

From YAS to LYRA

Lowestoft and Yarmouth Regional Astronomers



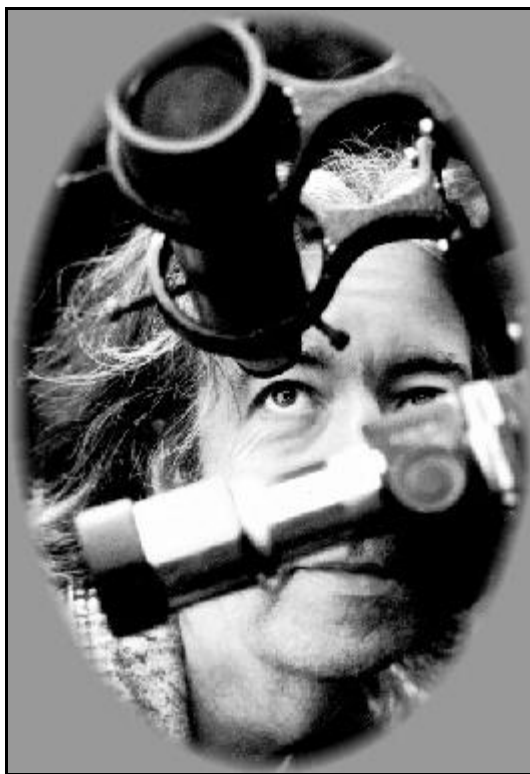
Researched and written by
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This book is dedicated to Michael Poxon, the founder of the Yarmouth Astronomical Society, and to his friends and co-founders, Michael Bean and Glyn Wadbrook, who helped to mould the society in its early days.



Michael Poxon as he is today

Acknowledgements

Writing an account on the history of LYRA would not have been possible without the help of several members and ex-members of the society.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those who were so kind in my research by lending me documents, old newsletters, images, artefacts as well as providing information by way of personal knowledge that has enabled me to produce this book. Those I wish to publically thank are:

Jim Kaler, honourable president.

Michael Poxon, founder and ex-member.

Michael Bean, co-founder and ex-member.

Glyn Wadbrook, co-founder and ex-member.

Richard Chilvers, secretary of LYRA, current member

John Perring, treasurer

Colin Watling, committee member

John Skippings, ex-member.

Simon Briggs, Kirkley Observatory Director, current member

Reg Hunt, current member.

Leonard Brundle, chairman.

NOTE:

John Seymour, who sadly passed away recently, worked relentlessly to help keep the society active in its early days, even though he was hounded by the rebellious, younger members at the time. Michael Poxon, who confessed to being one of the rebellious boys, wishes to publish his apologies to the society for his unacceptable behaviour in those days.

Foreward

As a youth I belonged to the Schenectady Astronomy Club. Best not to try to pronounce it. Schenectady is a small city near Albany, New York, where I grew up well before the era of brightly lit skies. Once a month, I'd take the bus for the 20-mile ride (we still use English units here, while the English don't, but that's not part of the story) to the meeting, where I got to hear someone speaking on some topic. It did not matter what, as I was among like-minded folk who loved the astronomical arts and I could learn something new. In high school, a small group of us founded the Albany Astronomical Association, so then I had TWO groups I could go to.

I'm privileged now to be a professional astronomer. I've been one for 46 years. But I'm also still an amateur, and after falling in love with the subject at the age of eight (when I wrote my first "book" on stars), I've been one far longer, now (rounding up a bit) going on 65 years. I don't see much distinction between the two except that as a professional I can spend more time at it. And amateur astronomy is one of the several reasons I was able to make it to a professorship and to live my life under the canopy of stars. Astronomy clubs are a foundation-stone of our science. They foster fascination with the skies, are centres of public learning, and provide an extensive base for public discussion and public policy for the exploration of space in all its aspects.

The Schenectady group no longer exists, at least not in its original form, and our little student group died when we went away to college, while new ones came in to take their places. But there are no threads to the stories. I'm among the

last who remembers. Which is why I was delighted to see this history of LYRA, which tells the tale of how the group came to be and how it grew into its present form. Knowing the story helps give solidity to the organization, helps gives it a base to grow on, so that it can continue to provide public services and education, and most of all so that it can continue to bring the beauty of the heavens to all, including those young people who may wish to make a life of it. So read on, and on behalf of all of us who have benefitted from the Astro-clubs of the world, congratulations on your achievements.

