



SHA e-News

Society for the History of Astronomy

Volume 15, no.1, February 2023

Editor: David Sellers



Holmdel Horn Antenna, New Jersey, USA
(picture credit: [Fabioj](#), Wikimedia Commons)

HISTORIC BELL LABS HORN ANTENNA UNDER THREAT

The Holmdel Horn Antenna in Holmdel Township, New Jersey (USA) was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1988 because of [its role in the work of Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson](#). In 1965, with this antenna, they discovered the cosmic microwave background radiation (CMBR). This provided the evidence that supported the “Big Bang” theory.

Now it appears that the antenna is under threat as the land is under consideration for high-end residential redevelopment, following a decision by the Holmdel Township Committee on 21 November. A [petition has been launched](#) for the protection of the this historic instrument.

Medal awarded for History of Astronomy

At its meeting on 13 Jan 2023 the Royal Astronomical Society announced this year’s winners of its awards, medals and prizes. These included the [Agnes Mary Clerke Medal for Historical Research in Astronomy or Geophysics](#), which was awarded to Professor Jim Bennett (University of Oxford/Science Museum).

The citation noted that: “Over the past four decades, Professor James A. Bennett has made an outstanding and internationally recognised contribution to the history of astronomy. Working in the context of collections of scientific instruments, chiefly at the Whipple Museum in Cambridge and the History of Science Museum in Oxford, Professor Bennett has focused on the history of practical mathematics, including astronomy and navigation, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. His work, resulting in more than 160 publications and contributing to over 35 exhibitions, has been highly influential among historians and curators of science...His books include *The Mathematical Science of Christopher Wren* (1982), *The Divided Circle: A History of Instruments for Astronomy, Navigation and Surveying* (1987), *Church, State and Astronomy in Ireland: 200 years of Armagh Observatory* (1990) and *Navigation: A Very Short Introduction* (2017).”



The image tweeted by the RAS on 13 Jan 2013
(unfortunately, it misspells Clerke’s surname)

FUTURE SHA MEETINGS

2023 SPRING CONFERENCE

This will be on **Sat 1 Apr 2023** at the [Birmingham & Midland Institute](#), 9 Margaret St, Birmingham, B3 3BS. at 10 am–5 pm.

Speakers include:

Carolyn Kennett on *The Dolcoath Mine Experiments: Airy and Whewell weighing the World*;

Megan Briers on *Nineteenth-century Astronomical Fieldwork*;

Kevin Johnson on *The SHA Survey of UK Astronomy*;

Rod Hine on *Edward Emerson Barnard*;

Carolyn Bedwell on *William Ludlam, a Leicester astronomer*

Emily Winterburn on *Nicholas Copernicus*.

2023 SUMMER PICNIC

The traditional summer picnic will be on **Sat 1 Jul 2023** (from 12.00 noon) at **The Jeremiah Horrocks Observatory, Moore Park, Preston**. There will be a tour, plus talk and tea/ coffee refreshments inside Observatory. Our hosts will be Preston AS. We will also organise a visit to UCLAN archives and the George Higgs 1927 Eclipse collection observations and photographs.

2023 AGM AND AUTUMN CONFERENCE

This will be on **Sat 21 Oct 2023** at **10 am–5 pm** at the [Birmingham & Midland Institute](#), 9 Margaret St, Birmingham, B3 3BS.

2024/2025 PARIS CONFERENCE?

Planning is going ahead for a possible repeat joint conference in Paris with the Historical Commission of the Société Astronomique de France (SAF). Previous joint conferences with our French sister organisation took place in Paris (2017) and Oxford (Apr 2019).

ONLINE MEETINGS

Free online evening presentations for members:

Wed 25 Jan 2023 (8 pm)

Title: **Reading between the lines: Important Astronomical Observations captured with Diary Entries**

SHA COUNCIL

The current SHA Officers & Council are:

Honorary Council Members

Hon President Dr Allan Chapman

Hon Vice-Presidents Dr Emily Winterburn, Prof. Mike Edmunds

Council Members

Chairman Gerard Gilligan

Vice-Chair (& e-News Editor) David Sellers

General Secretary Mike Leggett

Treasurer Geoff King

Membership Secretary Graham Jones

Editor, SHA Bulletin Kevin Walsh

Publicity Officer Mike Leggett

Survey Coordinator Kevin Johnson

Online Editor John Chuter

Librarian James Dawson

Meetings Secretary vacant

Co-opted Officers (non-Council)

Editor, The Antiquarian Astronomer Ian Ridpath
Asst. Editor, The Antiquarian Astronomer Peter Morris

Archivist John Chuter

Assistant Librarian Carolyn Bedwell

SHA COUNCIL MEETINGS

The next SHA Council meeting, via 'Zoom', is on:

Sat 11 Feb 2023 11 am

When physical meetings are able to resume, 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.

Speaker: **Jonathan Powell**

Wed 8 Mar 2023 (8 pm). Short talks by members, including:

Title: *Google Doodles dedicated to the history of astronomy*

Speaker: **Ian Ridpath**

Wed 10 May 2023 (8 pm)

Title: *Becoming Astronomers* (pre-historic astronomy)

Speaker: **Bernie Taylor**

SHA PUBLICATIONS

SHA e-News

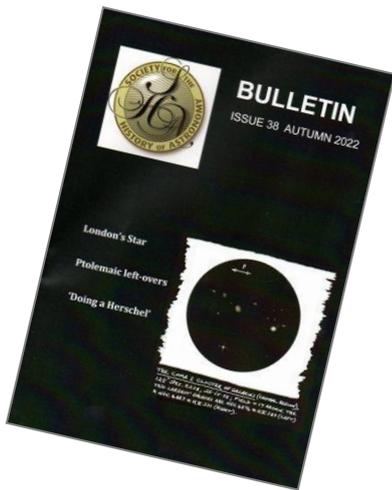
The next issue of the *e-News* is due in early February 2023. If you know of any meetings, publications, exhibitions or events pertaining to the history of astronomy that might interest other members, please email brief details to the [Editor](#) (David Sellers).



Back issues and guidelines for contributions are available from the [e-News web page](#).

