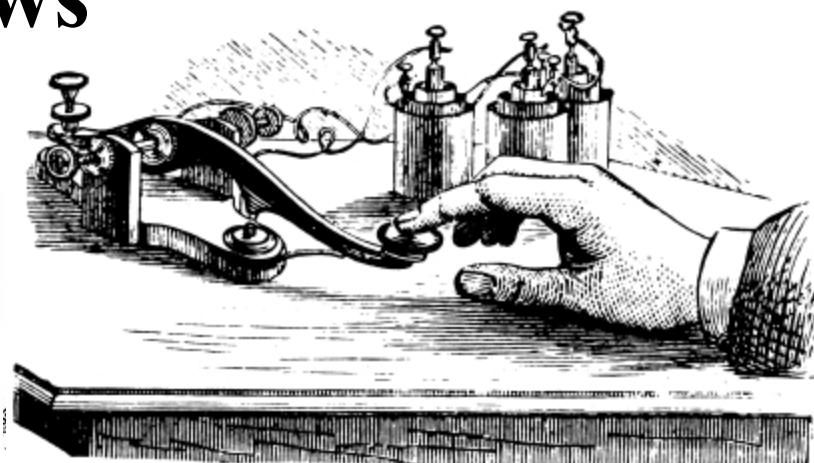


SHA eNews



Society for the History of Astronomy electronic news

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Editor: Clive Davenhall



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The cover shows Peter Hingley during the 2011 *Autumn Conference and AGM* held at the Birmingham and Midland Institute on Saturday 29 October. Photograph courtesy Stuart Williams.

Dates for the Diary

Imminent: **Sat. 21 Jul.** *SHA Summer Picnic* at the Institute of Astronomy, Cambridge. This picnic marks the tenth anniversary of the Founding of the SHA and the programme includes talks to commemorate the occasion. Further details are given later in this *eNews*.

Imminent: **Sun. 29 Jul.** *Lilburn Observatory Open Day*. The Lilburn Tower gardens will be holding an open day, which will allow rare access to the Lilburn Observatory, a mid-nineteenth century observatory essentially still in its original condition. Further details are given later in this *eNews* (non-SHA event).

Mon. 24 to Sat. 29 Sep. *SEAC 2012: Ancient Cosmologies and Modern Prophets*. Annual meeting of the Société Européene pour L'Astronomie dans la Culture (SEAC). To be hosted by the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (ZRC-SAZU), Ljubljana, Slovenia. See <http://seac2012.zrc-sazu.si>. The flyer for the first announcement is available at <http://www.archeoastronomy.org/downloads/seac2012-1stannouncement.pdf>. Note the deadline for submission of abstracts for contributions is 1 May 2012 (non-SHA event).

Sat. 27 Oct. *SHA Autumn Conference and AGM*, at the BMI in central Birmingham. The programme is now finalised and a flyer with further details is available from the Society's Web site. Further details are given later in this *eNews* and a flyer is available from the Society's Web site.

Mon. 5 Nov. *SHA Library Open Day*. The SHA Library at the Birmingham and Midland Institute in central Birmingham will be open from 11:00am to 3:30pm. Further details are given later in this *eNews*.

Exhibition

The Renaissance in Astronomy is an exhibition of books, globes and instruments of the sixteenth century at the Museum of the History of Science (MHS), Oxford. It runs from 11 May to 9 September 2012. The exhibition marks the five-hundredth anniversary of the birth of cartographer Gerard Mercator (1512-94) and is a joint undertaking of the MHS and the RAS. The exhibition presents a magnificent collection of sixteenth century astronomical books, globes and instruments, including a pair of Mercator's splendid terrestrial and celestial globes, Mercator's own annotated copy of Copernicus's *De revolutionibus* and a copy of Peter Apian's *Astronomicum Caesareum*. Further details are given later in this *eNews*.

Announcements

Peter D. Hingley

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of SHA member and Councillor Peter Hingley. Peter was a Founder Member of the Society and had served in various capacities during the last ten years.

His knowledge of astronomical history was outstanding. His input to the SHA was inestimable, and included arranging meetings, giving talks, writing articles, doing research, and sending out publications to members.



Many of you will remember his bubbly and enthusiastic personality, he was the kindest of souls for whom nothing was too much trouble. He be greatly missed.

At the time of his death Peter was the long-standing Librarian at the Royal Astronomical Society.

Madeline Cox

Craig B. Waff

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of historian, editor, and writer Craig Waff. Dr Waff was an eminent historian of astronomy who wrote his doctoral dissertation on French eighteenth-century lunar theory. He also made important contributions to the history of the US Nautical Almanac Office, the early career of the American telescope maker Alvan Clark and aspects of the controversy over the discovery of Neptune.



At the time of his death he was Senior Historian at the Air Force Research Laboratory at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio.

A quiet, generous and gentle man, he will be greatly missed.