Jim Kaler
Professor Emeritus of Astronomy
University of Illinois
And honorary member of LYRA

Introduction

In 2008, the year of my retirement, my interest in astronomy returned after many years of lapse. Towards the end of that year I searched for a local astro-group with views of becoming a member and found LYRA.

I had completely forgotten about this group, but after having located them via the Internet I vaguely remembered reading about them in the local journal some years previous. After attending some of their club meetings and observation nights, I finally enrolled as a paid member in Jan 2009.

After joining LYRA, my historical bent got me wondering about how the society came into being? I felt it might be interesting to research the origin of LYRA for the purpose of writing and preserving the society's history.

Having previously been involved with writing a number of historical paperback books on behalf of my local church and helping a local ageing author illustrate and word process four of his books, I felt qualified in attempting to write the history of LYRA.

After speaking to the secretary, Richard Chilvers, about writing the book, not only as an historical record of LYRA, but as a means of raising funds through its sale, I then commenced with research and the writing. I haven't written this book for personal gain, but instead, all proceeds from the book will go towards LYRA.

I'm not a trained historian, nor do I claim to be the best of writers, but I hope this book is written well enough to offer an interesting historical account on the origin of the

society, its difficulties and success over the past forty years of its existence.

Ron Larter 2009

Brief History of the Society

YAS to LYRA 1967 to 2009

The growing interest in astronomy in the 1960s was no doubt due to the famous TV programme, 'Sky at Night', presented by the legendary Patrick Moore, which began a decade earlier in the 1950's.

The dawning of the space age had drawn countless eyes toward the heavens, a vacant space that was beginning to fill with man-made satellites and space craft.

It was impossible for those two major events not to leave their mark on inquisitive minds, both young and old, who turned to the night sky to feed their curiosity.

Home-made telescopes were constructed ranging from the simplest refractor made from cardboard tubes, round lenses from old-fashioned spectacles and eye-pieces from disused microscopes and broken binoculars. Others who were better off financially and perhaps more adventurous spent countless hours grinding 6", 8", 10" and even 12" mirrors to build a Newtonian telescope.

The publication of astronomy books, especially those by Patrick Moore, began to fill the shelves of book shops to instruct many budding astronomers in the art of sky watching.

The growing interest of sky watching had given rise to the creation of many astronomical societies throughout the UK to cater for their needs, one of which was the Yarmouth Astronomy Society (YAS) that eventually progressed to become the Lowestoft and Yarmouth Regional Astronomers.

It all began in the mid 1960's in a slum area of Yarmouth, where, at 38 Cobholm Road, lived a young lad who was to become the driving force behind an astronomical society that was successfully carried through into the 21st century.

In those days Cobholm Road was declared to be a street of criminal families and backward old ladies who beat up their daughters. One side of the road housed a row of well-to-do families who lived in private residences with the luxury of curtains in their windows. On the opposite side of the road was a row of run-down, crumbling, curtainless council houses fit for demolition.

In one of those crumbling council houses, at 38 Cobholm Road, lived a 6 year old lad who on one dark night lifted his eyes towards the starry sky and wondered at the marvellous sights he saw. He described the event as something close to a 'religious experience' that stayed with him for quite some time.

At the age of 14, with memories of that religious experience, he began reading the family encyclopaedia and digested everything it had on astronomy. The book had several pages containing star maps and this young teenager, Michael Poxon, spent countless hours learning and memorising as many star and constellation names he could.

Being deeply drawn into the wonders of the night sky he had designs to embark on a career as a professional astronomer. With that career on his mind, Mike often wrote letters to Patrick Moore, quizzing him constantly about how he could become a professional in this field of work. Despite the good advice he received, his dream of becoming a professional astronomer didn't come to fruition. However,

the astronomical fire burning within him eventually led to a society that was to run well into the 21st century.

The only astronomical group around at the time of Michael's youth was the local Binocular Sky Society, where he became an active member, until that is, he had ideas of setting up his own astronomical society.

The founding of the YAS started after he was introduced to the school astronomy GCE O-level course by his teacher, John Geer. It began as a small club at the Technical High School, Yarmouth, in 1967 where he met Michael Bean and Philip Gilbert, who also enjoyed astronomy as a hobby. Between them, they discussed plans to create an Astronomical Society.