SHA BULLETIN

Issue 38 of the *Bulletin* (Autumn 2022) was distributed to SHA members during November. Issue 39 is due in Spring 2023.



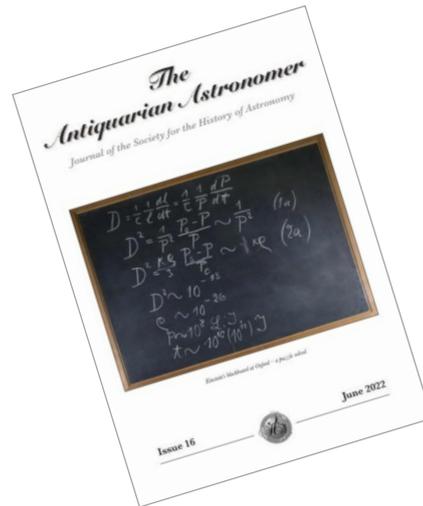
Contributions to the *Bulletin* are most welcome, including letters which can be on any aspect of the Society or the history of astronomy.

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 [Editor](#) (Kevin Walsh) before preparing items where duplication is a possibility (e.g. book reviews).

THE ANTIQUARIAN ASTRONOMER

Issue 16 of *The Antiquarian Astronomer* was published in May 2022 and has been sent to all members.



The latest issue contains seven substantial papers, including: part two of Paul Haley’s three-part series on Maria Mitchell; Jean-René Roy’s commemoration of the life and work of Adelaide Ames, who died 90 years ago at the tragically young age of 32; and an investigation by Cormac O’Raifeartaigh into an error by Einstein preserved on a blackboard that he used during a lecture at Oxford in 1931 (as seen on the cover above).

Issue 17 should be published in June/July 2023. Members and others wishing to submit material for future issues of *The Antiquarian Astronomer* should contact the Editor (Ian Ridpath) at aaeditor@shastro.org.uk. Guidance for authors and some back issues can be found on [The Antiquarian Astronomer web page](#).

VOLUNTEER A PRESENTATION?

Do you have a mini-presentation that you would like to make to an online SHA meeting? The SHA Council would like to organise occasional online meetings featuring several short talks, where members can present topics that they have been researching. If you have something up your sleeve and would like to give it a go, please let our Meetings Secretary (Acting), know:

Meetings@shastro.org.uk

SHA LIBRARY NEWS

The SHA library now has almost 3000 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.

Due to the internal reorganisation within the Birmingham and Midland Institute (BMI), we've had to relocate the SHA Library out of the Benson Room where it has resided since 2004. Our library has a temporary residence in a purpose built enclosure in the John Lee Lecture Theatre of the BMI.

We continue to look for and obtain new items for the Library and a list of the latest acquisitions is given below. If you have anything you'd like to donate to the Library please let us know.

Corliss, William R, *The moon and the planets : a catalog of astronomical anomalies* (1985)

Smart, WM, *Astrophysics : the characteristics and evolution of the stars* (Benn's sixpenny library number 36) (1928)

Sparrow, Giles, *Phaenomena : Doppelmayr's Celestial atlas* (2022)

McNaught, Robert W, *Celestial Atlases 1549-2009: L-Z* (2018)

McNaught, Robert W, *Celestial Atlases 1549-2009: A-K* (2018)

McNaught, Robert W, *Goodacre's Lunar Observations* (2018)

The following items were generously left to the SHA by Eddie Carpenter. Many of these books were already held in the SHA Library, but Eddie's copies may be earlier editions, or more commonly signed by the author or include something unique about the author or book:

Macpherson, Hector, *The Romance of Modern Astronomy* (1911)



BMI (Birmingham): home of the SHA Library

Murray, Fred W, *Astronomy: simply explained for beginners* (1926)

Armstrong, Mabel, *Women Astronomers: reaching for the stars* (Discovering Women in Science Series) (2008)

Baikie, James, *Peeps at the heavens* (1929)

Ball, Robert S, *The Story Of The Heavens* (1885)

Ball, Robert S, *In the High Heavens* (1893)

Ball, Robert S, *The Earth's Beginning* (1901)

Barker, Robert Horace, *Astronomy: A textbook for university and college students* (1930)

Baum, Richard, *Planets: Some Myths and Realities* (1973)

Chambers, George F, *The story of the solar system* (1895)

Chant, Clarence Augustus, *Our Wonderful Universe: an easy introduction to the study of the heavens* (1928)

Chapman, Allan, *The Victorian Amateur Astronomer. Independent Astronomical Research in Britain 1820-1920* (1998)

Clerke, Agnes M, *The Herschels and Modern Astronomy* (1895)

Dick, Thomas, *The Telescope and Microscope* (1848)

Dyson, Frank W, *Astronomy: a handy manual for students and others* (1910)

Fell, Joseph I, *Star Recognition* (1944)

Findlater, Andrew, *Astronomy* (Chambers's Elementary Science Manuals) (1892)