Clive Davenhall

We will publish a full obituaries of Mr Hingley and Dr Waff in the Winter 2012 issue of the Bulletin, and preliminary versions of both appear later in this eNews. We offer our sincerest condolences to their family and friends – Ed.

SHA news

Important: Membership Secretary Sought

Amongst his many other services to the Society, Peter Hingley was its Membership Secretary until he fell ill earlier this year, when Roger Hutchins kindly took over as temporary Acting Membership Secretary. Mr Hingley's tragic demise now makes it necessary to recruit a permanent replacement Membership Secretary. The duties are not onerous and the principal ones include: maintaining a list of current members, receiving and processing membership renewals and responding to enquiries and applications from individuals wishing to join the Society. Access to e-mail is required as most Society business is conducted this way. However, the Society's Officers also usually attend Council Meetings, of which there are typically three per year. Over the past year the Society has greatly benefited from the recruitment of Mike Leggett as Publicity Officer: 'new blood' is always welcome and brings fresh perspectives and ideas.

If you are interested in assisting the Society in this way then in the first instance please contact Roger Hutchins (e-mail: roger.hutchins@magd.oxon.org). It is also usually possible to attend Council meetings by arrangement, to get a feel for the way that the Society is run and what specific duties may entail. Any offers of assistance will be gratefully received.

Meetings during the Remainder of 2012

During the remainder of 2012 the Society will hold the *Summer Picnic* (Saturday 21 July), the *Autumn Conference and AGM* (Saturday 27 October) and a *Library Open Day* (Monday 5 November). The Summer Picnic is now imminent and will be held at Institute of Astronomy (IOA), Cambridge. 2012 marks the tenth anniversary of the founding of the SHA and to mark this milestone the *Picnic* will include several talks to celebrate the Society's first ten years. Further details of all these events follow.

Imminent: 2012 Summer Picnic

The SHA *Summer Picnic* will be held on Saturday 21 July 2012 at the Institute of Astronomy (IoA), Cambridge and will be a celebration of the Society's tenth anniversary. Consequently the format will be slightly different to previous years: there will be several talks in the morning followed by the picnic itself. The programme for the morning is:

- 10:00 Registration
- 10:30 Madeline Cox, Welcome to the IoA
- 10:35 Roger Hutchins, *Oxford Observatories 1772-1939: Astronomy and Controversy*
- 11:20 Mark Hurn, Guided visit to the Rare Book Room in the Mead Building
- 12:00 Prof. Roger Griffin, *Binaries: a Reflector, and the Cambridge Observatories 1957-2012*
- 13:00 End of talks and start of picnic

There are no items scheduled for the afternoon. Attendees should bring their own picnic lunch; there are no catering establishments close to the IoA. The picnic is notionally timetabled to end at 2:30pm, though attendees are welcome to continue to enjoy the Observatory grounds. An alternative possibility is to explore historic Cambridge. The Observatory is on the outskirts of the town, but there is an omnibus stop across the road from the entrance (take a Citi 4 omnibus into town). Cars can be left in the IoA grounds for the duration. The Fitzwilliam Museum and the Colleges are open until 5:00pm but the Whipple Museum is not open on a Saturday.

Tickets are £10 per person and should be booked in advance if at all possible. Guests or non-members are most welcome; children up to age 16 are free. Cheques should be made payable to ‘The Society for the History of Astronomy’ and sent to The Treasurer, Roger Hutchins, 1D, Fox Furlong, Littlemore, Oxford OX4 4XD.

The IOA’s address is: Institute of Astronomy, University of Cambridge, Madingley Road, Cambridge, CB3 0HA. Directions are available on the IOA’s Web site: <http://www.ast.cam.ac.uk/>

A flyer for this event is included with the mailing for this *eNews*.

2012 Autumn Conference and AGM

The 2012 SHA Autumn Conference and AGM will be held on Saturday 27 October at the Birmingham and Midland Institute (BMI) in central Birmingham. The programme is as follows:

- 9:30: Registration
- 10:00: Madeline Cox, *Welcome and Introduction*
- 10:05 Kevin Kilburn, *Jeremiah Horrocks's non-observation of the Venus Transit in 1639 from Carr House*
- 10:40 Stuart Williams, *Some Walsall Astronomers in History*
- 11:30 Gerard Gilligan, *The Bidston Observatory on Merseyside – A History*
- 12:30 Lunch (not provided)
- 13:30 Madeline Cox, *Welcome to the afternoon session*
- 13:30 Madeline Cox, *2012 Annual General Meeting*
- 14:45 Anthony Kinder, *BAA Roll of Members Project*
- 15:20 Afternoon refreshments
- 15:40 Dr Allan Chapman, *Hevelius: Grand Amateur and Master Brewer*
- 16:40 Madeline Cox, *Concluding remarks*
- 16:45 Close

Papers for the AGM will be circulated in advance. Members are invited to raise any issues that they may have concerning the Society.