They held meetings and observation nights at Mike's home in Cobholm Road, where they discussed the many facets of organising an astronomical society. News of the society reached the ears of their friends and those who had a passing interest in astronomy joined the group as members. But as membership grew so did their boisterous behaviour. On some occasions their meetings turned into noisy, musical affairs that had nothing at all to do with astronomy.

Despite the group's rowdy meetings, order however was partially restored through the addition of a new member who was, as Mike put it, a 'grown-up', Mr. Albert 'Budgie' Burgess, a radio engineer from Bradwell, who always brought his son along with him to their meetings

There was one important thing about Mr Burgess above all else - he had a home-made 6" Newtonian reflector, an instrument that attracted the members' attention.

There was no formal committee in the early days of the society, just two leaders; Michael Poxon as secretary and Michael Bean as chairman.

A short while later, another young lad by the name of Glyn Wadbrook who had a keen interest in astronomy since the age of about 10 years while at Greenacre School, Yarmouth, also joined the group.

During school lessons in one particular class, Glyn Wadbrook had to write an essay each week on a subject of his choosing. Most of the boys picked a different subject each week, but Glyn didn't know what to choose for his subject, so he lazily flicked through the first pages of a school encyclopaedia and his imagination was captivated by numerous images of stars and galaxies.

Those wondrous pictures of the heavens had caught his attention to the point where he wrote an essay on an astronomical subject each week. From those pictures and his weekly essays on astronomy, it instilled in him a serious interest in the subject.

His new found astronomical interest brought with it a 2" refractor given to him as a present. That telescope, which is an exciting instrument for any young lad, brought even greater wonders to his eyes that caused his heart to burn with deeper curiosity about the night sky

Glyn's hobby was further influenced by Patrick Moore's books; especially the 'Observer's Book of Astronomy' from which he had learnt so much about the night sky.

Those early influences and beginnings as a young amateur astronomer prompted him to search for a local

group of like-minded people. In his search, he found in the meetings column of the Yarmouth Mercury information about the local Yarmouth Astronomical Society. He phoned Michael Poxon for further details and promptly attended his first meeting at 38 Cobholm Road in 1968.

Shortly after, he was soon elected as treasurer and became active in helping to organise the society as one of its co-founders.

Working together with the stabilising effect of Mr Burgess, some form of structure was beginning to take place. That structure came by way of a small committee with elected officers as follows:

Michael Poxon:	secretary and editor
A Burgess:	chairman
Michael Bean:	vice-chairman
Glen Wadbrook:	treasurer

However, their meetings in Cobholm Road were about to come to an end during 1969/70 when the council decided to send in the demolition team. Michael Poxon's family was re-housed in a new flat at 10 Terryll Road, Yarmouth; a place where Mike admitted to making copious observations because he had a much better viewing conditions than he did at Cobholm Road.

Some of their meetings were held at this new address, but on some occasions they held meetings at the Yarmouth College in the evenings after class, which was an ideal meeting place with a warm room, chalk boards, comfort and

an observatory on its roof where a 6" Charles-Frank equatorially-mounted reflecting telescope was housed.

However, the telescope wasn't looked after by the college. The mirror became tarnished to some degree but was, surprisingly, still usable.

Their use of the college was short lived due to security concerns. The staff of the college felt it was too dangerous for the boys to be on the roof of the college to use the telescope without supervision. They were stopped from using the college *and* the telescope, which was such a huge disappointment to them. Losing the use of the college meant they needed to find a new venue.

It wasn't long, when in 1971, they found a new meeting place, a large ground floor at the Yarmouth Central Library for a few shillings. The Central Library, where they met Friday evenings from 7.30pm, was a more centralised and well-known building in the town, which ideal for meetings and easy for new members to find.

About the time they moved to the Central Library two older members joined them in the form of John Seymour and John Skippings. Once settled into the society's routine, they saw a serious need for restructuring. Seymour and Skippings suggested making changes the committee and set out some society rules. Membership was low and in need of growth, which the necessary changes were hoped to bring about.

Restructuring ideas didn't go down too well, and the younger members, some of whom were the founders of the society, saw the more mature members as interfering adults.

Rebellion aroused during meetings that called for a change, as some might be losing their coveted positions.

But despite there rebellion, changes were made, which in time placed the society on the road to greater success. John Seymour and John Skippings became great assets to the society.

