On Sunday, 29 April 2018, a memorial to British amateur selenographer, Miss Mary Adela Blagg (1858-1944), was unveiled in her home town of Cheadle, Staffordshire.

A self-taught mathematician, her analytical skills had been employed in the analysis of variable star observations during the first years of the 20th century but it’s for her work to collate the maps and nomenclature of 19th century selenographers, published in 1913 as a Collated List of Lunar Formations, that she’s best known. Invited to join the Lunar Committee of the International Astronomical Union in 1919, Mary Blagg and Czechoslovakian astronomer Karl Müller, in 1935 compiled the map and official IAU list of named lunar formations; the standard reference until the pre-Apollo photographic mapping of the 1960s.

A 4 km diameter crater in Sinus Medii, close to the centre of the Earthward facing hemisphere, was named Blagg in her honour. Mary Blagg was one of the first women to be elected to the Fellowship of the Royal Astronomical Society, in January 1916, and for that reason the Cheadle Discovery and Heritage Group (CDG) held a very successful exhibition between October 2016 and March 2017. It was later decided to erect a permanent memorial to her memory.

Members of the CDG, the Mayor and representatives from local history societies collected next to the Millennium Sphere, another astronomical monument gracing the Monument Gardens in the shadow of the 200ft spire of St. Giles R.C. church, ‘Pugin’s Gem’. The Royal Astronomical Society, the Society for the History of Astronomy and Manchester Astronomical Society were represented by: Kevin Kilburn, SHA Secretary, Mrs Laura Carrol, and Dr and Mrs Barry Henshall. Apologies for absence were received from local MPs, Mrs Karen Bradley (Secretary of State for Northern Ireland), Sir Bill Cash and from Dr Jeremy Shears and Prof Bill Leatherbarrow of the BAA.

After an introduction by Ivor Lucas, chairman of the CDG, Kevin Kilburn spoke about Mary Blagg’s contribution to selenography before local blacksmith and BAA Honorary Member, Jim Plant, unveiled the new memorial, together with its donor’s plaque (see page 4), as a lasting tribute to this important Staffordshire astronomer.

Kevin Kilburn
FUTURE SHA MEETINGS

2018 AUTUMN CONFERENCE & AGM

The SHA Autumn Conference for 2018 will be held at the Birmingham & Midland Institute, Margaret Street, Birmingham, B3 3BS, on Sat 27 October 2018, 9.30 - 17.00.

The speakers and their subjects are:

Andrew Stevens - *Observing the Andromeda Galaxy, Dec 1612 to date: a warps and all story!*

Rob Peeling - *William Henry Smyth, his life, placing his astronomical work in the wider context of his participation in British intellectual life in the 19th Century*

Bob Bower – *The Artistic Skills of Lord Rosse*

Eddie Carpenter and John Chuter - *Sir Robert Stawell Ball*

Dr Allan Chapman - *The Wonderful Century: From Atoms to Island Universes. Astronomy in the 20th Century*

Fee: £10 members, £15 non-members. For more details and pre-registration, please contact Gerard Gilligan at meetings@shastro.org.uk

2019 SPRING CONFERENCE

This will be a two day event, to be held on Fri 12 - Sat 13 Apr 2019 at St Anne’s College, Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 6HS. It will be a joint event between the SHA, the *Paris Observatory*, and the *Astronomical Society of France* (SAF).

The Conference, involving an exciting line-up of speakers from the UK, USA and France, will be on the Saturday (topics and speakers will be reported in the next *e-News*). A walking tour will take place on Friday (morning and afternoon). This will include expert guided tours of the *Oxford Museum of the History of Science*, the historic *Radcliffe Observatory*, and other places of great interest in the history of astronomy.

The cost of the Friday tour will be £17 per head to SHA members. Due to restricted space at some of the historic sites, the maximum number on the walking tour will be 30 persons. The Saturday Conference fee will be £10 for SHA members and £15 for non-members.

There will be an optional conference meal at St Anne’s College on Friday evening (separate charge).

Optional accommodation will be available in St Anne’s College, but the number of rooms is limited, so you need to reserve early at the accommodation booking website. The promotional code is ASTRO27685

PRESENTATIONS & POSTERS?

If you would like to give a presentation (brief or otherwise), or exhibit posters relating to your research, at future SHA events please contact the General Secretary.