Tickets are £10 per person and should be booked in advance if at all possible. Guests or non-members are most welcome. Cheques should be made payable to 'The Society for the History of Astronomy' and sent to The Treasurer, Roger Hutchins, 1D, Fox Furlong, Littlemore, Oxford OX4 4XD. Inquiries about the AGM should be addressed to The Chairman, Madeline Cox, 4, Rutland Close, Warsop, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG20 0DY, UK (e-mail: madeline.cox@googlemail.com).

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided during the afternoon break. However, you should make your own arrangements for refreshments prior to the meeting and for lunch. The BMI has a cafe and there are numerous cafes and restaurants close by.

The BMI is conveniently located in central Birmingham, within ten minutes walk of New Street station. Its address is 9, Margaret Street, Birmingham, B3 3BS. See:

<http://www.bmi.org.uk>

Library Open Day

The Society will hold a Library Open Day on Monday 5 November from 11:00am to 3.30pm. Note that unlike most of the Society's meetings this event is not on a Saturday. Please come along to browse, read, copy and borrow items as you wish. A complete list of the titles and series held is included in the *Library Manual and Catalogue*, which is available as a document in PDF format and can be downloaded from the Library page of the Society's Web site:

<http://www.freewebs.com/sochistastro/library.htm>

The Society's Library is kindly hosted by the BMI, which is conveniently located in central Birmingham. See the previous item for the address and other details.

Council Meetings in 2012

The most recent Council meeting was held on Saturday Sat. 23 June. This meeting was due to be held at the premises of the RAS in Burlington House and hosted by Peter Hingley. However, the venue had to be changed and thanks are due to Kevin Johnson for organising a room in the Science Museum, South Kensington at short notice. The following meetings are scheduled for the remainder of the year:

Sat. 8 September, TBD, but probably, the Science Museum, South Kensington, London,
Sat. 10 November, at the Institute of Astronomy, Cambridge.

Provisionally these meetings will start at 1:00 pm. Council meetings are not open due to lack of space, but any member may attend by prior arrangement with the General Secretary. Similarly, if you have any issue that you would like to raise with Council then please contact the General Secretary in advance (contact details at the end of this *eNews*).

Publications

The next issues of the *Bulletin* and *The Antiquarian Astronomer* are in preparation. *Bulletin* 22 should be out later in the summer and volume 7 of *The Antiquarian Astronomer* around the start of 2013.

Papers for consideration for publication in *The Antiquarian Astronomer* are always welcome. Papers should present original research in the history of astronomy and are externally refereed prior to publication. If you are interested in submitting one then please contact the Editor, Kevin Johnson, who will be pleased to advise.

Contributions for inclusion in the *Bulletin* are always welcome and might include meeting reports, articles, letters and book reviews. Letters and short articles could include photographs that you have discovered, informal descriptions of an observatory or astronomer or other interesting snippets from your local knowledge, research or reading. All such items can also contribute to the Society's Survey.

It is usually prudent to check with the Editor before preparing items, particularly for meeting reports and book reviews, where duplication is a possibility. All correspondence should be sent to Clive Davenhall (contact details at the end of this *eNews*).

Web site

The URL of the Society's Web site is:

<http://www.freewebs.com/sochistastro/>

The previous URL (<http://www.shastro.org.uk>) no longer functions correctly. (Strictly speaking the freewebs URL has been current for some time and the previous URL redirected to it. However, the redirection no longer works properly, so the freewebs URL should be used directly.)

Bulletin and Newsletter on-line

On-line contents lists are now available for issues **10-21** (March 2006 - Autumn 2011) of the *Bulletin* and its predecessor the *Newsletter*. For some issues the full text is also available as a downloadable PDF document. Full text is not provided for all the issues because of concerns over the licensing or copyright of images that they contain; this issue is being investigated. An index of the issues published, with links to the individual contents lists *etc.* can be accessed either via the Society's Web site or directly at the following URL:

<http://dl.dropbox.com/u/24095066/contents/index.html>

It is hoped to add issues 1-9 later this year, thus making the complete series available during the tenth anniversary year.

Membership

All membership correspondence should be sent to:

Dr Roger Hutchins, 1D, Fox Furlong, Littlemore, Oxford OX4 4XD, UK.
e-mail: roger.hutchins@magd.oxon.org

These details supersede any other addresses previously advised.

Finally, thank you if you have renewed your membership for 2012. The Society is most grateful for your continued interest and support. If you have not yet renewed then formally your membership lapsed at the end of March, though we will continue to send you e-mail (but not paper) communications for a while. For convenience the 2012 membership rates are listed below. Cheques should be made payable to 'The Society for the History of Astronomy' and sent to Roger Hutchins at the above address.