It was in 1970 that the society became official with a proper committee and a programme of events.

By the winter of 1971, a set of rules was finally established and published in the Albireo journal.

- i. The society shall be known as the Great Yarmouth Astronomical Society, (abbreviation YAS)
- ii. Any person over the age of fourteen years may join.
- iii. General meetings are held every six months, committee meetings once a month.
- iv. The society reserves the right to refuse or repudiate membership.
- v. Subscription is £1.00 per year. It lasts for the whole year irrespective of when it is paid. On payment of subscription the concerned member is given a membership card and receipt.
- vi. Committee decisions are final.
- vii. Majority vote operates in committee decisions.

- viii. An extraordinary general meeting cannot be called unless at least six members sign an agreement.
- ix. The broadsheet is to be issued free to members quarterly.
- x. The minutes of a committee meeting shall be read at the start of the following meeting.
- xi. Changes in the rules (or additions) can only be effected by committee decision.
- xii. Officers of the society are only re/elected at General Meetings.

In 1971 there appears to have been only 7 members, which expanded to 9 by 1972. Even though it had recently set up a new committee; with such a small body of members it had almost no input of articles from its rebellious members. As a result, the society had no choice but to drop its newsletter between 1972 to 1974. Publication at that time became impossible.

However, with continued effort and perseverance from the senior members the small number of dedicated members managed to keep the society alive.

Towards the end of the fallow period in the summer of 1974, the society began to see the fruits of its labours. Membership increased to 17 in all, doubling the size of the society. The doubling of membership brought about the revival of its newsletter in October 1974.

The following two years, 1975/76, saw a healthy, growing interest in astronomy amongst the members, an

interest that brought them together as a stronger unit, leading to regular meetings every two weeks.

But as always, another challenge was setting in. Their regular meeting place at the library was in jeopardy due to an increase of hiring fees. Extra expense had caused the committee to consider putting up membership fees to cover the extra costs, which might trigger, once again, a downward trend in membership numbers.

A solitary society by itself holds very little clout when complaining about the rising cost of hiring rooms, but it was considered if several societies hiring library rooms for their meetings got together with the same complaint, then perhaps between them they might have greater power to defer the rise of hiring costs. Several societies banded together, including the YAS, to make complaints against the Yarmouth Library. Despite the banding, their efforts seem to have made very little impact and the fees continued to rise.

In the early part of 1980, a new meeting place was found at the Star Hotel pub. They were offered a room for free as long as its members were willing to buy drinks during their meetings, which were held monthly on the last Friday of each month.

It was while at the Star Hotel, where, on the 15th May 1981, guest speakers Nigel Henbest and Heather Cooper were invited to give a lecture to the society on the subject of deep space - but more about that later.



New meeting place – 1980
Star Hotel, Hall Quay, Gt Yarmouth

Shortly after that momentous meeting, the Yarmouth society decided to move to the town of Lowestoft where the majority of its members were living.

Having moved to Lowestoft a new and appropriate name was needed to mark a new historical chapter. With the society now based in Lowestoft, the most appropriate name chosen was the Lowestoft & Yarmouth Regional Astronomers, which coincidentally corresponded with the letters of the constellation, LYRA, became its logo.

The society first began meeting at the Lowestoft College, where our current members, Simon Briggs and Reg Hunt served on the committee and who were instrumental in renaming and running the society.

The move to Lowestoft began a new era for the society, with new ideas, plans and ventures.

Amongst the many ventures planned, one such venture during the late 1990's was its regular monthly spot on the Beach Radio, with Reg Hunt as guest speaker for LYRA. Each month he would talk and answer questions about some aspect of astronomy ranging from equipment, constellations, meteor showers, planets, the moon, space travel and even touching on the possibility of alien life. In the beginning, Reg was on his own, but on following months he had other LYRA members join him, namely; Simon Briggs, Malcolm Robertson and Ian Nicholls.

It was during this time that Malcolm Robertson had his time in the famous chair of 'Mastermind' answering questions on the subject of astronomy. He managed to get through some rounds but never achieved the ultimate. - general knowledge questions had let him down.

However, with regards to their venues, the 1990's saw LYRA on the move yet again. The society moved from Lowestoft College to Kirkley High School where it stayed for many years. But after a long and healthy relationship with Kirkley High School, difficulties began to set in that had severed their relationship and a new venue was sort after.

