

THE OFFICIAL  
NEWSLETTER  
OF THE ATHENAEUM  
ASTRONOMY ASSOCIATION

Athenaeum  
Astronomy  
Association

# Extra Celestial

April 2020

*Chairman's Update*

*A members look at the ISS*

*An update on our new home at Whepstead*

*New donated telescope for the AAA*

*Members Resources*

*AAA Events and Guest Speakers*

*Silly Space and Galactic Games*



W

f

Twitter logo

FIND US ON OUR WEBSITE AND SOCIAL CHANNELS!

# Introduction

*Extra Celestial is the official newsletter brought to you by the **Athenaeum Astronomy Association**.*

*This issue is a little different from what we originally had planned, but this doesn't mean we have nothing to talk about... oh no!*

*We may not be meeting, but our love for Astronomy continues!*

## A WORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I hope you and your family are keeping well. For those of you who are working in key roles keep up the amazing work and for those of you who are working/staying at home keep this going as you are also playing a vital part. We are all in this together!

Many of you will no doubt be discovering new things to do with the extra spare time as a result of the lockdown. Some of you may be catching up on DIY (my wife kindly did a list for me!), new hobbies etc, but remember this is also a great opportunity to further explore the wonders of astronomy and gain some extra star gazing time. The chatter and fabulous images on WhatsApp tells me many of you are already doing this!

I also wanted to let you know that your committee are doing all they can to keep our association functioning, to keep you updated and to plan ahead for happier days. So 'until we meet again' I would like to finish by thanking our editor Peter Bruce for another excellent newsletter.

Stay Well  
Best wishes  
Mike



# *A members Look at the ISS*

AAA member Brian Shepherd has been busy at work this past months, doing his best to photograph the International Space Station!



It's not an easy task by any means, and we are delighted to share with you some of his words of wisdom, as well as a selection of his photographs...

*The ISS has caused a bit of a flurry in the last few days of March and so I attempted a very basic capture of the ISS taken on Sunday 29th March using a DSLR with a 300mm zoom lens mounted on a tripod with a remote trigger: ISO 6400, f4, 1/2.5s.*



Fig. 1

*Fig 1. In the first picture the ISS is to the left of the Moon (I'm looking West from deepest North Lincolnshire).*

*Fig 2. So the next shot is the same one but*



Fig. 2



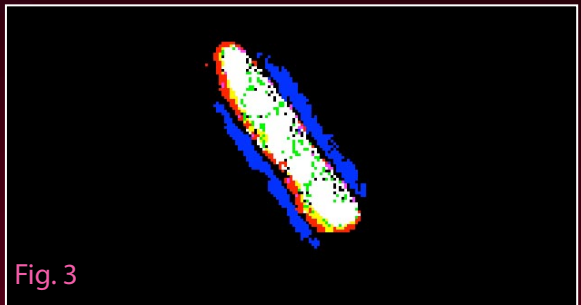
zoomed in using the Nikon software package that came with the camera (other packages are available).

Note that the Moon is not full yet and the area in shadow is partly lit, this is the effect of 'Earth Shine', that is light reflected back off the earth onto the Moons surface.



*Fig. 3* In all of the excitement it is easy to miss the fact that Aldebaran is also present, this is a red giant some 65 light years away and it appears as the brightest star in the constellation of Taurus 'The Bull', in fact it is one of the bulls eyes. In Arabic its name means, 'The Follower' as it appears to follow the Hyades star cluster, that forms the head of the bull, across the sky.

The ISS is no more than an elongated blur but it is possible to apply a basic filter on the image to see some semblance of the space station outline; the blue areas are the large solar panels.



*Fig. 3*

## ON REFLECTION

The next time I try this I will do so using an astro camera attached to my telescope as I still want to get as good an image of the ISS as James Dale (image is to be seen on our website), the gauntlet has been laid down :-)

The following site is useful for the timings of the ISS, just enter your own postcode [https://spotthestation.nasa.gov/sightings/view.cfm?country=United\\_Kingdom&region=England&city=London#.XoOb1i-ZNTZ](https://spotthestation.nasa.gov/sightings/view.cfm?country=United_Kingdom&region=England&city=London#.XoOb1i-ZNTZ)

The above also gives some useful data about the visibility duration, maximum height (this is the key factor as the higher it is the better the viewing), where it appears from and then disappears to.

