will be on the cliff top, behind Brackenbury Refreshment Hut

The maximum is on Friday 14th December

Directions for those who do not know this part of Old Felixstowe

- From Hamilton Road roundabout, take the turning into High Road East
- Once you are parallel with the cliff top, the car park is behind the trees on the right, just past the open area of grass, where Brackenbury Fort was one located

If you interested please contact Roy Gooding, Martin Cook and James Appleton

CAN YOU HELP?

OASI member, Peter Grimer, is without transport these days and although physically not able to get around quite as much as he would like, he would be most grateful if anyone could offer him the occasional lift to Orwell Park Observatory or to the Workshop evenings?

Peter lives in Woodbridge and he can be contacted by telephone:

Night Sky (December)

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	07:50	15:57		
	31	08:13	16:02		
Mercury	1	07:01	15:30	-0.5	Is at superior conjunction on the 17 th
	31	09:01	16:27		
Venus	1	03:37	14:25	-4.0	Venus is unmistakable in the pre-drawn sky
	31	04:59	13:47		
Mars	1	17:35	10:47	-1.7	Mars is very well placed for observations, in Gemini. At opposition on the 24 th
	31	14:38	08:16		
Jupiter	1	09:16	16:59	-1.8	Jupiter in conjunction with the sun on the 23 rd
	31	07:48	15:30		
Saturn	1	23:09	13:02	0.8	Saturn remains in Leo
	31	21:12	11:05		
Uranus	1	13:01	23:57	5.7	Uranus is in Aquarius
	31	11:04	22:02		
Neptune	1	12:11	21:34	7.8	Neptune is in Capricornus
	31	10:14	19:40		

Meteor Showers

Shower	Limits	Maximum	ZHR
Geminids	December 7 th to 16 th	December 14 th 11 hours	15
Ursids	December 17 th to 25 th	December 22 nd	10

Meteor source is the BAA Handbook



OCCULTATIONS DURING DECEMBER

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
01 Dec	04:19:13	D	0.53-	-30	44	5.6	44 Leo
	04:36:17	R		-27	45		
19 Dec	18:26:09	D	0.75+	-23	49	6.7	104 Psc
20 Dec	19:26:53	D	0.85+	-33	55	7.2	Hip 12319
21 Dec	21:22:04	D	0.93+	-49	62	5.4	Celaeno
21 Dec	21:24:06	D	0.93+	-50	62	4.3	Taygeta
21 Dec	21:45:09	D	0.93+	-52	63	5.8	Asterope
21 Dec	21:52:12	D	0.93+	-53	62	3.9	Maia
	22:30:13	R		-57	61		
21 Dec	21:55:09	D	0.93+	-54	63	5.7	18 Tau
23 Dec	22:07:36	D	1.00+	-55	59	6.0	ZC 909

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

Date	UT	Lunar Phase	Sun Alt (deg)	Star Alt (deg)	Star Az (deg)	L	Mag	Star
30 Dec	03:17	0.61-	-42	33	149	S	4.3	Ups Leo

The graze track is as follows: Chevington (SW of Bury St Edmunds), Lavenham, Layham (S of Hadleigh), Brantham, Great Oakley and out to sea at the Naze.