Membership category	Amount
Ordinary Membership	£25.00
Family Membership	£30.00
Concessionary Membership	£20.00
Institutional Membership	£20.00
Overseas Supplement	£10.00

Other news

***Imminent:* Lilburn Observatory Open Day**

The Lilburn Observatory on the Lilburn Estate, Northumberland was built for Edward John Collingwood, a nephew of Admiral Lord Collingwood around 1850. It is a typical mid-nineteenth century observatory and houses a 6 $\frac{1}{3}$ -inch refractor by Troughton & Simms on an English cross-axis mounting and a 4-inch transit circle also by Troughton & Simms. Unfortunately Mr Collingwood's eyesight deteriorated rapidly shortly after he had established the observatory and it was little used. It is essentially still in its original condition, albeit somewhat dilapidated. It is likely to be of considerable interest to many SHA members.

The Observatory is one of several buildings and monuments on the Lilburn Estate, of which the principal property is Lilburn Tower, a mid-nineteenth century mansion house. Both the Tower and the Estate are privately owned, so public access to the Observatory is not usually possible. However, the estate gardens are holding an open day on Sunday 29 July, when access can be arranged. Anyone wishing to visit the Observatory on this day should write to: Mr Adrian Parday, Lilburn Tower, West Lilburn, Alnwick, NE66 4PQ.

For further details of Lilburn Tower see, for example:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lilburn_Tower

and for the open day:

<http://www.redcross.org.uk/Get-involved/Events/Open-Gardens/Northern-England/Lilburn-Tower>

The Lilburn Observatory will feature as an *Observatory Scrapbook* entry by Len Clucas in the forthcoming issue of the *Bulletin* (no. 22, Summer 2012).

Exhibition: the Renaissance in Astronomy

The Renaissance in Astronomy is an exhibition of books, globes and instruments of the sixteenth century at the Museum of the History of Science (MHS), Oxford. It runs from 11 May to 9 September 2012. The exhibition marks the five-hundredth anniversary of the birth of cartographer Gerard Mercator (1512-94) and is a joint undertaking of the MHS and the RAS.

Mercator is still widely known for the ubiquitous world map projection that bears his name. However, to his contemporaries he was also a famous cartographer, mathematician and maker of globes. A pair of his splendid terrestrial and celestial globes, lent by the Royal Museums Greenwich, is featured in the exhibition. Also on show is Mercator's own annotated copy of

Copernicus's *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium*. Important books from the library of Royal Astronomical Society are also on display, including Peter Apian's stunning *Astronomicum Caesareum*, along with astronomical instruments from the Museum's collection.

The exhibition presents a magnificent collection of sixteenth century astronomical books, globes and instruments, and should be of considerable interest to SHA members. The Museum's address is: Museum of the History of Science, Broad Street, Oxford OX1 3AZ. The opening times are: Monday, closed; Tuesday to Friday, 12:00 noon to 5:00pm; Saturday, 10:00am to 5:00pm; Sunday, 2:00 to 5:00pm. Admission is free. Further details are available on the Museum's Web site:

<http://www.mhs.ox.ac.uk/>

There is also a Web site specifically for the exhibition:

<http://www.mhs.ox.ac.uk/exhibits/the-renaissance-in-astronomy/>

Access to the RAS Library

Hitherto members have enjoyed access to the RAS Library during its normal opening hours (Monday to Friday, 10:00am – 5:00pm) and there have also been monthly Saturday open days. The Saturday openings were a personal initiative of Peter Hingley and they cease with his tragic demise.

The RAS Library Saturday openings are permanently terminated with immediate effect and any dates previously advised are no longer valid.

We hope that members will continue to enjoy access to the RAS Library during normal working hours: the Society is affiliated to the RAS which, in any event, has always welcomed genuine scholars to its Library by prior arrangement. However, access to the collection will necessarily be difficult during the interregnum. It would be helpful if requests to consult specialised material, that is anything not on the open shelves in the main Library, are deferred until a new Librarian is in post. Your patience and understanding during this period would be much appreciated.

Journal Astronomical History and Heritage

[Last year the Journal of Astronomical History and Heritage (JAHH) announced that from 2012 it would only be available free-of-charge on-line through the NASA ADS. Below is a slightly abridged version of an announcement that the first on-line version is now available. We wish the JAHH every success in its new format and under its new publisher. – Ed.]

The long-awaited volume **15** no. 1 of the *Journal of Astronomical History and Heritage* is now available online, at least most of it. We hope that ADS will post the obituary and book reviews soon. Just go to URL:

http://adsabs.harvard.edu/toc_service.html

and enter ‘jahh’ for Journal Name/Code: and ‘15’ for Volume or ‘2012’ for year. You will get the table of contents with links to abstracts and full articles in either PDF or GIF versions. You can do the same with the first 14 volumes as well. The only exception is that volume **14** no. 3 is not yet posted, but we hope to see it there soon.

We regret the delays in the publication of what is supposed to be the March/April issue. Some of the reasons are addressed in the editorial by Wayne Orchiston. We thank both subscribers and authors for their patience, and we look forward to speedier publication in the future.

Starting with the next issue the JAHH will have a new publisher, the National Astronomical Research Institute of Thailand (NARIT), but the journal will be unchanged, with Wayne Orchiston continuing as Editor and Richard Strom and I as Associate Editors.