SHA COUNCIL

The current SHA Officers & Council are:

**Honorary Council Members**

*Hon President* Dr Allan Chapman  
*Hon Vice-Pres.* Dr Michael Hoskin  
*Hon Vice-Pres.* Prof. Sir Arnold Wolfendale, FRS

**Council Members**

*Chairman* Bob Bower  
*Vice-Chair (& *e-News Editor*)* David Sellers  
*General Secretary* Laura Carroll  
*Treasurer* Geoff King  
*Membership Secretary* Gerard Gilligan  
*Editors, SHA Bulletin* Carolyn Kennett/ Len Adam  
*Publicity Officer* Mike Leggett  
*Survey Coordinator* Kevin Johnson  
*Online Editor* John Chuter  
*Librarian* James Dawson  
*Meetings Organiser* Dennis Osborne

**Co-opted Officers (non-Council)**

*Editor, The Antiquarian Astronomer* Ian Ridpath  
*Archivist* Mark Hurn  
*Assistant Librarian* Carolyn Bedwell  
*Historical Records Officer* Anthony Kinder

SHA COUNCIL MEETINGS

The following SHA Council meetings are scheduled for 2018:

Sat 22 Sep 2018, 10.30 am, Birmingham (BMI)  
Sat 23 Feb 2019, 10.30 am, Birmingham (BMI)

SHA members are very welcome to attend Council meetings as observers. Please let the General Secretary know in advance, if you wish to do so.
SHA PUBLICATIONS

SHA e-News

The next issue of the e-News is due in early November 2018. If you know of any meetings, publications, exhibitions or events pertaining to the history of astronomy that might interest other members, please email brief details to the Editor.

SHA BULLETIN

All members should have received issue 29 of the Bulletin in early April 2018.

Back issues and guidelines for contributions are available from the e-News web page.

Back issues (except for the last 2 years) and guidelines for contributions are available from the Bulletin web page.

It is usually prudent to check with the Editors before preparing items where duplication is a possibility (e.g. book reviews). Back issues of the Bulletin (and its predecessor: SHA Newsletter) are now indexed on the Abstract service of SAO/NASA. Enter “SHAN” as the ‘Journal Code’ at http://adsabs.harvard.edu/bib_abs.html

It is hoped that in the near future, scanned copies of the original articles will be accessible in the same way.

THE ANTIQUARIAN ASTRONOMER

Members should have received issue 12 of The Antiquarian Astronomer at the beginning of July 2018.

Members with email addresses should also receive a digital version.

Contributions to the Bulletin are most welcome, including letters which can be on any aspect of the Society or the history of astronomy. Issue 30 is due in October 2018 and the deadline for copy is 1 Aug 2018.

It contains the following papers:

Robert Aglaé Cauchoix (1776-1845) and his large achromatic object-glasses, by Françoise Launay

Two important cases of the irradiation illusion in astronomy, by William Sheehan

Two Chessmen of Mars: Edgar Rice Burroughs and Eugène-Michel Antoniadi, by Richard McKim

Note: the first six issues of The Antiquarian Astronomer have been online at NASA’s ADS service since the start of 2015. Type “antas” into the box at the top marked Journal Name/Code on this page http://adsabs.harvard.edu/bib_abs.html

Members and others wishing to submit material for future issues of The Antiquarian Astronomer should contact Ian Ridpath (Editor) at ian@ianridpath.com. Guidance for authors and some back issues can be found on The Antiquarian Astronomer web page.
DON’T KEEP IT TO YOURSELF!
PUBLISH YOUR RESEARCH IN
THE ANTIQUARIAN ASTRONOMER

The latest issue of The Antiquarian Astronomer has three excellent, substantial papers. Between them they cover a nice range of historical astronomy and keep up the high standard that members and others have come to expect. But, there is scope for more papers per issue and the Editor would welcome more submissions.

Papers need not be of great length, but should contain: original research; a new interpretation of or insight into material already in the public domain; or a description that brings to a wider audience material of limited availability. Naturally, papers offered for publication in The Antiquarian Astronomer should not have been published previously.

Papers published in The Antiquarian Astronomer, though mainly by amateurs, should be of a standard that will be recognised as giving the research and the Society lasting credibility. To fulfil this principle, each paper is peer-reviewed by one or more Independent Reviewers, in addition to the usual editorial scrutiny. Reviewers are selected for being knowledgeable about the subject of the paper, able to provide helpful feedback to the author and to the Editor and supportive of the aims of the Society.

For useful guidance about how to prepare your paper, take a look at our guidelines. If you are tempted to send something, why not discuss your plans with our Editor, Ian Ridpath at: journal@shastro.org.uk

Remember, anyone having a paper published in the journal receives one year free membership of the SHA!