Keep an eye on the night sky

Brian Shepherd



## WHAT'S HAPPENED TO WHEPSTEAD?

The good news is we will still be moving to Whepstead Community Centre, but as to when this will happen depends on the current situation.

The secretary at Whepstead and Realise Futures (our previous landlord) have both been very understanding regarding moving our equipment over.

As soon as we have more information we will update you but in the meantime if you wanted a reminder of what it has to offer please visit the site by clicking [HERE](#)

SUFFOLKVILLAGEHALLS.CO.UK

## DONATED TELESCOPE - NEW TOYS!

Thanks to a very generous donation from Mr Tony Bate we are now the proud owners of a Celestron NexStar 8SE telescope.

Many astronomers feel the classic, 8-inch Schmidt-Cassegrain revolutionised amateur astronomy in the 1970s. Now, the iconic "orange tube" design is updated with all the latest features to provide the best stargazing experience for beginners and experienced observers alike.

### Features:

- Large, 8-inch aperture with excellent light-gathering ability provides spectacular views of the Moon and planets, along with deep sky objects like the Whirlpool Galaxy.
- Starbright XLT revolutionary optical coating system.
- Fully automated, GoTo mount with database of 40,000+ celestial objects automatically locates and tracks objects for you.
- SkyAlign technology gets your telescope aligned and ready to observe in minutes. Even if you're unfamiliar with the night sky, you can easily align your telescope on any three bright objects.
- Unique single fork arm design and sturdy steel tripod all break down into separate components for easy transport and quick assembly.



In addition the donation included a great range of eyepieces (6mm, 8mm, 13mm, 17mm, 25mm, 32mm), a 2 x Barlow lens and a range of filters (red, orange, yellow, greens, blue and moon).

Due to the lockdown our chairman has been storing the equipment at his home and finally gave in to temptation in trying it out on your behalf – he said “it’s awesome and we will all have some great viewing to look forward to with this equipment”.



Whilst Tony did not ask for any money he did ask that a financial contribution be made to his nominated local charity, **Bury Bombers Wheelchair Basketball Club.**

A number of our members asked if they could make a personal donation and to this end our treasurer James has set up a way to do this. We will collate these monies and in addition top this up with a contribution from AAA funds, which we will formally present to the Bury Bombers at the earliest opportunity.



So if you wish to make a donation you can either make a BACS payment to;

Bank: **Natwest**

Sort Code: **600416**

Account#: **91982162**

If using BACS please put your name in name field followed by BBB in the reference field. Alternatively, If you'd prefer to send a cheque let James (treasurer) know and he provide you with an address.

## ***MEMBERS RESOURCES***

It's great to see our WhatsApp group being put to great use as it is providing invaluable information and support during these difficult times. Our website **[www.3a.org.uk](http://www.3a.org.uk)** is a great source of information and Richard's podcasts continue to be posted here. In addition, under our resources section there is a variety of links and suggested apps and this could be a great opportunity to become more familiar with some of these including **Stellarium** and **Quickmap Moon**.

## MEMBERS RESOURCES

Our WhatsApp group has taken on a brand new importance since we have all had to get used to living indoors, and having more time for observing.

We have seen some superb photographs from our various members on the group:

David shared with us his telescope and two photographs he has taken.

The top one is of Venus and Plaeides in the same shot.

The bottom is the Heart and Soul nebula.



Chris snapped this excellent photo of the moon!

The moon is a great photo opportunity. Many digital cameras have capability to snap a decent moon shot! Why not give it a go?

Ask our members for all the advice you need to get started!



We also love seeing the toys you have!

John here shows us a great shot of his telescope looking at a low rising moon near the horizon.

Window looks clean! Good Job!



AAA Stargazer

Ad hoc stargazing

Media, L

Starred

Chat Se

Mute

Custom

Save to

Encrypt  
Messages  
end-to-end

27 PARTICIPANTS



# AAA EVENTS

Due to coronavirus a number of events which we normally deliver and bring us an income of approximately £700 in total have unfortunately been cancelled. This includes National Trust (Ickworth), Nowton Park Star Party (March) and BID Whitsun Fayre. The BID has, due to the cancellation of the Whitsun Fayre invited us to attend the August BH Food & Drink Festival (income for AAA £400) which at this stage has not been cancelled.