*Joe Tenn,
Associate Editor, Journal of Astronomical History and Heritage,
24 June 2012.*

Job Advert: Observatory Manager, Scottish Dark Sky Observatory

The following item is a little off-topic for the SHA, but might be of interest to some members. The Scottish Dark Sky Observatory (SDSO) is looking to recruit an Observatory Manager. The SDSO is a new venture to create a world-class public observatory in the Galloway Forest Dark Sky Park. There are only eight Dark Sky Park parks in the world and Galloway Forest is the only one in the UK. The SDSO is located on the Craigengillan Estate, in a beautiful landscape close to the village of Dalmellington, Ayrshire. Further particulars are available at the following URL:

<http://www.intellemetrics.com/Documents/SDSO%20Details.pdf>

Please note that the closing date is 13 July 2012.

Obituaries

Below we include preliminary obituaries of SHA Councillor Mr Peter Hingley and of Dr Craig Waff. Full versions of both will be published in the Winter 2012 issue of the Bulletin. We offer our sincerest condolences to their family and friends – Ed.

Peter D. Hingley, 1951-2012

On 22 June the RAS made the shocking announcement that their colleague and Librarian Peter had died. He had been unwell for a week, but his number came up on Wednesday 20. Peter would certainly have thought the Reaper had lost all sense of reality, not to mention gentlemanly consideration, since he was only 60, his friend Françoise was due to arrive at the weekend to commence a trip on the Broads with him, his favourite ‘Dotty Aunt Peg’ was shortly to celebrate her 91st birthday, he had articles in draft, models half built, steam trains waiting, and committee meetings scheduled which needed his sage input. His paternal grandfather had lived to 96, his great aunt to 98, and Peter was a man in the full flow of life.

However, his health had been noticeably poor for about eighteen months, and he was hospitalised after a fall, and with a nasty virus, in February. For a week he had a room high up in St Thomas’s with a marvellous view up the river and across the London he often walked: ‘This is better than my flat, I’m staying unless they sort me out quickly!’ He then enjoyed recuperating for a couple of weeks with his Aunt Peg Malpass in Cannock. He returned to work in good spirits, and pitched into his various commitments while at last taking his full weekends off, enjoying model making or music if it was wet, rust removal and painting old steam engines if it was fine, telling his awful jokes to anyone nearby. He felt good about clearing out old ‘tat’ from his flat as he relished retiring on 31 August and moving to Crewe – at the heart of a web of steam railways, canals, and other essentials. Alas! It was not to be. He fell ill again in mid-June, and this time his usual head of steam failed him.

Peter was a polymath scholar and dedicated librarian and archivist with a fine mind, great memory, quick wit, mischievous sense of fun, passion for all things historical, and he had a great big heart. He was tirelessly interested in and encouraging and helpful to all researchers and enquirers to the RAS’s beautiful library. When a team of amateurs in Australia started restoring the Great Melbourne Telescope, a friend here asked Peter if he had any photos; he found some they did not have, and provided prints that have been immensely helpful. Bill Sheehan recalls: ‘His generosity included not only helping me beyond the call of duty with the archives, but letting me use his flat on occasions when he was away.’ He was a willing horse on any committee he was asked to serve, the first to step in to any gap regardless of personal over-load. He was in demand to give talks to astronomical societies, learned and other societies, at home and abroad, too numerous to tally. Tina Hammond of Orwell Astronomical Society recalls: ‘He had been a fan of the Goon show, and quite spontaneously his talks would be laced with their one-liners and catchphrases where appropriate. He hardly

noticed he'd done it.' One of the great services he achieved was to initiate the RAS having its photograph collection copied and made available by Science Photo Library. More people enjoyed, admired and had reason to be grateful to him than anyone can ever know.

At long last friends saw him beginning to get the work-life balance right. He was planning ahead and had many aspirations to write, to work on several steam railways he supported, and he and Françoise planned some explorations of England's rivers.

Five years ago Peter amused himself by drafting a little 'biog', which he tongue-in-cheek headed *Life and Hard Times*. It was never published, but is paraphrased here. Peter Dennis Hingley was born 6 October 1951 in Pedmore, near Stourbridge, Worcestershire, and was inordinately proud of being 'descended from long lines of Black Country ironworkers and Staffordshire and Shropshire yokels.' His male Huguenot line to his delight produced Noah Hingley & Sons, who made chain cable and anchors for many great ships, including the *Titanic* – Peter; 'The family's best work is at the bottom of the Atlantic!' His sister Jane says Peter could read before he was five, indeed stood on a box to read the lesson in church at Christmas when he was that age. He was a totally absorbed reader. If you asked him to make a cup of tea you would find him an hour later deep in a book, the kettle gone cold. He was proud of his father Gerald, who was taken prisoner after his bomber was shot down in WWII, and he ferreted out that his naval uncle Dennis had died at age 19 of friendly fire in the same conflict. Peter sought and knew how to find detail.