MARY BLAGG PLAQUE UNVEILED
(see front page)

List of plaque sponsors, including the SHA

Cheadle Millennium Armillary Sphere

NEW MEMBERS

We are pleased to give a warm welcome to the following new members who have joined since the previous issue of SHA e-News:

Mr Jonathan David Harty, Llandudno, Conwy
Dr Robert John Speer, Lyme Regis, West Dorset
Prof. Omar Nasim, Rengensburg, Germany
SHA LIBRARY NEWS

The SHA library now has over 2500 books dedicated to the history of astronomy and related subjects, numerous journals, as well as miscellaneous items including letters, meeting programmes, conference proceedings and the like.

Outside the legal deposit libraries, the SHA Library has one of the most extensive history of astronomy collections in any library in the British Isles. It is unique in having a collecting policy, totally focussed on history of astronomy, that includes not only the latest popular and scholarly works, but also the active acquisition of second-hand books, astronomical ephemera, and the preservation of the works of lesser known British astronomers and authors.

Some of the library’s new additions:

- American Philosophical Society. Symposium on Copernicus (1973)
- Chapman, Allan. Three north country astronomers (1982)
- Crossley, Robert. Imagining Mars: A Literary History (2011)
- Daumas, Maurice. Scientific Instruments of the 17th and 18th Centuries and Their Makers (1989)
- King, Henry C. The McLaughlin Planetarium: Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto (1968)
- Lusis, A. Astronomy and Astronautics : an enthusiast's guide to books and periodicals (1986)
- McNaught, RW. Dawes' Telescopic Observations (2017)
- Ottway, W. Catalogue of astronomical telescopes and instruments (1952)
- Singh, Gurbir. The Indian Space Programme (2017)
- Spry, Reg. Make Your Own Telescope From Everyday Materials (1978)
- Stetson, HT. Man and the stars (1930)
- Swiderska, Hanna. Copernicus and the new astronomy : a guide to the commemorative exhibition in the British Museum (1973)
- Wegg-Prosser, FR. Galileo and his judges (1889)
- Woodward, Marcus. How to enjoy the starry sky (1928)
- Wright, Hamilton. To the Moon! A distillation of the great writings from ancient legend to space exploration (1968)

Some recent donations [donor in square brackets]:

- Heath, Thomas L. Greek Astronomy (1932) [Frank Dutton]
- Parry, Russell. The Appley Bridge Meteorite (2014) [Gerard Gilligan]
- Seydl, Otto. The maps of the boundaries of the constellations in the galactic system of co-ordinates (1928) [Derek Jones]

Library opening schedule 2018:

Thursday 16th August
Tuesday 11th September
Friday 26th October

If there is a specific date you would like to use the library let us know and we will try to accommodate this. On library open days the door will be open between 10am and 3pm, though invariably it is open between 9am and 6pm, but please do contact the library in advance of a visit.
The revised catalogue of books in the library is available and a link to this can be found on the library page of the SHA’s website as a downloadable Excel spreadsheet – if you have trouble viewing the catalogue let us know and we can arrange to send it to you in an alternative format.

If you want to know more about the library or its stock, or if you’d like help with your research or finding a book or article, or other library-related matter, please do contact James and Carolyn who would love to hear from you.

James Dawson, SHA Librarian

CHAIRMAN’S CHAT

I gave a very healthy “State of the Union” overview of the SHA in my previous Chat – which remains the case. There is, though, one aspect of our activity where you can help to maintain this state of affairs. David Sellers has mentioned it elsewhere in this e-News, but forgive me for adding my six penn’orth too. I’m sure you will all agree that the latest edition of *The Antiquarian Astronomer* contains a fascinating and quite diverse set of articles. There is, though, one thing that we would dearly like to address – the fact that there were but three of them. I would urge you to consider making a submission to editor Ian Ridpath if you have done original research that has not yet been published. You do not need to have previous experience as an author – Ian will be happy to guide you through the process.

Our event programme for the coming season is looking good. We have an excellent range of talks lined up for the Autumn Conference, as described elsewhere in this e-News.

This said, though, it is with great regret that I note Dennis Osborne’s very recent resignation as Events Secretary, due to pressing personal health issues. The very significant increase in attendee numbers at our events attests to the outstanding work he has done. Health is a matter that transcends most things. I am sure you will all join with me in wishing him well for the future.

Gerard Gilligan has kindly stepped up to the mark for the final administration of the Autumn Conference, and I will be continuing with organisation of the two-day Spring Conference in Oxford next year. However, we now have a very important vacancy to fill on Council. If any of you fancy the role and are willing to stand for election as such at the AGM, then please contact us.

The speaker schedule for the two-day Spring Conference in Oxford next year is in the final stages of compilation. Suffice it to say that the range of topics and speakers will have a very international flavour. We plan to have three speakers from the SHA, and three from the Société Astronomique de France (SAF). Topics will include the works of Herschel, Rosse and Lassell, and the history of the Constellations among others.