The society transferred their meetings to the Viking Hotel, now called the 'Sunrise', in Corton Road, where they had 'astro-talk and drink' meetings and regular meetings. With a new venue for meetings, its position with the Viking Hotel were a little shaky in the beginning, but soon stabilised to become their regular meeting place once every month on the first Thursday of the month..

It was at one of those gatherings at the Viking Hotel that Simon Briggs, Danny Wheeler and Malcolm Robertson on leaving the meeting, noticed a shining bright light in the northern sky. Photos of the auroral display were taken and subsequently printed in a large format in the Lowestoft Journal and Waveney Advertiser.

Like many societies with low membership, leading members could not guarantee regular attendance at their meetings. It was during a period of low membership that a critical 'make or break' meeting had LYRA nearly disbanded due to the resignation of its Secretary, Simon Briggs and Treasurer, Brian Philpott.

Up against the wall, facing closure, volunteers were called for and new officers stood up to fill the breach. Richard Chilvers became the Secretary, David Elsey, Treasurer and Leslie Barrows as its Chairman

Shortly after, another new mini-chapter opened, which included rebuilding the broken relationship with Kirkley High School. Meetings were held and trust was reborn with the school authorities who helped us finance the re-aluminising of the flat mirror and 12" reflecting mirror as well as checking the quality of the optics of the telescope at the KO. The report was positive as Rick Turrell predicted, who incidentally suggested the transfer of the observatory into the hands of LYRA, which up until then had been run by the school. All that was now needed was to rehouse the telescope and to get it into working order. Two main options were available; removal of the observatory to another location or bringing the present site back into workshop order.

While the restoration of the scope was taking place, Secretary, Richard Chilvers, contacted, via email, the eminent USA astronomer, James B Kaler. This contact cemented the new era with Jim not only being our Honorary President, but also writing articles 'Jim's Stellar Corner' for our newsletter for many years. Jim's articles contributed to LYRA can be found in his website section 'Stella Stories'.

So, during that very busy period to re-organise the LYRA committee, move to Corton Road and of its efforts to restore relationships with Kirkley High School, the following ideas were also implemented:

i: To create a sub-committee of astro-organisers who would be responsible for organising events within a given aspect of astronomy, to attend meetings, to plan events, meetings and trips and to keep a book to record those who attend those events and meetings.

ii: To reduce membership fees from £10 to £3 per year as a means of encouraging new members.

iii: To team up the Norwich Astronomical Society by becoming an affiliated society with them, which will give LYRA access to their resources, acquire reduced rates to open meetings and to obtain support from them in any of LYRA's events.

Other initiatives that were taken by the LYRA committee was the purchase of a TV and Video combi., and to produce a brochure giving details about LYRA and its events and meetings that were to be distributed around the Yarmouth and Waveney area.

After a successful association with the Viking Hotel, LYRA eventually moved to its current venue at the Kirkley Gymnasium Club in Notley Road.

Kessingland Astronomy Group. KAG:

The Kessingland Astronomy Group was conceived by LYRA secretary, Richard Chilvers, who approached Colin Watling of Kessingland, a new member of the Lowestoft & Yarmouth Regional Astronomers.

The population of Kessingland was increasing to the point where the village had become the largest in Suffolk, almost to the point of being called a town, Colin was asked if he would like to tap into that growing community and form a localised sky watching group.