Gaining a place at King Edward VI Grammar School, he came under heavy paternal compulsion to study sciences instead of the literature and history that attracted him as moth to candle. Sustained by much viola playing and pursuit of steam, he 'staggered out of Lancaster University in 1973 with an indifferent degree in Environmental Sciences.' He took a labouring job in a cotton mill for a short time, but having 'been treated kindly by agreeable and civilised librarians' he identified that profession as a route to remote locations, escape from sciences, and possibilities to engage in subjects that actually interested him. He was a countryman at heart, having spent much of his youth in his beloved Shropshire. With his usual unerring aim his first post was in Piccadilly, London, as Librarian to the Society of Antiquaries – hardly remote, but specialising in history and archaeology. Six years later he was 'rustled' to work as Assistant, then Librarian, at the RAS. He found this job most rewarding and pleasant, and stayed for the rest of his career, over thirty years. It led him to describe himself as 'an aesthete on the edge of science,' although in reality many scholars have benefited from his profound knowledge of astronomy and other sciences. When Halley's Comet returned in 1986, Peter cycled across London to Edmund Halley's grave near Greenwich, and observed it from there. Of course.

Meanwhile Peter thoroughly enjoyed serving eighteen years in the Royal Naval Reserve, achieved the rank of Lt-Commander, and received the Reserve Decoration. His ex-wife Sheila visited him on his ship in Portsmouth, and never saw him happier. He could park a minesweeper before belatedly passing his driving test. A rather hesitant driver himself, he always accused ageing Aunt Peg of being 'too quick off the roundabouts.' But 'he ignored

motorways. In his head he knew the Roman roads and the railway routes, and he navigated across the country from town to town by that mental map.' He loved matters maritime, especially naval, was thrilled to find himself guardian of Captain Cook's sextant and other treasures, and was witheringly scornful of those responsible for cuts in naval strength.

Spare time interests included making metal models of railway equipment and ships (he had his own lathe), 'shovelling coal into obsolete steam locomotives on the Severn Valley Railway, classical music ("is there anything else?"), and historical research on railways, the family ironworks, and history of astronomy.' For thirteen years while living in Faversham, Kent, he was the Honorary Curator of the preserved Chart Gunpowder Mills. Latterly he developed a keen interest in Romanesque sculpture and stonework, of course became a keen photographer, and a seeker-out of Norman churches. Peter was a member of the Prayer Book Society, and his sister said: 'I can well understand that he would enjoy the King James Bible, and the Cranmer Prayer Book, and value them for their tradition and language. He enjoyed matins or evensong in an old church. He had no truck with modern services.' He would certainly have required thee and thou for the One who created the Universe. Last autumn he twice sallied forth as a volunteer to shake a tin by the Tube station to raise money for the Macmillan Nurses. He reported back with glee to Council that he was astonished to have raised several hundred £s. – 'Head down commuters. Would you believe it?' – he asked in obvious astonishment, his faith restored. Poor weary commuters, they never stood a chance!

Peter enjoyed concerts such as those at Wigmore Hall, Thames barges, cycling, and passionately loved the Lake District. He rescued the last Severn Trow from Digris Basin – *The Spry* is now in a display shed at Blist's Hill open air museum, part of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum. Sundays in London would often be spent walking to 'Ally Pally' and throughout his life runs a skein of a passionate interest in gardening, possibly inherited from his maternal grandfather.

Recent published work included Droitwich Sailing Barges, and 'A Far Off Vision – a Cornishman at Greenwich Observatory' about astronomer Edwin Dunkin, a lengthy series of short notes in *Astronomy & Geophysics* on various items from the library and archives, Warren De La Rue and the HMS *Himalaya* expedition, Father Stephen Perry and the Transit of Venus, and other worthy topics. His desk and computer hide drafts on Shuckburgh and the English [telescope] Mounting, Shropshire Shipbuilders, the history of Durham University Observatory, and a diverging flow of other topics.

His family is inordinately proud of Peter's achievements. Indeed, his sister Clare relates the joy of coming across a copy of *The Stargazer of Hardwicke*, a book dedicated to Peter, in Brecon library some years ago. With feigned nonchalance she was able to explain to the librarian her interest in the book.

For some years he has been a Consultant to Commission 41 of the IAU, and was elected a full IAU member at the 2006 General Assembly in Prague. Peter was founder member number 13 of the Society for the History of Astronomy in 2002, and was hugely supportive,

including hosting Council meetings in the library, and in his own time ‘stuffing and posting’ publications and mailings. He was elected a Council Member in 2005, and in 2008 upon the death of a colleague volunteered to take on being Membership Secretary. When there was another crisis in 2010 he was about to take on the Treasury too. That’s how he was, regardless of his own well-being, giving himself to whatever he really believed was worthwhile.