This is my last e-News submission as Chairman. I would like to thank David for allowing me to ramble away each time – and thanks to all of you for supporting the Society and making it the vibrant organisation that it is.

Bob Bower
July 2018

SHA SURVEY NEWS

On 10 Aug 2018 our Survey Coordinator, Kevin Johnson, will be speaking at the 2018 Stellafane Convention of Amateur Telescope Makers in Vermont, USA (in the McGregor Observatory Library). His topic will be: *A Survey of Astronomical History: Why Our Heritage Matters*.

Recent additions to the Survey have included George and Francis Wollaston (thanks to Bill Barton). Work to streamline the survey website is ongoing. In particular, the Coordinator would like to make it easier to search for key words, phrases and names inside the associated PDF files.

Bob Bower
July 2018

Communications relating to SHA e-News should be sent to the Editor: *enews@shastro.org.uk*

General communications to the Society should be sent to the General Secretary (Laura Carroll): *lauracarroll55@hotmail.com*
FORTHCOMING BOOKS NOTICED


This new scientific biography of Galileo explores the influences on, and of, his exceptional work, thereby revealing novel connections with the worldviews of his age and beyond.

Galileo Galilei’s contribution to science is unquestionable. And his conflict with the church establishment of his time is no less famous. In this book, authored by a physicist and history scholar, Galileo’s life and work are described against a backdrop of the prior scientific state of the art in his various fields of achievement. Particular emphasis is placed on Galileo’s vision of the world in relation to historic and also future cosmological models. The impact of his discoveries and theories for the later development of physics and astronomy is a further focus of the narrative.


This book traces out the unfolding history of important discoveries in astronomy and astrophysics, and anchors our present understanding of the Universe within the findings and personalities of the astronomers. They have used telescopes and instruments to extend our vision to places that cannot be seen with the unaided eye, discovered a host of unanticipated objects, found out how various parts of the night sky are related, and discovered that the Universe is larger, more complex, and older than has been previously thought. This comprehensive historical approach to the present state of astronomy is a key aspect of the book.


The margravial court astronomer Simon Marius, was involved in all of the new observations made with the recently invented telescope in the early part of the seventeenth century. He also discovered the Moons of Jupiter in January 1610, but lost the priority dispute with Galileo Galilei, because he didn’t publish his findings in a timely manner.

The history of astronomy neglected Marius for a long time, finding only the apologists for the Copernican system worthy of attention. In contrast the papers presented on the occasion of the Simon Marius Anniversary Conference 2014, and collected in this volume, demonstrate that it is just this struggle to find the correct astronomical system that makes him particularly interesting. His research into comets, sunspots, the Moons of Jupiter and the phases of Venus led him to abandon the Ptolemaic system and adopt the Tychonic one. He could not take the final step to heliocentricity but his rejection was based on empirical arguments of his time.

This volume presents a translation of the main work of Marius and shows the current state of historical research on Marius.


This book surveys the explosion of astronomy after the telescope arrived on the scene, covering not just well-known figures such as Galileo and Herschel but also a raft of supporting characters. Each of them played important roles in constructing the foundation of the science of astronomy as we recognize it today – and all of them employed the tools of visual astronomy to achieve their goals.

The first telescopes were inevitably crude devices, but that did not deter their enthusiastic use and their potential to revolutionize humankind’s visual reach ever further into the heavens. As optical improvements began to take place, they created an insatiable desire for further improvements. And as the telescope improved, so too did the skills and talents of the first people to utilize them. Who these men and women were, the difficult conditions in which they frequently labored, and the many surprising – indeed, given the nature of their equipment, often amazing – discoveries they made, is the subject matter of this book. It’s a fascinating allegory of dedication, insight, intuition, and perseverance, all of which were fueled by an unquenchable thirst to understand both the logic and the cycles of the heavens.

From the first day humankind cast its collective gaze into the dark sky above, a never-ending fascination with the Moon and stars has been a defining
characteristic of our species. Curiosity concerning the mysterious events and objects in the night sky led to constant speculation and conjecture, resulting in a diverse collection of myths and theories that became deeply woven into the fabric of our many cultures.


In this fascinating foray into the millennia-long relationship between science and military power, astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson and writer-researcher Avis Lang examine how the methods and tools of astrophysics have been enlisted in the service of war. “The overlap is strong, and the knowledge flows in both directions”, say the authors, because astrophysicists and military planners care about many of the same things: multi-spectral detection, ranging, tracking, imaging, high ground, nuclear fusion and access to space. Tyson and Lang call it a “curiously complicit” alliance. “The universe is both the ultimate frontier and the highest of high grounds”, they write. “Shared by both space scientists and space warriors, it’s a laboratory for one and a battlefield for the other. The explorer wants to understand it; the soldier wants to dominate it. But without the right technology—which is more or less the same technology for both parties—nobody can get to it, operate in it, scrutinise it, dominate it or use it to their advantage and someone else’s disadvantage.”