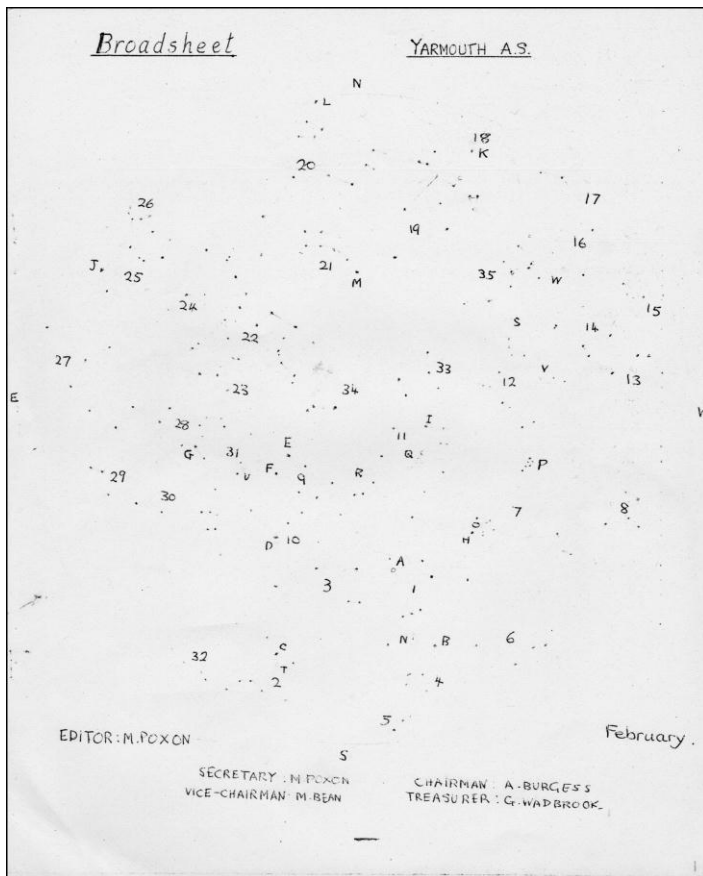
Although KAG is a separate group in its own right, it is however a sister group affiliated with the LYRA society. The group has been running for about three years, and although it cannot boast a large membership, it nevertheless plays an important role within LYRA.

As part of KAG's programme, Colin organises regular observational nights, which caters for the beginner astronomer. He is always willing to help them find their way around the night sky to discover the many wonders that lie waiting to be found.

Besides his KAG observational nights, Colin is also a keen comet hunter as a result he heads the comet section of LYRA. Besides comets, another passion he has is space exploration. He is forever hot on the tail of NASA news for recent events, which he posts daily to LYRA members via the internet.

Society Newsletters:

Most societies at one point or another often start producing an in-house newsletter for its members. LYRA, followed the same path. The first attempt to produce a newsletter was in 1971, called the 'YAS broadsheet' that was based on the design of the Norwich Astronomical Society broadsheet.



*The very first issue of the YAS newsletter,
February 1971*

The broadsheet, about A4 size, had from 6 to 8 pages per issue. Because the young society had no means of

printing the broadsheet, the founder, Michael Poxon, who became editor of the publication at the time on account of spent hours typing out each individual newsletter. Not only did he type each newsletter, he also drew the simple sketches on each cover and all the illustrations within its pages – again, in each copy, which shows the love he had for astronomy and the dedication he had for the society.

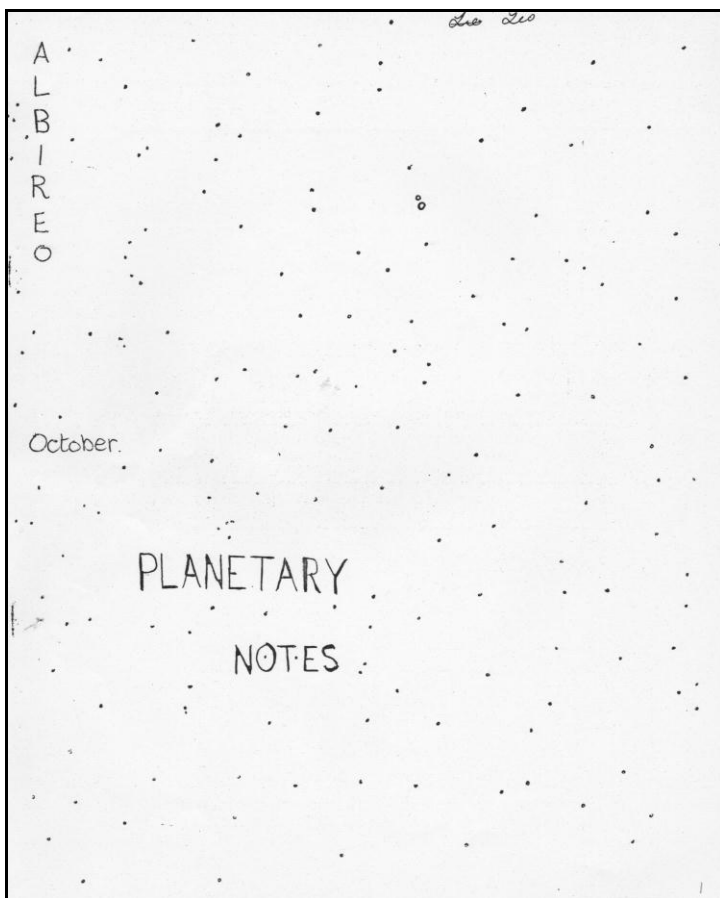
Most of the articles within the broadsheet were short, concise and very basic, but as the society progressed the contents of each article became longer and more in-depth.