Reactions from Council included: Chairman Madeline Cox: ‘Losing him has been a great shock. It is impossible to summarise all he did for the Society in the last ten years, the countless hours he gave us serving on Council, organising meetings, finding us articles and photographs, giving talks, writing articles, collecting fliers from publishers to include in our mailings so that members saw new books available. He was always cheerful, entertaining, welcoming, unfailingly generous and kind to everyone he met.’ Another: ‘Truly shocking. Peter was our dearest friend and supporter, a true enthusiast for whom nothing was too much trouble. He will be very sadly missed. RIP, Peter.’ Another: ‘He was hugely encouraging with my sustained research, and exceptionally generous in supplying photos. A gentleman of the old school, but irreverent, he was without doubt a wonderful ambassador for the SHA, as of course for the RAS.’ Another: ‘We have lost a dear and genial colleague.’ Another: ‘It’s hard to come to terms with the loss of one of our oldest and most active supporters and friends. Peter was a real character and a one-off; we shall not see his like again.’ Another: ‘My log of the Council email net shows more than 1000 emails containing the signature PDH. As in his conversation, he often started with one subject, but then elaborated as in this one from 2007 in reply to my mention of the Chance Glass archives being returned to Sandwell:

That is really excellent news, a few years back there was a Chance centenary of some sort and I contacted the Archives but nothing resulted. I tend to think of Chances re lighthouses rather than astronomy though they did some lens blanks. Incidentally also ‘Chance Lights’ for ASW [anti-submarine warfare] Wellington bombers. Long years ago in our Worcestershire village when I was very young the church organist was a chap called Hipkiss who worked for Chances for many years (my grandfather sang in the choir). He used to give magic lantern lectures about the places he had been to building lighthouses, but also had a fantastic collection of photos of the lighthouses themselves. I would give a lot to get my hands on those today!!’

One of Peter’s oldest friends is Dr Allan Chapman, Hon. President of the SHA. He recalled:

I met Peter in the autumn of 1970 when he came up to Lancaster University where I had started the year before. He had an early love of astronomy, and together we founded the University’s Astronomical Society. I remember that in May 1971 we observed the Transit of Mercury together. At other times he was dashing off on steam journeys, or travelling railway lines that were under threat.

Peter was always wonderful company. A raconteur, his pattern was a joke, a piece of information, then historical or political discussion, a swipe at whichever ‘old buffer’ in authority he believed was responsible, then another joke.

Really he was an instinctive antiquarian. Inevitably, he joined the British Sundial Society because he cared for old objects, and he could never resist a windmill. Everyone recognised that he was learned and respected, a passionate collector of information. He was without doubt one of the leading scholars of the history of astronomy. His knowledge of archives, names, places, connections, was incomparable. He enjoyed deploying it to help anyone. As John Aubrey said upon the death of one of his friends: ‘When a learned man dies, much learning dies with him.’ He will be greatly missed.

Peter leaves his daughter Eleanor finishing her Master’s degree in Norfolk, his ex-wife Sheila at Durham University, with whom he kept in touch, his musical sisters Jane Rigby (singer) and Clare Walker (a fine bassoonist), Clare’s son Joseph (his godson) and his ‘Aunt Peg’ (a retired teacher and BA) with her four cats in Cannock. He also leaves Françoise Launay, his loyal, learned and wise companion.

Peter’s extraordinary mind, informal ways and outgoing personality gained him many friends in many countries. A gentle man who really did make a difference, he will be remembered by anecdotes, with gratitude and a smile.

Roger Hutchins

Craig B. Waff, 1946–2012

Historian, editor, and writer Craig Beale Waff passed away at 5:22pm, Tuesday, 12 June 2012, in Pasadena, California, just one week after he had observed the rare transit of Venus from Mount Wilson Observatory. He was 66.

Waff was born in New York, NY, on 3 May 1946, younger son of Charles and Mary (nee Carper) Waff and grew up in Flushing, Queens, and Plainview, Long Island, in New York as well as in North Miami, Florida, graduating from Miami-Norland High School in 1964. Showing mathematical ability at a young age, Craig majored in mathematics at the University of Florida, graduating in 1969; during the summers he worked as a co-op student at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Langley Research Center in Virginia. He attended graduate school at Johns Hopkins University, receiving his PhD in 1976. Research for his dissertation on French eighteenth-century lunar theory in France and Denmark was supported by a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship; his dissertation was completed under noted historian of astronomy Harry Woolf, who had written what is now a classic book on the eighteenth-century transits of Venus in 1761 and 1769.

Painfully shy as a young man, Waff realised after a year of teaching mathematics at the University of Missouri, Kansas City, that a career as a university professor standing in front of a classroom was not his forte. Thus, for much of his career he was an editor for New York City-area publishers of encyclopaedias and other reference works, including the American Institute of Physics (1977-79), Arete Publishing Co. (1979-82), Columbia University Press (1982-84), Random House (1984-85), Collier-Newfield Inc. (1994-97), Macmillan General Reference (1997-98), and Scholastic Library Publishing (1998–2003). He also served as contract historian for the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, from 1985-93, researching the history of NASA's Deep Space Network (the tracking system for interplanetary spacecraft) and the Galileo mission to Jupiter, and serving as a technical writer. At the time of his death, he was Senior Historian at the Air Force Research Laboratory at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, where he had worked since 2004, except for a brief stint at Andrews Air Force Base, where he was historian for the 89th Airlift Wing (the wing that maintains Air Force One and other aircraft for federal officials).