Spanning early celestial navigation to satellite-enabled warfare, *Accessory to War* is a provocative examination of the intersection of science, technology, industry and power, introducing yet another dimension of how the universe has shaped our lives and our world.


Human beings have long imagined what other worlds are like. They have imagined travelling to them, have endowed them with meaning and mystery, and have fantasised about the beings that inhabit them. This anthology brings together chapters from astronomers, historians and writers who are inspired by the sky, and who originally gathered at the Conference on the Inspiration of Astronomical Phenomena at London’s Gresham College in 2015. Its topics range from the representation and exploration of the sky in the arts, architecture and literature, and from the ancient world to the digital age.

This unique volume describes the richness of human encounters with astronomy. In twenty-six papers, it spans cosmic and human time, starting with the beginnings of the universe, continues with the architecture of Christopher Wren, the astronomical operas of Philip Glass, science fiction by Italo Calvino, and ends with speculations about the Last Days of our universe. The first piece by Lord Martin Rees, Astronomer Royal of England, is truly extraordinary in the cosmic reach of topics and the clarity of his explanations of items like dark energy, multi-universes, black holes, and neutron stars. None who read this volume could avoid being stunned by the crescendo of breakthroughs we are now experiencing in astrophysics and by the fascinating variety of human activity that has been inspired by the heavens..

**RECENT BOOKS MISSED**


The search for life in the universe, once the stuff of science fiction, is now a robust worldwide research program with a well-defined roadmap probing both scientific and societal issues. This volume examines the humanistic aspects of astrobiology, systematically discussing the approaches, critical issues, and implications of discovering life beyond Earth. What do the concepts of life and intelligence, culture and civilization, technology and communication mean in a cosmic context? What are the theological and
philosophical implications if we find life - and if we do not? Noted astronomy historian Steven J. Dick argues that given recent scientific findings, the discovery of life in some form beyond Earth is likely and so we need to study the possible impacts of such a discovery and formulate policies to deal with them. The remarkable and often surprising results are presented here in a form accessible to disciplines across the sciences, social sciences, and humanities.

Astronomy on Calton Hill: The Observatory in the mid Nineteenth Century, by Bruce Vickery (Colwill Crossfield), May 2017, pp.17 (paperback, £3.00), ISBN 9781999727901

Astronomy on Calton Hill is written and meticulously researched by astronomer Dr Bruce Vickery, a member of the Astronomical Society of Edinburgh. The fully illustrated booklet is filled with fascinating facts on the scientific instruments and the world class astronomers who worked in the observatory. Price £3.00 plus postage and packing. Enquire here to obtain your copy.

Note: The descriptions of the books above are largely taken from the publishers. They are not reviews and do not imply endorsement by the SHA.

SHA RESEARCH GRANTS

SHA Small Research Grants are available for the period 1 November 2017 to 31 October 2018 and applications are solicited. The total amount allocated by the Council for the current round is £1500. The amount for the following year will also be £1500. These grants are made available to provide limited financial support for members’ research.

Links to the application form and regulations for applicants are available on the Society’s Web site. Applications must be made using the application form. Appended to the regulations are some guidelines for completing the case for support that forms part of every application.

SHA MEMBER HONOURED WITH ASTEROID NAME

SHA member Bob Garfinkle (Union City, California) has received an out-of-this-world honour. In May 2018, Bob received word that the International Astronomical Union (IAU) has officially adopted the name “(31862) Garfinkle” for a Minor Planet (asteroid) originally designated 2000 EY70, which is located in the main asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter. The object is about 6 km in diameter and has a visual magnitude of 20.5. Bob is also a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society and a best-selling author of astronomy books. He is nearing completion of the proofing stage of his major lunar observers’ handbook, Luna Cognita, which will soon be published by Springer.

DATA PROTECTION & GDPR

By now you are probably fed up of receiving communications about GDPR (the General Data Protection Regulation) which came into force in the UK on 25th May 2018 and we apologise for sending you yet another one. Nevertheless, the SHA takes data protection and the privacy of its members very seriously and we need to let you know that the SHA has revised its Data Protection Policy to comply with the provisions of GDPR. This means that members are given explicit new protections and rights.

In particular, the SHA undertakes to only use your personal data (name, address, etc) for providing the services that you have signed up for, and for which you renew your subscription each year – namely, to receive our publications, notices of our meetings and other matters related to the history of astronomy.

The SHA will keep your data secure and will not pass it on to third parties.