For any publication to become successful, and no matter what size or how complex the subject may be, the need for contributed articles, notes and letters etc from members was paramount in order to keep a newsletter alive.

Because the contribution of such material was rather sparse, members were constantly encouraged to become more active as many of the society's articles were contributed by the same members time and time again for each quarter.

As a means of encouraging members to contribute to the newsletter, a number of ideas were created such as offering rewards by inviting members to send in observational notes and articles to a yearly competition. The idea worked well, but there was no flood of articles.

In October 1971 the YAS broadsheet changed its name to the 'Albireo', which was suggested by Michael Poxon who saw the name on an astronomical newsletter in Holland.



The continued lack of contributions saw, in autumn 1972, the last issue of the Albireo broadsheet for almost two years. But when membership had doubled in 1973 it prompted the re-issuing of the broadsheet a short while later in April 1974. It was again stressed that the success and quality of the broadsheet depended on members' contribution of articles.

Prior to its publication the society considered creating a new name for the journal, but after some deliberation it

was decided to keep the name Albireo. In that issue, the new editor, David Miles, remarked:

When the GYAS was first formed a few years ago, a journal was introduced with some degree of success. For some time now the committee has been considering reviving the issue of this journal and has at last been able to do so. With an ever-increasing membership, which has doubled in the last 12 months, it was thought that such a journal would answer a needed purpose.

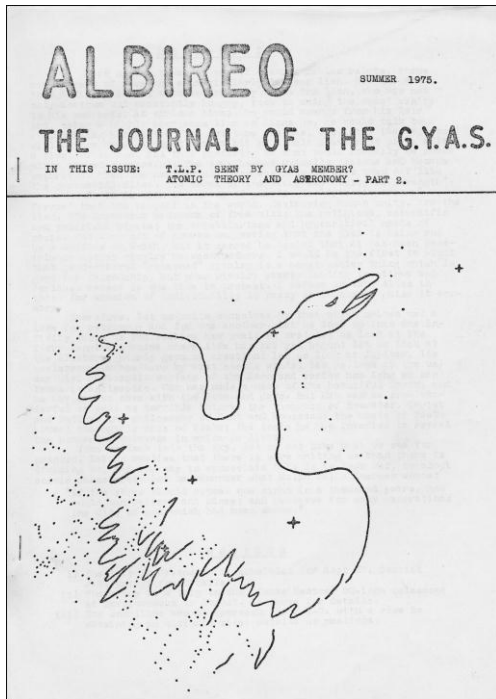
It is hoped to produce this as a quarterly for the time being and future editions will of course depend on the support of members. In considering the name given to it, the committee thought it appropriate to keep to the name originally suggested by Michael Poxon at its inception. It was also thought that it should have a distinguishing mark from the original and was decided to incorporate the figure of a swan to illustrate the constellation of Cygnus from which (the name Albireo) comes.

The format of the journal will be seen to have various sections in which it is hoped that members will take an active part by making contributory articles. Suggestions for improving the journal will also be welcomed by your committee. It should be realised that this is a step forward for the society and only success can assure its continuation. In renewing this venture, your committee is sure that it speaks for everyone, when it wishes the journal ALBIREO continued and lasting success.

The addition of Cygnus, the swan, wasn't used until some time later, but the spring issue of 1974 with its name 'Albireo' remaining was designated as being issue No.1 to mark its new beginning as a new astronomical journal.

The journal's size remained as before, but its contents and format were changed slightly by dividing part of the journal into sections devoted to specific topics such as an 'Observational Section' 'Planetary Section' 'Stellar Section', etc depending on what was to be published in each quarter.

The committee had hoped that the new format with its various sections would induce members to make contributions of articles and observation notes for the Albireo.



The summer of 1975 issue finally saw the addition of Cygnus on its front cover. It had 10 sheets giving 20 pages of information, which was quite a substantial increase.

The constant need for new contributors for the journal was desperately needed, and to help encourage it a yearly competition

was again initiated with prizes going to the best article of the year.