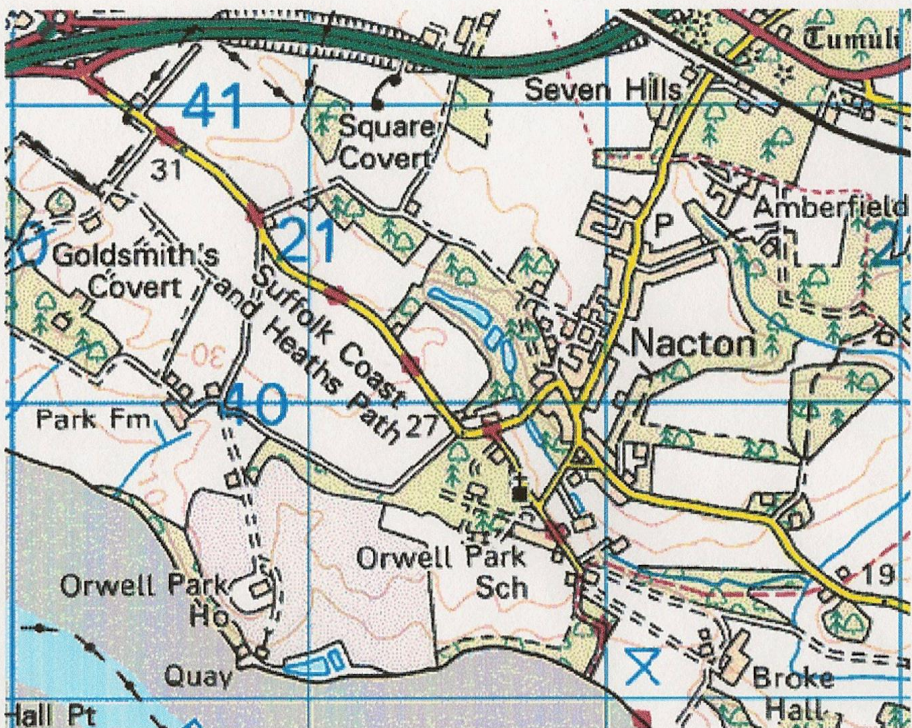
James Appleton

More Astronomy Workshops

**Workshops run on the first or second Wednesday of the month,
starting at 7:30pm.**

**Venue: NACTON VILLAGE HALL (next to the small village
school, just below and left of the N in Nacton on the map)**

Date	Event	Run by...
5 th December 2007	<p>Quiz Night Back by popular demand - a pub quiz style evening – with teams formed on the night, so everyone welcome. Just turn up with something to drink and some nibbles. About 8 quiz rounds including general knowledge, pictures, and of course a fair bit of astronomy. A prize for the winner! Also a raffle (please bring anything you can donate to the raffle as a prize).</p>	Paul Whiting is your Quizmaster Mike Whybray is doing the marking
9 th January 2008	<p>His Lordship's Monster The story of the telescope known as 'The Leviathan of Parsonstown', the Rosse family and their contributions to astronomy.</p>	Ken Goward
6 th February 2008	<p>The Lifecycle of a Star Where do stars come from? How long do they last? What happens to them when they die? Hopefully I'll give you an answer to these and similar questions.</p> <p>Preceded by a 10 minute introduction to IYA 2009 Launching the OASI International Year of Astronomy 2009 planning stage. What's it all about and what's happening nationally and internationally. Your chance to help shape the way OASI responds to this event.</p>	Paul Whiting
	One or two more to follow.	



The previous two workshops this season were well attended. The first saw over 20 members viewing three of the NASA 16mm films recently donated to the society. We viewed films of Apollo missions 11, 13 and 15 – with the latter having some really good sequences of trips on the lunar rover.

The second workshop was a chance for members to use the 19 inch Millennium Telescope to view comet 17/P Holmes. We had to take advantage of gaps in the cloud but most people got a look. The main problem was that I'd brought the wrong step-ladder so for those of a shorter build it was hard to get high enough to get your eye to the eyepiece! Hot soup provided by Nicky and Peter helped keep us going.

Mike Whybray [redacted] (Mobile) [redacted] (Home)



Seasonal Greetings



From the OASI Hon President, Dr Allan Chapman FRAS

It is a great and continuing pleasure being President of the Orwell Astronomical Society. It has been an immensely busy year, as all years seem to be, but on the other hand, enormously rewarding and enjoyable. I have done T.V. work with the inimitable Sir Patrick – who sends his warmest regards – as well as addressed a very diverse range of research specialities at home and abroad, including Astronomers, Engineers, medical people and Theologians. But Christmas, like Easter, is always a very special time for me, and for Rachel, not only because of the break involved, but more importantly, for its Christian significance. We look forward to a peaceful Christmas and hope and pray that everyone in the Society and their families has peace and calm and love this coming Christmastide, and a joyous and prosperous New Year.

So here's to clear skies, good fun, and God Bless.

Allan

From the OASI Chairman, Kenneth J. Goward FRAS

Good grief, Christmastide again, where *DOES* the time go – it only seems like a few weeks ago that I penned my last seasonal greeting!

Another busy year for our society and one in which we commemorated 40 years of endeavour at Orwell Park. Celebrations aside, at long last we have light at the end of our tunnel, so far as the Observatory Licence negotiations are concerned and perhaps we can now look forward to a more settled and secure atmosphere, albeit we will be diligent in our efforts to investigate future options?

Many of you - *as have my family and I* - have gained much observing pleasure from the recent and ongoing outburst of Comet P/Holmes (17P), a short period Comet normally of Magnitude 17. By no means the first such occurrence for this object, was itself discovered by British Amateur E Holmes in 1892 from his London home when in outburst. OASI Treasurer, Mike Harlow, has been making some excellent CCD images of Comet Holmes and we hope to present a montage of Mike's work on the cover of the January edition. Incidentally, may I take this opportunity to congratulate Mike upon his recent election onto the Council of the British Astronomical Association. Moreover, may I extend my own grateful appreciation to all our hard-working Committee members and others, who have done so much this past year to keep OASI moving forward.