Furthermore, members have the right to be ‘forgotten’ should they wish to leave the SHA.

Please take time to look at the details of our new Data Protection Policy online and do not hesitate to contact the General Secretary, if you have any concerns.
SHA ON THE ROAD

Recent events at which the SHA has had a stall include:

- Birmingham & Midland Institute History Fair (Sat 12 May 2018)
- Webb Society Conference (2 Jun 2018)
- North West Astronomy Festival at Runcorn (7 Jul 2018).

Events in the coming year at which we intend to be present include:

The International Astronomy Show at Stoneleigh Park (Fri 12- Sat 13 Oct 2018)

If you are aware of other events, which would be suitable for a SHA stall, please contact the Publicity Officer, Mike Leggett.

Please note that help with travel expenses to stalls can only be given in line with the SHA expenses policy and on the basis of prior agreement.

SHA EVENTS SECRETARY WANTED

As you will have read in the Chairman’s Chat feature on page 6, our excellent Events Secretary, Dennis Osborne, has stepped down due to ill health. Is there any volunteer out there who would like to take the lead role in our organising meetings and booking speakers? Maybe you have performed this role in your local astronomical society and now relish the challenge of doing it for national meetings, purely on historical topics?

Regardless of previous experience, any member stepping forward to volunteer for this job will have lots of support from other Council members. There will be plenty of time to get up to speed, as the Autumn Conference 2018 and the Spring Conference 2019 are already organised.

If you are interested, please contact Laura Carroll, the General Secretary.

JODRELL BANK HERITAGE FUNDING CONFIRMED

At the end of May 2018 it was announced that the £20.5m transformative First Light at Jodrell Bank project is set to receive a total of £16.1m from The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). £12.1m of the total is thanks to National Lottery players, with a further £4m coming from the Government.

The project will create a spectacular new building that will promote and celebrate Jodrell Bank’s world-leading place in the history of astronomy, and a pioneering chapter in British scientific and cultural history. According to the Jodrell Bank press release, it “will preserve and protect the heritage of the site for future generations and result in a must-see national heritage destination to match the site’s national and international importance. The new facilities will house a stunning new exhibition and engagement space, incorporating the original fabric of the 1957 dish of the telescope, an auditorium devoted to displaying immersive digital presentations, an education hub, and a new café.”

‘THROUGH THE LENS OF TIME’

This was the title of a 5-page feature in the June 2018 issue (pp. 44-48) of the UK’s Sky at Night Magazine prepared for the magazine by SHA members. It described some of the most notable places in the UK featured a 5-page article on six notable places of interest in the history of astronomy, which readers could visit over the summer months.

In case you missed it, the recommended places were: Jodrell Bank Observatory (Macclesfield, SK11 9DL); the Observatory Science Centre Herstmonceux (East Sussex, BN27 1RN); Armagh Observatory (Armagh, BT61 9DG); the Herschel Museum of Astronomy (Bath, BA1 2BL); the Royal Observatory Edinburgh (Edinburgh, EH9 3HJ); the Royal Observatory Greenwich (London, SE10 8XJ); and, Woolsthorpe Manor (near Grantham, NG33 5PD).
WEB-LINKS NOTICED

How to research using the ADS archive

This video, posted by the RAS shows how to carry out searches using the Astrophysics Data System (ADS).

A Residence Above the Clouds

Two years ago SHA e-News reported on the making of a film about the work of Charles Piazzi Smyth in relation to high altitude observatories. We also gave a link to a trailer. The film (100 minutes long) is now complete and was shown at the Edinburgh Spanish Film Festival in October 2017.

A new trailer is available and an interview about the film.

HAD News 91

The April 2018 issue of HAD News – the newsletter of the Historical Astronomy Division of the American Astronomical Society (AAS) is now available for download.

The Adler Planetarium in Google Arts & Culture

The Adler Planetarium in Chicago has joined Google Arts & Culture, an online platform that provides access to images of works in its collections.

A selection of highlights from the Adler’s scientific instruments, rare books, and archives has been made available to peruse here: https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/adler-planetarium

GRAVE OF WILLIAM LASSELL RESTORED

On 12 May 2018, after being inspired by Kenelm England’s talk on Berkshire Astronomers, members of Maidenhead Astronomical Society turned out with gardening implements in St Luke’s Church cemetery at Norfolk Road, Maidenhead. Their objective? To seek out and tidy up the long-neglected grave of William Lassell (1799-1880) – a brewer, famous for his discovery of Triton (Neptune’s largest moon), Hyperion (a satellite of Saturn), and Ariel & Umbriel (moons of Uranus).

Lassell, who originally did his observing in Liverpool, built a 48-inch telescope, which he installed and used in Malta. After returning to the UK he resided in Maidenhead and operated a 24-inch telescope from an observatory there.

