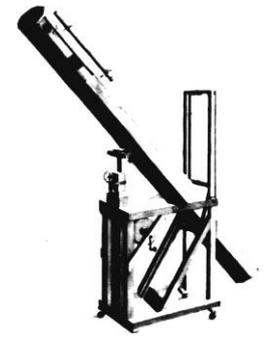




Society  
for the  
*History of Astronomy*  
&



## William Herschel Society

### Joint Spring Conference 2016 Saturday 2 April

Elwin Room, Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution  
16-18 Queen Square, Bath, BA1 2HN

Time	Speaker	Subject	Note
09.30 to 10.00		REGISTRATION	Refreshments will be served in the Lonsdale Room
10.00		Introduction and welcome to the BRLSI	
10.15 to 10.45	<b>John Chuter</b> SHA	<i>Somerset Astronomers</i>	John Chuter is the Somerset rep in the SHA County Survey of the History of Astronomy
10.45 to 11.15	<b>Richard Mansfield</b>	<i>Bristol Astronomical Society: Past, Present and Future</i>	Richard Mansfield is the Chairman of the Bristol Astronomical Society
11.15 to 11.30	<b>Dr Roger Moses</b> WHS	<i>Dr Rodney Hillier: An Appreciation</i>	Dr Hillier supported amateur astronomy through several West Country astronomical societies.
11.30 to 12.15	<b>Dr Roger Moses</b> Bristol University/ WHS	<i>A Thin Hard Rain from Outer Space: 100 Years of Cosmic Ray Astronomy</i>	Roger Moses did his PhD research on cosmic rays at Bristol and still lectures on space systems engineering.
12.15 to 13.30		LUNCH BREAK	Delegates are asked to make their own arrangements.
13.30		Welcome back	
13.45 to 14.30	<b>Prof Francis Ring</b>	<i>William Herschel and the Bath Philosophical Society</i>	Francis Ring is a founder member of the William Herschel Society and was Chairman of the Society for 20 years. He is now Vice Chairman and Editor of the Society Journal <i>The Speculum</i> .
14.30 to 15.30	<b>David Love</b> SHA	<i>Kepler and the Universe: How One Man revolutionized Astronomy</i>	Johannes Kepler is the subject of "Kepler and the Universe", a book by David Love recently published by Prometheus Books.
15.30		CONCLUSION	
16.00 onwards		VISIT TO HERSCHEL MUSEUM FOLLOWED BY RECEPTION	The reception will include Herschel music



This programme should appeal to all. Registration in advance is essential to our arrangement with BRLSI, and to arrange refreshments. Fee is £5 per person (£10 per guest) for SHA and for WHS members. SHA members should register with Mike Leggett ([leggett189@btinternet.com](mailto:leggett189@btinternet.com)). WHS Members should register with Roger Moses ([roger.moses@btinternet.com](mailto:roger.moses@btinternet.com)). Light refreshments will be provided but delegates are asked to make their own provision for lunch. There are plenty of eateries of all sorts close to BRLSI. Further information about the location of the BRLSI can be found on the website at <http://www.brlsi.org/>. Information about car parking in Bath (including the Park & Ride car parks) can be found at <http://visitbath.co.uk/travel-and-maps/parking-in-bath>. For general information about rail travel to Bath Spa station see <http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/>.

Mike Leggett (SHA) & Roger Moses (WHS)

## **Abstracts**

### **Somerset Astronomers: John Chuter**

John Chuter has recently become the SHA Survey Coordinator for Somerset. It has always been a rural county, and came to national attention a couple of years ago with the extensive flooding on the Levels. Nevertheless, so far, I have uncovered a surprising amount of information about Astronomical activity by residents of Somerset over the last 150 years. Most certainly there is a lot more to be discovered. This talk will describe some of the things so far unearthed.

### **Bristol Astronomical Society – Past, Present & Future: Richard Mansfield**

Bristol has long been associated with astronomy and space science through the likes of William Denning, Sir Bernard Lovell & Gordon Taylor amongst others.

My talk will look at some of these links and how the Bristol Astronomical Society came into being during and after the war years in the 1940's.

Since those early days the BAS has grown to become a thriving group, holding regular meetings with guest speakers & observing sessions in and around the Bristol area.

My talk will highlight some of our guests, visits, celebrations and plans for the future of the society.

### **A Thin Hard Rain from Outer Space – 100 Years of Cosmic Ray Astronomy: Dr Roger Moses**

Cosmic radiation was mysterious in 1912; it still is. This lecture ranges from Hess's pioneering flight to the latest observations.

Hazardous to space travellers and an airliner crew risk, it causes mutations driving evolution. Individual particles cross the Universe in a month.

### **William Herschel and the Bath Philosophical Society: Prof. Francis J Ring DSc FRAS**

William Herschel came to Bath in 1766 to take up the post as first organist of the new Octagon Chapel in Milsom Street Bath. He quickly became established as a leading musician, teacher, composer and concert organiser. Bath was at that time developing into a centre of culture. New buildings in "Bath stone" were shaping the city. Tea and coffee houses were becoming centres for people to meet.

Unsurprisingly local thinkers were drawn together in an exclusive scientific debating group known as "The Bath Philosophical Society" drawn from an area around for regular meetings. William Herschel was invited to be one of the chosen, and to which he was drawn into the realm of popular science. His contemporaries included William Watson, who had introduced him to the telescope and Joseph Priestley who became famous for his discoveries of oxygen and its properties. This was the special environment that allowed William to develop as an astronomer of significance.

### **Kepler and the Universe: how one man revolutionised astronomy: David Love**

A contemporary of Galileo and a forerunner of Isaac Newton, Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) was a pioneering German scientist and a pivotal figure in the history of astronomy. His contributions to astronomy were every bit as important as those of Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton.

It was Kepler who first advocated the completely new concept of a physical force emanating from the sun that controls the motion of the planets – something that today we take for granted. He also established that the orbits of the planets were elliptical in shape and not circular. And his three laws of planetary motion are still used by contemporary astronomers and space scientists. But he also had an arduous life, punctuated by frequent tragedy and hardships. His first wife died young, and eight of the twelve children he fathered succumbed to disease in infancy or childhood. His mother narrowly escaped death when she was accused of being a witch. And he was frequently caught up in the three-way dogfight between Catholics, Lutherans and Calvinists that was the defining feature of the age.