- Forbes, George, *The Stars* (Benn's Sixpenny Library No. 107) (1927)
- Forbes, George, *The Earth, the Sun, and the Moon* (Benn's Sixpenny Library No. 106) (1927)
- Gall, James, *An Easy Guide to the Constellations with a Miniature Atlas of the Stars* (1904)
- Giberne, Agnes, *Sun, Moon, and Stars: Astronomy for beginners* (1886)
- Glyn Jones, Kenneth, *Messier's Nebulae and Star Clusters* (1991)
- Graves, Charles (editor), *100 facts on astronomy* (Smallerbooks number 12) (1949)
- Greig, Brian, *Halley's Comet over Australia. Once in a lifetime...don't miss it* (1985)
- Hawks, Ellison, *The Boys' Books of Astronomy* (1914)
- Hine, Pam, *Total eclipse of the sun in Cornwall and south Devon, Wednesday 11th August 1999* (1999)
- Hood, Peter, *The Sky and the Heavens* [With illustrations] (1953)
- Inglis, James Gall, *An easy guide to the constellations: with a miniature atlas of the stars* (1948)
- Irving, Edward, *How to Know the Starry Heavens. An invitation to the study of suns and worlds ... With charts, coloured plates, diagrams, and many engravings of photographs* (1905)
- Lawrence, Peter, *The Northern Lights: the story of the Aurora Borealis* (2011)
- Lester, Reginald Mountstephens, *Practical astronomy for the forces* (1943)
- Lewis, Isabel Martin, *Splendours of the Sky* (1920)
- Lockyer, Norman, *Astronomy. Science Primers* (1874)
- Lodge, Oliver, *Pioneers of Science* (1893)
- Macpherson, Hector, *The wonders of modern astronomy: describing in simple but exact language the wonders of the heavens* (1914)
- Merriman, Arthur Douglas, *The Night Sky: hand-craft books for scouts* (1924)
- Mitton, Geraldine Edith, *The Children's Book of Stars* (1907)
- Moore, Patrick, *Eyes on the universe: the story of the telescope* (1977)
- Moore, Patrick, *Patrick Moore's Yearbook of Astronomy 2011* (2010)
- Moore, Patrick, *Patrick Moore's Yearbook of Astronomy 2012* (2011)
- Moore, Patrick, *Patrick Moore's Yearbook of Astronomy 2013* (2012)
- Moore, Patrick, *Patrick Moore's Yearbook of Astronomy 2014* (2013)
- Moore, Patrick, *Patrick Moore's Yearbook of Astronomy 2015* (2014)
- Moore, Patrick, *Patrick Moore's Yearbook of Astronomy 2016* (2015)
- Morse, Edward Sylvester, *Mars and its mystery* (1906)
- Nagel, *Nagel's encyclopedia: guide the Moon* (1970)
- Olson, Roberta JM, *Fire In The Sky: Comets and Meteors, The Decisive Centuries in British Art and Science* (1998)
- Orr, M A, *Southern stars: a guide to the constellations visible in the Southern Hemisphere* (1896)
- Proctor, Richard A, *Half-hours with the telescope. A popular guide to the use of the telescope as a means of amusement and instruction* (1868)
- Proctor, Richard A, *The Universe of Suns : and other science gleanings* (1884)
- Proctor, Mary, *Everyman's Astronomy* (1939)
- Selley, E A, *Astronomy for the man in the street: on our solar and planetary system* (1907)
- Stott, Carole, *Images of the Universe* (1991)
- Turner, Herbert Hall, *A voyage in space: a course of six lectures "adapted to a juvenile auditory" delivered at the Royal Institution at Xmas 1913* (1915)
- Whitehouse, David, *The Moon: a biography* (2001)
- York Minster Deanery, *The astronomical clock in York Minster: a memorial to fallen airmen 1939-1945* (York Minster Picture Books) 1955
- Chambers, George F, *The Story of Eclipses* (nd)

Some other recent donations with the donor on the right:

Applebaum, Wilbur, *Jeremiah Horrocks and the New Astronomy* [unpublished] (2022) - David Sellers

Porter, Jermain G, *Our Celestial Home: an astronomer's view of heaven* (1888) – James Dawson

The 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
library@shastro.org.uk



Part of the SHA Library on temporary shelving in the John Lee Lecture Theatre of the Birmingham and Midland Institute

A WORD FROM THE CHAIR



Hello. As I write this message we are already four weeks into 2023, but I would still like to take this opportunity to wish you all the very best and good health for the New Year ahead: Yet another year which has its fair share of personal

challenges at home and some abroad as well.

The Society Council was unable to secure a new person into the Meetings Secretary post for 2023 sadly, so I decided to carry on in that role for one last year, which will also be (as already announced at last year's AGM) my last as Chairman. But I'm glad to report that we have a busy 12 months ahead with planned webinars, conferences and summer events, which I do hope you will continue to support, as you did in large numbers last year. Like many organisations and businesses we will continue to provide online webinars, which are perhaps one of the few positive results and aspects of the Covid-19 related lockdowns in 2020-21.

More details of these upcoming webinars can be found within this issue of *SHA e-News*, but I can tell you that we have another special webinar on Wednesday March 8th, when I will be inviting SHA members to present short (20-30 minute) webinar presentations on historical astronomers, places or organisations that may be of particular research interest. Our very own Ian Ridpath has agreed to do a short talk on historical astronomical *Google Doodles*, and yes, I await to hear from other potential speakers please. This will be followed on May 10th with online a presentation by archaeoastronomer and SHA member Bernie Taylor entitled "Becoming Astronomers".

On Saturday April 1st, and, no fooling, yes we are back at the Birmingham & Midland Institute in the centre of Birmingham for the SHA 2023 Spring Conference (the Institute of Astronomy at Cambridge University was not available). A warm welcome awaits you, together with an outstanding list of speakers, namely Dr Emily Winterburn, Kevin Johnson, Miss Megan Briers, Rod Hine, and Carolyn Kennett—who will give the very first Michael Hoskin Memorial Lecture on the subject of the Dolcoath Mine Experiments and the attempted measurement of the density of the Earth. I can also report that this year's SHA Summer Picnic is to held at the Jeremiah Horrocks Observatory,

Moore Park Preston, Lancashire, on Saturday July 1st. Arrangements and plans for that are at the moment still at an early stage, so it is indeed a case of watch this space to learn more details.

Finally please remember that you will additionally be enjoying new issues of the *SHA Bulletin* in the spring and autumn of this year, with the much anticipated *Antiquarian Astronomer* dropping onto door mats in the summer. We hope to also enjoy the publication of the long awaited SHA booklet on the life of Sir George Biddell Airy by our President Dr Allan Chapman. That's more space to watch out for, a new year to savour, so please don't miss out. If you have delayed renewing your membership to the society for 2023, then I very much hope you remain with us to enjoy the many events and publications that await you.