## GUEST SPEAKERS (DIGITAL)

As you may know we are keen to broaden the range of outside speakers and topics we have as part of our already extensive member's programme.

To this end our chairman has continued to stay in touch with Paul Fellows, Chairman Cambridge Astronomical Association (CAA) who we have on our 'todo' list for inviting to deliver a presentation.

In the meantime Paul has kindly shared a You Tube video which he delivers as part of his regular spot on cruise ships; the first video is in two parts and called ***Fire and Ice – the volcanic worlds of the solar system*** (43mins in total). You can view these via the following links;

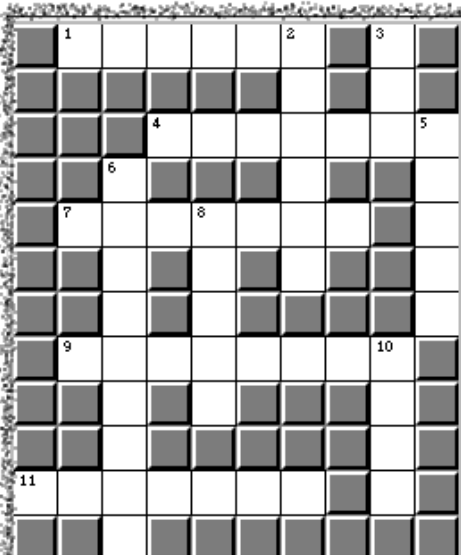
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JNYlj3PdITA> and  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kr0cQtIDZKc>



# SILLY SPACE AND GALACTIC GAMES!

Why not give a few of these a go, and show us your results on the WhatsApp group!

## OUTERSPACE PUZZLE PAGE



### ACROSS

1. Seventh planet from the sun
4. Eighth planet from the sun
7. Closest planet to the sun
9. What meteors are called before they visit Earth
11. Fifth planet from the sun

### DOWN

2. Planet with many rings
3. The closest star to Earth
5. Third planet from the sun
6. Tool used to look at planets and stars close-up
8. Sometimes shows a pretty tail
10. The \_\_\_\_ side of the moon is cooler than the other side



**Blast Off for some fun!**  
Games on this page are related toouterspace & our solar system.

## SPACEY WORD SEARCH

Hunt for the words shown on the list below, then circle them as you find them!

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

mercury  
venus  
mars  
jupiter  
saturn  
uranus  
neptune  
telescope  
stars  
moon  
sun  
orbit  
planet  
stardust  
meteor  
comets  
asteroids  
spacecraft

Using just the letters in the word below, can you make at least 12 new words? **RULES:** You may only use a letter as many times as it is shown in the key word. Each word must be at least 4 letters long. **GOOD LUCK!**

## ASTEROID

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

the  
**Kidz**  
page.com

See the letters around the rocket at the top of the page? Try to rearrange them to fill in the blanks:

WHAT HAPPENS BEFORE LIFT-OFF

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

# SILLY SPACE AND GALACTIC GAMES!

Why not give a few of these a go, and show us your results on the WhatsApp group!

Have a go at making your very own  
***Space Shuttle Paper Airplane!***

Follow the below link for your  
printable designs!

<https://www.freekidscrafts.com/space-shuttle-paper-airplane/>



## WIN A PRIZE!!!

Editor Peter Bruce will award a small sweet prize  
to the person who shows their paper airplane doing the  
'most impressive' or 'most disastrous' flight! Sillier the better!  
You have until we meet again...

**Send in your entries to the WhatsApp group!**



Examples of Prizes on Offer!



Examples of Prizes on Offer!

## Can you LAND ON THE MOON?

Try out this glorious recreation of the classic moon lander game, in your browser!  
This is designed to be played with a  
keyboard and mouse.

<http://moonlander.seb.ly>

***Share your high scores  
with us on the  
WhatsApp group chat!***



Thanks for reading our little newsletter!

For our full programme of events, and more on the  
Athenaeum Astronomy Association please visit our website:

[www.3a.org.uk](http://www.3a.org.uk)

**Athenaeum  
Astronomy  
Association**