A time-lapse movie of the grave clear up can be seen on the MAS website.

Maidenhead AS members at the restored grave of William Lassell

Part of the simple epitaph now visible

(images courtesy of Maidenhead AS)
OTHER MEETINGS, COURSES & EXHIBITIONS NOTICED (non-SHA)

European Society for Astronomy in Culture (SEAC) – 26th Conference

27 Aug – 1 Sep at the University of Graz, Austria.

Harmony and Symmetry: Celestial regularities shaping human culture

The theme of the Conference will be: Culture is impossible without structure, and structure

Keynote speaker, Lisa Taub of Cambridge University will lecture on Where did astronomy ‘sit’ in ancient Greek and Roman culture?

Caird Library Research Seminar - Chronometers at Sea: Translating Theory into Practice, 1819–36

5 Nov 2018 at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich

Developments in technology, mathematics and astronomy during the eighteenth century transformed the nature of navigation at sea, enabling established theories to be put to practical use in the decades that followed. The marine chronometer became part of standard practice for determining longitude, although users faced many problems putting this new technology to use in often challenging environments. Focusing on specific voyages, this seminar will explore how the process of standardisation overcame these challenges during the early nineteenth century. Led by Emily Ackermans, NMM Collaborative Doctoral Partnership PhD student

Under One Sky: the IAU Centenary Symposium (IAU Symposium 349)

27 – 31 Aug 2018 at the University of Vienna

Although celebrating the IAU centenary is one aspect of the proposed symposium, it is emphasized that this is far from the major rationale for the proposed gathering. The history of astronomy is a major scientific discipline in its own right, which is recognized by the IAU through commission C.C3. However, the symposium will be only the second ever IAU symposium where the history of astronomy is a major focus (the first was IAU Symposium 269 in January 2010 on Galileo’s Medicean moons). This symposium will be a major scientific meeting on the history of astronomy and astrophysics over the last 100 years; the celebration of the IAU’s success over this time will be one significant aspect but not the main focus. On the other hand, the IAU Centenary Committee will organize an evening event to celebrate the centenary of the IAU at the time of this symposium.

Understanding historical observations to study transient phenomena

20-22 Aug 2018 in Vienna, Austria, during the IAU General Assembly

IAU Focus Meeting FM 5: There are a large number of historical observations of transient celestial phenomena, always noticed as (problematic?) deviation from the otherwise seemingly eternal, unchanging heavens. In a new area called Terra–Astronomy, we study transient astrophysical phenomena which potentially affect Terra (e.g. climate, biosphere, etc.) such as solar activity and nearby supernovae – and we investigate them with terrestrial archives, both natural archives (e.g. 14C in trees and 10Be in polar ice as solar activity proxies, or 60Fe in the ocean crust indicating a nearby supernova) and historical archives (e.g. observations recorded in previous centuries to millennia). Written records from all civilizations offer high temporal and spatial resolution, e.g. for aurora observations to reconstruct solar activity. It is essential to correctly understand the historical reports, which are written texts in old to ancient languages, using a different terminology. True understanding means considering intentions of the authors, possible narratives and hidden quotations, etc.

Internationality in Astronomical Research of the 18th-20th Centuries

17-19 Aug at the Kuffner Observatory, Vienna

Although it may be too late to register for this conference – timed to coincide with the IAU General Assembly in Vienna - SHA members might find the illustrated abstracts booklet very interesting.
In the last issue of SHA e-News, we asked if readers could help identify astronomers and observatories featured in old lantern slides collected by SHA member Eddie Carpenter.

Thank you very much to all those who sent in suggestions. We received lots of responses from around the world. The consensus seems to be as follows.

**Astronomer 1:** John Adelbert Parkhurst (1861-1925)

**Astronomer 2:** Camille Flammarion (1842-1925)

**Observatory 1:** The dome of the 36-inch ‘Yapp’ reflector at the Royal Observatory in Greenwich Park.

---

**OBSERVATORY 1: THE HISTORY**  
By Mike Lowne

In the May issue of SHA e-News the identification of some astronomers and observatories was requested. The telescope dome pictured as Observatory 1 is that of the 36-inch ‘Yapp’ reflector, installed at the Royal Observatory at Greenwich in 1932, the gift of William Johnston Yapp who also donated the 34-foot diameter dome and associated structures. A later photograph which I took in 1954 from much the same viewpoint shows the dome shortly before the telescope was dismantled prior to its removal to Herstmonceux. The louvered structure in the foreground is a simple air pollution monitor.