Gerard Gilligan

Chair, Society for the History of Astronomy

NEW MEMBERS

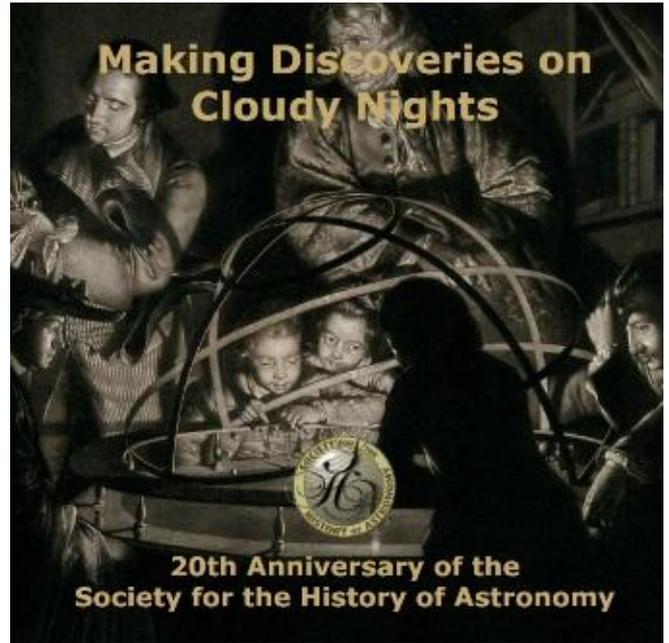
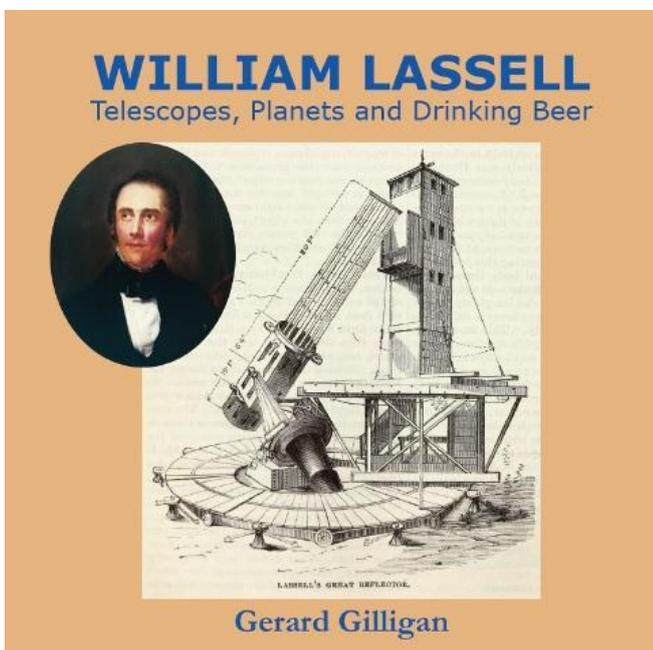
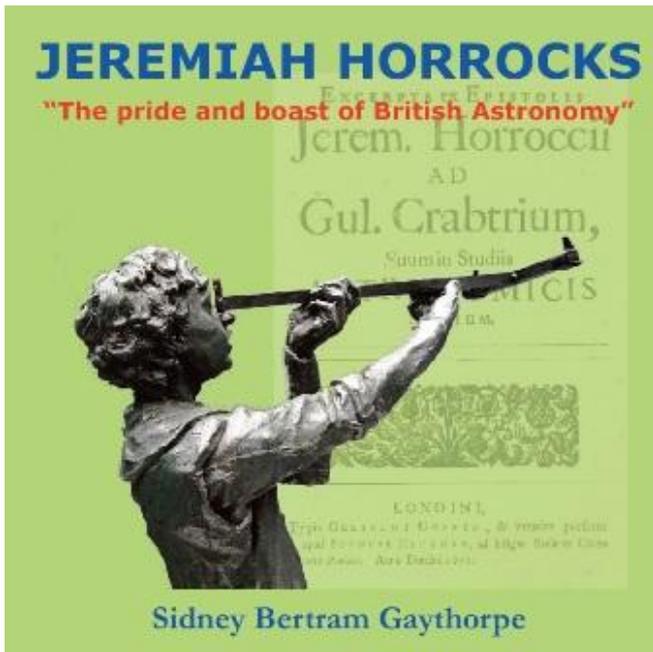
We are pleased to give a warm welcome to the following new members who have joined since the previous issue of *SHA e-News*:

Dr Austin Mardon	CANADA
Mr Shaun Albrighton	NUNEATON
Dr Isobel Falconer	FIFE
Ms Lynne Marie Stockman	CAMBRIDGE
Mr Norman Kissoon	BANBURY
Mr Steve Berry	BARTON UPON HUMBER
Mr Matthew McMahon	Armagh Observatory
Ms Janna Müller	

SHA BOOKLET SERIES

Three titles in the SHA’s occasional booklet series have been published so far. One on *Jeremiah Horrocks* (2020), by Sidney B Gaythorpe, one on *William Lassell* (2021), by Gerard Gilligan, and one for the *SHA 20th Anniversary* (2022) by various authors. These are available for purchase at SHA events (£8 each for the first two; £10 for the last one). For further details, please contact [Gerard Gilligan](#).

The next planned booklet in the series will be on *Sir George Airy*, by Allan Chapman, and is already in preparation for early 2023 publication.



SHA RESEARCH GRANTS

SHA *Small Research Grants* are available for the period **1 Nov 2022 to 31 Oct 2023** and applications are solicited. The total amount allocated by the Council for the current round is £1500. These grants are made available to provide limited financial support for members’ research.

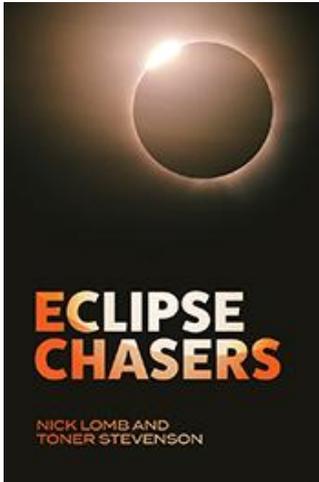
Links to the [application form and regulations](#) for applicants are available on the Society’s web site. Applications must be made using the application form. Appended to the regulations are some guidelines for completing the case for support that forms part of every application.