His love of history was so great that it was also his hobby during his leisure hours, and vacations were often research trips to archives around the United States and Europe. His abiding personal research interest was history of astronomy. Among other topics, he wrote seminal papers on the history of the US Nautical Almanac Office, on the early pre-factory career of major nineteenth-century American telescope maker Alvan Clark, and on aspects of the controversy among nineteenth-century English and French astronomers surrounding priority for the discovery of the planet Neptune. Papers and articles of his have been published in *Scientific American*, *Journal for the History of Astronomy*, *Astronomy*, *IEEE Spectrum*, *Journal of the Antique Telescope Society*, various Air Force publications, and half a dozen academic encyclopaedias. At the time of his death, Waff was completing research on

the popular lectures of Ormsby MacKnight Mitchel, the founding director of the Cincinnati Observatory who has been likened to a nineteenth-century Carl Sagan.

An avid Yankees fan, Waff also was keenly interested in the history of early American pre-1860 pre-Civil War base ball (when the sport was still spelled with two words and played by somewhat different rules from today). At the time of his death, he had just completed writing and editing several contributions to an upcoming book *The Greatest Games of 19th Century Baseball* to be published by the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR), of which Waff had been a member since 1992. Most significantly, however, through his dogged research through digital databases and newspapers on microfilm, Waff single-handedly quintupled the known number of base ball games played between 1845 and 1860 from around 300 to at least 1,500 (an early account of this project and Waff's Games Tabulation appear at <http://www.retrosheet.org/Protoball/GamesTab.htm>).

From 1993-97, Waff was married to science writer and editor Trudy E. Bell, whom Waff had known professionally and as a friend since the late 1970s. Although the two found living together challenging and they divorced and lived apart in different Ohio cities, they remained extremely close companions, sharing the raising of Trudy's daughter Roxana, spending most holidays together, and travelling together on research trips, family vacations, and to conferences. An exceptionally gentle family man, during the school year Waff almost daily assisted Roxana with her math homework from elementary school through required courses in college, attended all her theatrical performances and other important events, and every Saturday he was in town took her to breakfast at a favourite local diner.

Waff and Bell were visiting Pasadena to give talks at the same special symposium on the transit of Venus held at Mount Wilson Observatory, and together they observed the rare transit of Venus across the face of the sun from inside the 150-foot solar tower telescope at the observatory on Tuesday, 5 June. On Thursday, 7 June, Waff was completing some of his last research on Mitchel at the Huntington Library in Pasadena and had just hung up from a phone call to Bell when he collapsed on the reading room floor from massive cardiac arrest. Although he was rushed to Huntington Memorial Hospital, he never regained consciousness, passing away five days later.

Waff is survived by his brother LCDR William B. Waff, USCG (ret.) and sister-in-law Ellen Coutts Waff of Middlefield CT, nieces Margret of Middlefield CT, Sarah of Edgewood NM, and Rebeccah Waff Cope of Raleigh NC, and by Trudy E. Bell (Gertrude E. Bell) and 21-year-old stepdaughter Roxana Bell of Lakewood OH, Bell's brother John, of San Diego CA, and sister Shanna Dee Bell and nephew Kenneth Henderson Bell, of Irving TX.

Waff's ashes will be scattered at both a historic observatory and at a baseball stadium in recognition of his love of and fundamental research in the history of astronomy and history of early American baseball. A memorial service will be held at the Cincinnati Observatory Center on Saturday, 21 July; for details, please contact Trudy E. Bell (t.e.bell@ieee.org) or

Ellen Waff (ewaff@comcast.net). The family also solicits reminiscences and remembrances from people who knew Craig Waff professionally or personally.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Waff's name to the Antique Telescope Society, a 501(c)3 educational organisation. Cheques (in US Dollars) should be made payable to the 'Antique Telescope Society' and sent to ATS Executive Secretary Walt Breyer, 1878 Robinson Road, Dahlonega GA 30533; note in the memo on the cheque (or in a separate note) that the contribution is in the memory of Craig B. Waff. (Information about the ATS appears at <http://oldscope.org/>; the link to the special double issue of the ATS Journal about Alvan Clark highlights some major work by Waff.)

The family plans to see that Waff's nearly completed major research on Mitchel and on pre-1860 baseball games is prepared for posthumous publication.

Trudy E. Bell

eNews admin

Next Issue

The next issue will be circulated around 1 October 2012.

Contributions for inclusion in this issue should reach me by 14 September 2012.

Snippets for the *eNews*, typically notices of forthcoming events, are always welcome. Longer items suitable for the *SHA Bulletin* are also welcome and should be sent to the same address.

Contact Details



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