It only remains to send you my most sincere and warm best wishes for a Happy Christmas and a great New Year.

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Ken

Articles For Newsletter

Every month I am looking for articles for the newsletter. If you can help in any way it would be very much appreciated. What we need are any items of astronomical interest that you have had while observing, events you have attended and things you have planned for the future or even what you would like to do no matter how impossible it might seem at the moment.

Building your own telescope Building an observatory or improving on the equipment that you already have or just getting more use out of what you already have.

Meeting your hero's in the astronomical world. They can be inventors, scientists, astronauts or any one of thousands of people who have contributed to our knowledge and interest in things astronomical.

Now we are in the third Millennium if you think about it almost any thing is possible. Holidays abroad could be any where in the universe. The only thing holding you back now is your imagination.

As you can see we need more members to help keep the newsletter in articles. The more of you that make a contribution the easier it gets for the few who produce articles every month.

Now I hope to hear from a lot more of you in the future which will make the newsletter much more interesting and my job easier.

All entries need to be in A5 format which will save me having to retype any articles and stop me making any mistakes or misinterpretations of things I don't understand.

Newsletter Co-ordinator
E Sims

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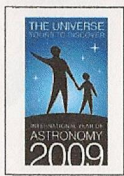
Astronomy word puzzle from Roy Lobbett
 -beware some words run at an angle and
 backwards

C L A T I T U D E H G N M O R
 I O E W S O L S T I C E I N I
 T N P B R E F R A C T O R I N
 P G Q E Q L A C R E C N A C G
 I I E O R E A T O P S N U S S
 L T D T A N D R O M E D A U T
 C U E U S L I U E S E L S I H
 E D M L T T R C T D T T T R X
 U E Y P E E Y E U I I A R I I
 R P N S R S Q X T S N S O S L
 O O A U O U C U A A A G N R M
 P L G E I X D O A L R T A A M
 A L D N D E B T P T A C U M O
 H U O B E R O N O E O G T R O
 X X A U R O R A D N A R I M N

Altitude	Andromeda	Asteroid
Astronaut	Aurora	Cancer
Comet	Copernicus	Crater
Earth	Ecliptic	Equator
Equinox	Europa	Galaxy
Ganymede	Io	Latitude
Longitude	Magnitude	Mars
Meteorites	Mira	Miranda
Moon	Oberon	Pluto
Pollux	Refractor	Rings
Saturn	Sideral	Sirius
Solstice	Sunspot	Telescope
Titan		

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. IYA 2009 Coordinator*
Bill Barton FRAS	Committee	☎		Safety & Security.



** Please note that Paul Whiting FRAS has kindly taken on the role of OASI IYA 2009 Coordinator and he'd like to hear from YOU*

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

Diary for December

Monday 3rd & 17th FROM 8PM	<u>SMALL TELESCOPE OBSERVING SESSIONS</u> (STONS) Observing Target: Taurus & Triangulum ☎ Paddy O'Sullivan [redacted] ☎ Gerry Pilling [redacted]
Wednesdays FROM 8PM NB The Observatory will NOT be Open on the evening of the Christmas Meal – 12 th <i>See below</i>	<u>MAIN OBSERVATORY CLUB NIGHTS</u> Primary Observational targets: Nebulae and faint objects. ☎ Martin Cook [redacted] (mobile) [redacted] ☎ Roy Gooding [redacted] (mobile) [redacted]
Wednesday 12th 8PM Lodge Restaurant Bourne Hill Wherstead	<u>OASI CHRISTMAS MEAL</u>  NB Please approach via the road that passes the Oyster Reach Pub (Bourne Hill) and <u>NOT</u> via the A137. ☎ Roy Gooding [redacted] (mobile) [redacted]
Wednesday 5th FROM 7.30PM Nacton village Hall	<u>MONTHLY WORKSHOP</u> ***QUIZ NIGHT*** By popular request, following last year's highly successful and enjoyable evening. Just turn up with something to drink and some nibbles to share. Prize for the winning team. Raffle – donations welcome! ☎ Mike Whybray [redacted]
Thursday 7th FROM 8PM - 20th FROM 7PM -	<u>Visits by Local Community Groups</u> General group. 26 th Ipswich Beaver Colony ☎ 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



A Very Merry Christmas one and all