COUNCIL VOLUNTEERS INVITED

Would you like to be involved in helping the SHA to develop? We need extra volunteers. Please email the Chair ([Gerard Gilligan](#)) to find out more.

FORTHCOMING BOOKS NOTICED

[Eclipse Chasers](#), by Nick Lomb and Toner Stevenson (CSIRO Publishing), Mar 2023, pp.2161 (paperback, £30.95), ISBN 9781486317073



Eclipse Chasers is a guide to past and future Australian total solar eclipses, exploring historical and cultural knowledge, as well as featuring five upcoming eclipses that will be visible in Australia.

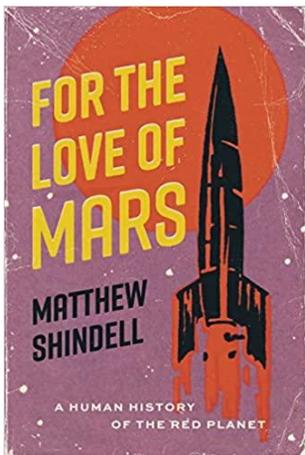
The science of eclipses is explained, as well as how to prepare for an eclipse and view it safely. For upcoming eclipses

the best locations to view each one are revealed, alongside tips for taking photographs.

The book also reveals untold stories of how past Australian astronomers observed the total eclipses that have occurred since European settlement, and how these eclipses were celebrated in popular culture, poetry and art. It explores the great significance of solar eclipses for First Nations peoples, and their observations and cultural meanings.

Eclipse Chasers showcases the drama and beauty of total solar eclipses and is essential for anyone fascinated by these amazing events. highlighted.

[For the Love of Mars: A Human History of the Red Planet](#), by Matthew Shindell (University of Chicago Press), May 2023, pp.248 (hardback, £20.00), ISBN 9780226821894



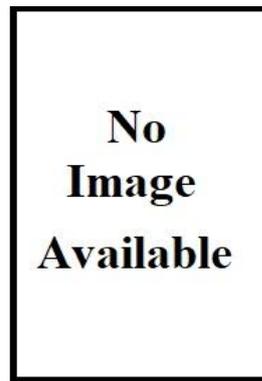
Mars and its secrets have fascinated and mystified humans since ancient times. Due to its vivid color and visibility, its geologic kinship with Earth, and its potential as our best hope for settlement, Mars embodies everything that inspires us about space and exploration. *For the Love of Mars* surveys the red planet’s place in the human imagi-

nation, beginning with ancient astrologers and sky-watchers and ending in our present moment of exploration and virtual engagement.

National Air and Space Museum curator Matthew Shindell describes how historical figures across eras and around the world have made sense of this mysterious planet. We meet Mayan astrologer priests who incorporated Mars into seasonal calendars and religious ceremonies; Babylonian astrologers who discerned bad omens; figures of the Scientific Revolution who struggled to comprehend it as a world; Victorian astronomers who sought signs of intelligent life; and twentieth- and twenty-first-century scientists who have established a technological presence on its surface. Along the way, we encounter writers and artists from each of these periods who take readers and viewers along on imagined journeys to Mars.

By focusing on the diverse human stories behind the telescopes and behind the robots we know and love, Shindell shows how Mars exploration has evolved in ways that have also expanded knowledge about other facets of the universe. Captained by an engaging and erudite expert, *For the Love of Mars* is a captivating voyage through time and space for anyone curious about Curiosity and the red planet.

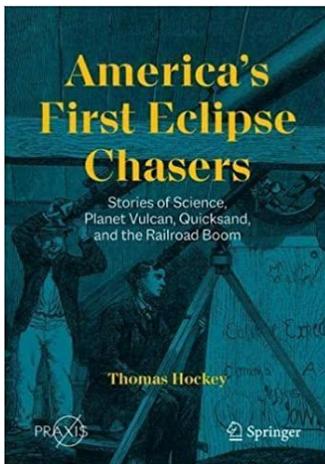
[Star Noise: Discovering the Radio Universe](#), by Kenneth I. Kellermann (Cambridge University Press), May 2023, pp.400 (hardback, £39.99), ISBN 9781316519356



Until Karl Jansky’s 1933 discovery of radio noise from the Milky Way, astronomy was limited to observation by visible light. Radio astronomy opened a new window on the Universe, leading to the discovery of quasars, pulsars, the cosmic microwave background, electrical storms on Jupiter, the first extrasolar planets, and many other unexpected and unanticipated phenomena.

Theory generally played little or no role – or even pointed in the wrong direction. Some discoveries came as a result of military or industrial activities, some from academic research intended for other purposes, some from simply looking with a new technique. Often it was the right person, in the right place, at the right time, doing the right thing – or sometimes the wrong thing. *Star Noise* tells the story of these discoveries, the men and women who made them, the circumstances which enabled them, and the surprising ways in which real-life scientific research works.

[America's First Eclipse Chasers: Stories of Science, Planet Vulcan, Quicksand, and the Railroad Boom](#), by Thomas Hockey (Springer), Apr 2023. pp.250 (paperback, £27.99), ISBN 9783031241239



In 2017, over 200 million Americans witnessed the spectacular total eclipse of the Sun, and the 2024 eclipse is expected to draw even larger crowds. In anticipation of this upcoming event, this book takes us back in history over 150 years, telling the story of the nation's first ever eclipse chasers.

Our tale follows the chaotic journeys of scientists and amateur astronomers as they trekked across the western United States to view the rare phenomenon of a total solar eclipse. The fascinating story centers on the expeditions of the 1869 total eclipse, which took place during the turbulent age of the chimerical Planet Vulcan and Civil War Reconstruction.

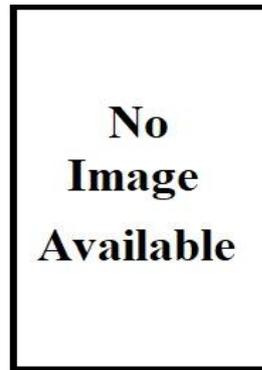
The protagonists—a motley crew featuring astronomical giants like Simon Newcomb and pioneering female astronomers like Maria Mitchell—were met with unanticipated dangers, mission-threatening accidents, and eccentric characters only the West could produce. Theirs is a story of astronomical proportions. Along the way, we will make several stops across the booming US railroad network, traveling from viewing sites as familiar as Des Moines, Iowa, to ones as distant and strange as newly acquired Alaska.