As the Greenwich telescopes were to be provided with new domes at Herstmonceux, that of the 36-inch was redundant and various uses for it were discussed. One of these was the housing for a 40-inch telescope destined for the Belgian Congo, but due to civil war the telescope was never installed: it is now on public display (not in operational condition) in Dome F of the Herstmonceux Science Centre. The Yapp dome (but not the brick building) was eventually used in 1964 to house a new 40-inch reflector installed at the Cape of Good Hope observatory in South Africa, and later transferred to the South African Astronomical Observatory (SAAO) observing site near Sutherland in the Karoo, about 400 km north-east of the Cape. Here it shares the sky with other telescopes including the 72-inch reflector formerly used at the Radcliffe Observatory in Pretoria and the South African Large Telescope (SALT), an 11-metre reflector. The 40-inch telescope (now firmly referred to as a 1-metre telescope) was built by Sir Howard Grubb, Parsons and Co. of Newcastle, who had made the Yapp telescope thirty years previously.

The Yapp telescope was remounted in Dome B of the Herstmonceux Equatorial Group and resumed work in about 1959. It was provided with new state-of-the-art instrumentation such as spectrographs and...
photometers, and was very useful as a test bed for other similar instruments designed for use on the 98-inch Isaac Newton Telescope. Now under the care of the Herstmonceux Science Centre, it is on display and is used for visual observing on public open evenings.

MALACHY HITCHINS

As the person who bought the damaged portrait of an unknown clergyman at auction and had him restored by a national expert, I am delighted that Malachy has become so well-known of late, and almost hope that the Royal Observatory live to regret not offering me a sensible sum for it. I spent many hours researching the work, both in London and Oxford, as well as in Cornwall, and eventually identified Opie as the artist. Quite how the portrait ended up at auction in Hereford is a mystery, but I can reveal that it had been used for target practice. There was a bullet hole in his forehead and one in the globe. Research on Malachy suggests that he may well have visited Clive of India at his house in Berkeley Square, for the latter gentleman was a keen student of astronomy. The boy from across the Tamar done well, eh? I’m sure, however, that an education at both Oxford and Cambridge helped him cope successfully with the social pressures of Georgian London.

It is worth noting, by the way, that over and behind Malachy’s right shoulder is the parish church of St. Hilary with its spire. Sadly, the recent layers of protective varnish have made it very difficult to see the building but, given its state at auction, that is a relatively small price to pay. According to a contemporary source, whose identity I have lost, Opie charged 5 shillings for the portrait, which he completed in two days, and the apprentice was given half of that sum for his labours.

More recently I have passed on Malachy to a close friend who has a lovely panelled breakfast room. Every morning as the sun rises they look at each other, no doubt with mutual admiration. Whenever I visit the house, I always pay my respects to the great man before making a fuss of his dog and saying hello to his wife. The ultimate accolade, indeed, and very well deserved!

Andrew Maden
Lecturer in Geography (ret’d)

Carolyn Kennett adds

Malachy Hitchins has been the focus of a Heritage Lottery funded project with Mayes Creative and the children of St Hilary school. The students undertook a visit to the museum and spent time at the church learning all about his life. They have finished the heritage lottery funded project by creating a banner which will go on permanent display in the village museum. A picture of the banner follows.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONTH</th>
<th>SHA EVENT OR PUBLICATION</th>
<th>VENUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEB</td>
<td>SHA e-News (1-5 Feb)</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workshop: Researching Astronomy History (17 Feb)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APR</td>
<td>SHA Bulletin 29 (1 Apr)</td>
<td>Cambridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SHA Spring Conference (21 Apr)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAY</td>
<td>SHA e-News (1-5 May)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUN</td>
<td>The Antiquarian Astronomer (Jun)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUL</td>
<td>SHA Summer Picnic (30 Jun)</td>
<td>Norwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUG</td>
<td>SHA e-News (1-5 Aug)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCT</td>
<td>SHA Bulletin 30 (1 Oct)</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SHA Autumn Conference &amp; AGM (27 Oct)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOV</td>
<td>SHA e-News (1-5 Nov)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEB</td>
<td>SHA e-News (1-5 Feb)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APR</td>
<td>SHA Bulletin 31 (1 Apr)</td>
<td>Oxford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SHA Spring Conference (12-13 Apr) – UK-French special</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
20% OFF SCIENCE & MATHEMATICS TITLES
from Oxford University Press for members of the Society for the History of Astronomy

Email membership@shastro.org.uk
to obtain the discount code

CAMBRIDGE

EXCLUSIVE 20% DISCOUNT
Available for all
Society for the History of Astronomy members.

Visit
.cambridge.org/astronomy
and browse our books.

To obtain the discount code please contact the
membership secretary: membership@shastro.org.uk.