From equipment failures and botched preparations to quicksand and apocalyptic 'comets', welcome to the wild, western world of solar eclipses.

[Aristarchus of Samos: On the Sizes and Distances of the Sun and Moon - Greek Text, Translation, Analysis, and Relevant Scholia](#), by Cristián C. Carman & Rodolfo P. Buzón (Routledge), May 2023, pp.304 (hardback, £96.00), ISBN 9781032026732

This book offers the Greek text and an English translation of Aristarchus of Samos's *On the Sizes and Distances of the Sun and Moon*, accompanied by a full introduction, detailed commentary, and relevant scholia.

Aristarchus of Samos was active in the third century BC. He was one of the first Greek astronomers to apply geometry to the solution of astronomical problems in his only extant text, *On the Sizes and Distances of the Sun and Moon*. Alongside the Greek

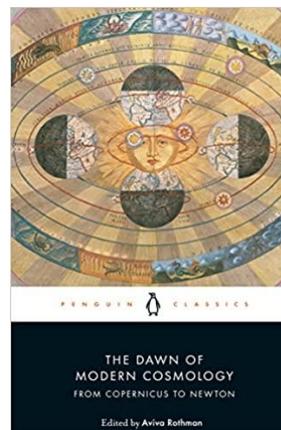


text and new English translation, the book offers readers the Latin text and English translation of Commandino's notes on the text. Readers will also benefit from a comprehensive introductory study explaining the value of Aristarchus' calculations and methodology throughout history, as well as detailed analyses of each part of the treatise.

This volume is of interest to students and scholars working on ancient science and astronomy and the general reader interested in the history of science.

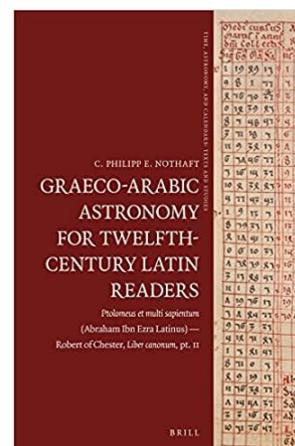
[The Dawn of Modern Cosmology: From Copernicus to Newton](#), by Aviva Rothman (ed) (Penguin Classics), Jul 2023, pp.624 (paperback, £14.99), ISBN 9780241360637

An introduction to the pioneering work of Nicolaus Copernicus, Galileo Galilei, Johannes Kepler, Rene Descartes, and Isaac Newton – along with extracts.



RECENT BOOKS MISSED

[Graeco-Arabic Astronomy for Twelfth-Century Latin Readers](#), by C. Philipp E. Nothhaft (Brill), Dec 2022, pp.372 (hardback, £141.00), ISBN 9789004526914



This volume makes available two little-known twelfth-century Latin sources on mathematical astronomy: the anonymous *Ptolomeus et multi sapientum...* (c.1145), which is attributable to the famous Jewish astrologer Abraham Ibn Ezra, and the surviving second part of Robert of Chester's *Liber canonum*, which accompanied the *Tables of London* (c.1150).

Both texts are introductory-level works originally written to educate a Latin Christian audience in the concepts and techniques involved in computing with astronomical tables. They are here presented in critical editions with facing English translations. The accompanying introductions and in-depth commentaries elucidate their significance in the context of twelfth-century Latin astronomy.

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 ON THE ROAD

Recent and future publicity events

The Society for the History of Astronomy continues to publicise its activities through events ranging from talks for local astronomical societies through to larger scale events such as astronomy shows. In addition, James Dawson continues with his excellent book sales tables at SHA events and at larger external events where the SHA has publicity stands.

Recent events:

Mon 10 Dec 2022: [When NASA went to the Moon](#), hosted by National Museums Liverpool. The Chairman, Gerard Gilligan, was invited to set up a stand for the SHA, as shown in the photo.



SHA stall at the Liverpool *When NASA went to the Moon* event in Dec 2022, ably supervised by Gerard

Mike Leggett continues to promote the SHA at his historical talks for local astronomical and other societies. This includes a "mini-stand" for the SHA with display copies of SHA publications, details of forthcoming events and a replica of a medieval astrolabe, as shown in the photo taken when Mike Leggett pre-

sented his talk on *Astronomy in the Ancient World* at the Nene Valley Astronomical Society meeting in **October 2022**.



SHA stall at Nene Valley AS meeting (Oct 2022)

Forthcoming events:

Sat 11 Mar 2023: [The Practical Astronomy Show](#), Kettering Conference Centre, NN15 6PB (9 am – 5 pm). The SHA will have a stand for publicity, membership recruitment and book sales.

If you know of other forthcoming events at which the SHA might be able to have a publicity stand, please let the Publicity Officer, Mike Leggett know via publicity@shastro.org.uk.

BBC RADIO *In Our Time*

BBC 4 Thurs 2 Feb 2023 at 9am (42 mins)

The Life of Tycho Brahe (1546-1601)

Melvyn Bragg and guests discuss the pioneering Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe (1546 – 1601) whose catalogues offered an unprecedented level of accuracy.

In 1572 Brahe's observations of a new star challenged the idea, inherited from Aristotle, that the heavens were unchanging. He went on to create his own observatory complex on the Danish island of Hven, and there he developed innovative instruments and gathered a team of assistants, taking a highly systematic approach to observation.

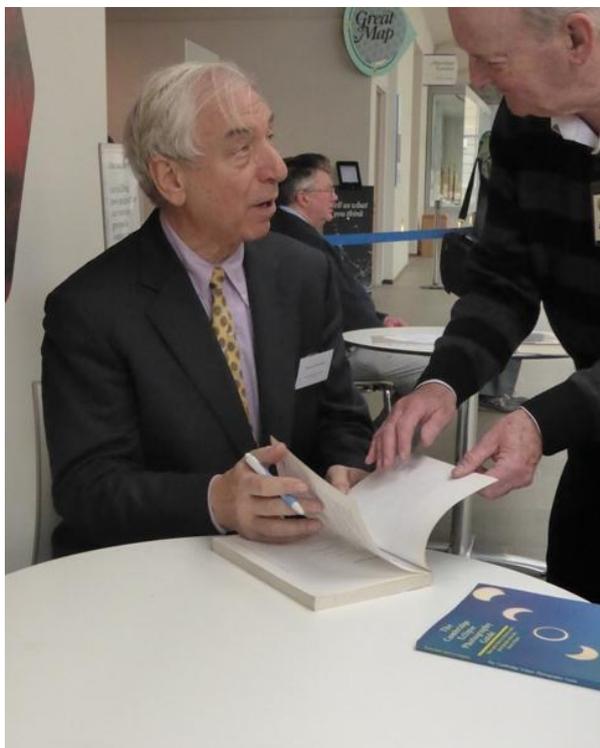
The guests will be: Ole Grell (Open University), Adam Mosley (Swansea University), and Emma Perkins (Cambridge University).

Available as [a podcast after the broadcast](#).

Professor Jay Pasachoff (1943-2022)

We are very sad to record the death, since the last issue of *e-News*, of a great friend of the SHA, Professor Jay Pasachoff. Jay, who died on 20 Nov 2022, was the Field Memorial Professor of Astronomy at Williams College in the USA and was the author of many books on astronomy and its history. He was particularly noted for his eclipse chasing, having possibly observed more solar eclipses than any person in history.

SHA members were treated to a memorable presentation by Jay when he participated in the SHA Spring Conference at Greenwich in 2015, having just returned from observing the 20 Mar 2015 total solar eclipse. Along with former SHA Chair, Kevin Kilburn, he also did a great deal to publicise and analyse the rare Bevis star atlas—*Uranographia Britannica*—discovered in the possession of Manchester Astronomical Society.



Jay Pasachoff autographing one of his books (for Eddie Carpenter) during a break at the SHA Spring Conference 2015

WEB-LINKS NOTICED

Journal of Astronomical Heritage and History

The latest issue of the [Journal of Astronomical History and Heritage \(vol.25\(3\) – Sep 2022\)](#) is now available for free download.

JAHH is published by the Centre for Astronomy Research & Development at Rizal Technological University (RTU) in the Philippines. The journal publishes issues quarterly in March, June, September, and December. All papers are refereed prior to publication. JAHH is published online only and is fully open-access. It is co-edited by Prof. Wayne Orchiston and Prof. Shi Yunli.

HAD News

The latest issue of the newsletter of the Historical Astronomy Division of the American Astronomical Society ([HAD News, issue no. 100, Oct 2022](#)) is now available for free download.

“Simon Marius 1573–1624” Anniversary

This year marks the 450th birthday of the astronomer Simon Marius and the 400th anniversary of his death is the following year. The Simon Marius Society wants the 2024 anniversary to be an opportunity to remember him. It proclaims an international jubilee year under the title "[Simon Marius 1573–1624](#)". International associations (professional and amateur) are invited to participate with lectures, exhibitions, and publications.

Planned core scientific projects are a conference and the publication of all letters from and to Marius.

OTHER MEETINGS, COURSES & EXHIBITIONS NOTICED (non-SHA)

BAA Historical Section Meeting

Sat 20 May 2023 (10.00 am - 5 pm). Doors open 9.30 am

Venue: Birmingham & Midland Institute, 9 Margaret St, Birmingham, B3 3BS.

Mark Edwards – *The Early Years of Jodrell Bank*

Marie-Louise Archer – *Ulugh Beg: Sultan, Astronomer, Mathematician and Visionary*

Pauline Norris – *Ancient Egyptians and their Astronomy*

Lee Macdonald – *Refugees, Star Clusters and Relativity: Astronomy at Greenwich Observatory in the First World War*

[Andrew Lound](#) – *Herschel's Lunatick Friends*

Further details on BAA website.

History of astronomy in the North-East of England

2 Mar 2023 6 pm GMT

Venue: The Lit & Phil, 23 Westgate Road, Newcastle, NE1 1SE

Graham Darke of the Sunderland Astronomical Society discusses the [history of Astronomy in the North East of England](#).

Cultural astronomies in Medieval and Early Modern Europe

17–21 July 2023. 6 hours per day. Hybrid format.

An intensive [international Summer Course on Cultural Astronomies in Europe](#) at postgraduate level.

CULTURAL ASTRONOMIES
IN MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN EUROPE

2023 SUMMER INTENSIVE INTERNATIONAL COURSE (postgraduate level) JULY, 17–21 hybrid format/English 6 hours/day Free registration

L. & A. Biskampjäger Institute for the History of Science, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw

Academic Director: Prof. Josefina Rodrigues-Arribas (IHN PAN)
Organizing Committee: Prof. Nicholas Campion (U. Wales Trinity Saint David), Prof. Henrique Leitão (CHCT - U. Lisboa)

Alberto Bardi, Macey Jasicki, Teyra Lanza
Barbara Bierias, Stephen Johnson, Roman Leitão
Nicholas Campion, Sylwia Konarska-Zimnicka, Henrique Leitão
Anne-Laurence Caudano, Richard Kerner, Sacha Stern
Soh-Pik, Tsvi Langermann, Ilana Wartenberg

Expressions of interest by email to rodriguesarribas@gmail.com

The course will focus on Medieval and Early Modern Europe and its cultural forms of understanding, theorizing, and practicing astronomy between the 13th and 17th centuries. It will explore what 'cultural' means in the astronomy practiced by astronomers in Europe during these periods. For instance: a) What aspects of astronomical knowledge and practice can be considered cultural. b) Whether there is an overlapping between the fields of the History of Astronomy and

Cultural Astronomy. c) Why the History of Astronomy is more well-represented than Cultural Astronomy in current research and publications. d) How astronomy relates to society and aspects of culture, such as the arts, religion, literature, and the built environment. e) How the study of astronomy and culture helps us understand the History of Astronomy and the history and nature of science.

NDXV History of Astronomy Workshop

Jun 21-25, 2023

Venue: University of Notre Dame, Indiana

This, the [Fifteenth Biennial History of Astronomy Workshop](#), will be on the theme *Communicating Astronomy* and will include a one-day trip to the Adler Planetarium in Chicago. The keynote speaker will be Charlotte Bigg, a permanent research fellow with the French CNRS, Centre Alexandre Koyré, who is known for her work exploring the intersection of scientific practice and public display in the elaboration of astronomical instruments, images, and ideas.

SHA SURVEY UPDATE

Substantial additions to the SHA Survey have been made since the last issue, including the following:

ASTRONOMERS

Robertson, John (1830-1920); **Southgate**, Alexander Abraham (1868-1937); **Ellis**, Henry Samuel (1825-1878); **Proctor**, Mary (1862-1957); **Holden**, Francis [Frank] (1917-1992); **Gaythorpe**, Sidney Bertram (1880-1964); **Benson**, Davis Edmonson (1860-1937); **Grumbrecht** [von Gumpach], Johannes [Baron Theodor] (1814-1875); **Blundeville**, Thomas (1522?-1606?); **Beverley**, Thomas (1795-1834); **Loxton**, Charles Adshead (1855-1950); **Bessemer**, Sir Henry (1813-1898); **Smyth**, John Hugh Pigott (1792-1853); **Bonaparte**, Lucien (1775-1840).

OBSERVATORIES

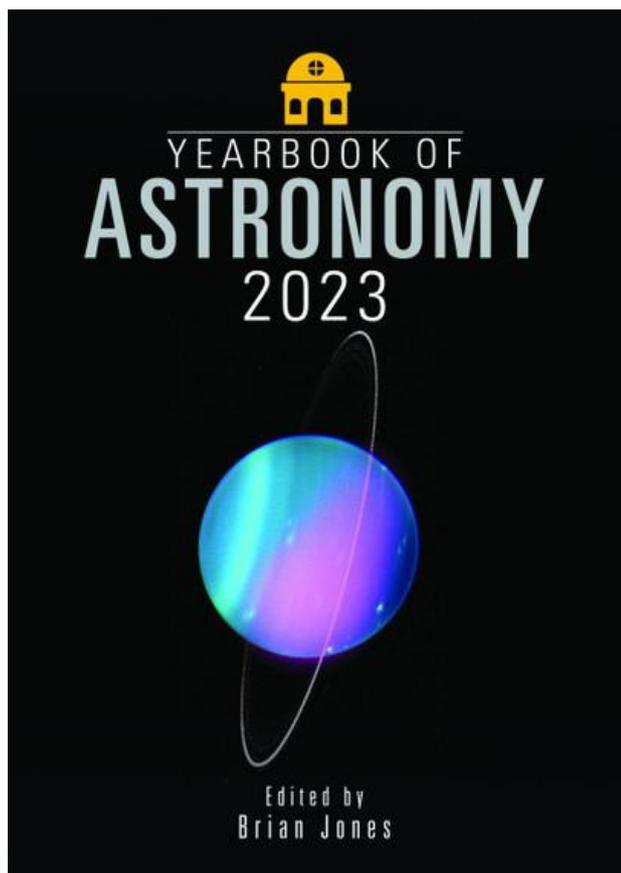
Ellis's Observatory (fl. 1853); **Heath's Observatory** (1963-1996); **Sheepshanks's Observatory** (c.1824-1841); **Offord's Observatory** (c.1897-fl.1907); **Cannock Civic Observatory** (2010-?); **Loxton's Observatory** (1890s-1940s); **Wandlebury Observatory**; **Bessemer House Observatory** (c.1880-1940s); **Oundle School Observatory** (c.1920-); **Rayleigh Observatory** (c. 1890s; 2012-); **Sharples School Observatory** (2015-); **Radley College observatory** (1889-1920s; 1934-c.1970s); **Bradfield College Observatory** (1947-1989)president.

Kevin Johnson (Survey Coordinator)

SHA CALENDAR 2023

MONTH	SHA EVENT OR PUBLICATION	VENUE
2023		
JAN	SHA Online Lecture No.11, by Jonathan Powell (25 Jan)	Via 'Zoom'
FEB	SHA e-News (1-5 Feb)	
MAR	SHA Online Lecture No.12, by Ian Ridpath (8 Mar)	Via 'Zoom'
APR	SHA Spring Conference (1 Apr) SHA Bulletin 37 (1 Apr)	Birmingham
MAY	SHA e-News (1-5 May) SHA Online Lecture No.13, by Bernie Taylor (10 May)	Via 'Zoom'
JUN	The Antiquarian Astronomer 17	
JUL	SHA Summer Picnic (1 Jul)	Jeremiah Horrocks Observatory
AUG	SHA e-News (1-5 Aug)	
OCT	SHA AGM & Autumn Conference (21 Oct)	Birmingham
NOV	SHA e-News (1-5 Nov)	
DEC	SHA Bulletin 38 (mid-Dec)	

ADVERT



Yearbook of Astronomy 2023

ed. Brian Jones

Pub. Pen & Sword Books (£18.99)

Maintaining its appealing style and presentation, the Yearbook of Astronomy 2023 contains comprehensive jargon-free monthly sky notes and an authoritative set of sky charts to enable backyard astronomers and sky gazers everywhere to plan their viewing of the year's eclipses, comets, meteor showers and minor planets as well as detailing the phases of the Moon and visibility and locations of the planets throughout the year. To supplement all this is a variety of entertaining and informative articles, a feature for which the Yearbook of Astronomy is known. Presenting the reader with information on a wide range of topics, the articles for the 2023 edition include, among others, *The Incomparable Sir Patrick Moore*; *Shining a Light on Jupiter's Atmosphere*; *A Brief History of the End of the Universe*; *The Closing of Historic Observatories*; *The Ability to Believe: Bizarre Worlds of Astronomical Antireality*; *Optical SETI at Harvard*; *The Future of Spaceflight*; and *Male Family Mentors for Women in Astronomy: Caroline and William Herschel*.

[Order here](#)