The winter of 1980/81 saw the introduction of a new format for the Albireo newsletter. Its size remained unchanged, but its content was to introduce regular features such as a news column, out and about column and a star diary, plus all the usual articles as published in previous issues.

With the advancing pace of space exploration, future newsletters were also to include more topics related to space travel and planetary probes. On the last page a list of books held by the society's private library, looked after by the librarian, Sean Smith of Oulton, was also published.

I don't whether or not the following two events were part of the Yarmouth Society's attempts to hold onto its identity as an astronomical group, but towards the end of its era in Yarmouth, a new logo appeared that might have been used to attract attention. This logo was



soon redundant due to a further name change from the Great Yarmouth Astronomical Society to the Great Yarmouth District Astronomers, which came in to being

during the summer of 1981. This date also happened to be the last of the Albireo publications and the ending of its newsletter marked the end of the society in Yarmouth.



*The final Albireo Newsletter with its new society name GYDA.
Summer 1981*

In that same year, 1981, the society had moved to Lowestoft, which led in due course, to the creation of a new publication, the LYRA Circular. It wasn't a regular publication, but appears to have been a sporadic circular printed when the society had news to publish.

Following that circular, a more regular LYRA newsletter was published in the year 2000. It's still in circulation to this very day due to the dedicated service of its editor and LYRA Secretary, Richard Chilvers.

Telescope and Observatory

One of the major goals of any astronomical society is the acquisition of a good telescope housed in an observatory that could be used by its members. It's considered an important astronomical need, as well as being a tool that could draw in new members.

The YAS was no exception to this need, where the society's minutes regularly record the importance of obtaining a good telescope and observatory.

They exercised many ideas and put a lot of hard work into their efforts, but it seems to have reached a disappointing result. Finances and finding an appropriate site were the two main challenges that prevented that dream coming to fruition.

In the early days of the YAS in 1972, the group did in fact have the use of a telescope that was housed on the roof of the Yarmouth College, but when the society lost the use of the college, they also lost the use of the telescope too.

Having lost the college telescope they made use of each others' instruments, but in the meantime they initiated a saving fund for a new telescope and an observatory, which by July 1971, amounted to the princely sum of £15.50p. It was apparent they still had a very, very long way to go to reach their goal.

In their desire to construct an observatory they needed a site to build on, and after drawing up plans for their observatory, it was sent to the chief education officer in Yarmouth. The society considered two possible sites. One was at the Cobholm Playing Field, Yarmouth, which had

good N, S and W, horizons, but access to the site was said to be difficult, plus there were no toilet facilities, which is a must for any astronomer on a cold winter's night.

Failing that, they considered the possibility of using the Herman School in Gorleston, which was surrounded by farmland that offered good skies for observation, except for the north horizon. But the farmland in question was earmarked for creating a new football ground, which wouldn't have been a satisfactory situation, especially if floodlights were to be added later.

In the meantime, Michael Poxon, in 1972 made plans to build a Newtonian Reflector and began the process of grinding an 8" mirror. Someone was kind enough to give him a clock drive for the proposed telescope, but as time moved on; he never did complete the mirror, but instead, purchased a 10" ready-made mirror together with flat mirror and lens.

He finally built a reflector, which was housed in a small shed in the Cobholm/Southtown area close to some allotments. Although members were allowed to use it, the YAS committee were concerned about the lack of attendance at their meetings and it became a desperate bid to build its own Yarmouth Observatory. It was felt that to own an observatory was the way forward as a means of encouraging more members to attend as well as attracting much needed new members.

After all, an astronomical society without an observatory tends to advertise a less positive image in the eyes of the general public, and having its own purpose built observatory was considered to be a way of drawing in the crowds.

By 1975 the society managed to raise a healthy £120 toward its telescope fund, which was a big jump from its earlier balance of £15. However, the committee's dream was still far from reality. Plans were barred by the challenges of finding an appropriate site to house a telescope.

Later, in 1977, when Michael Poxon left the group to begin studies at university, he sold his 10" reflector to the society. The strange thing is none of the early society members can remember that telescope being bought, which remains a mystery to this day.

As far as records show, the Yarmouth Society never managed to obtain a site for an observatory; and when the group moved to Lowestoft in 1980 and became LYRA, plans for an observatory wasn't on their agenda until later that year.

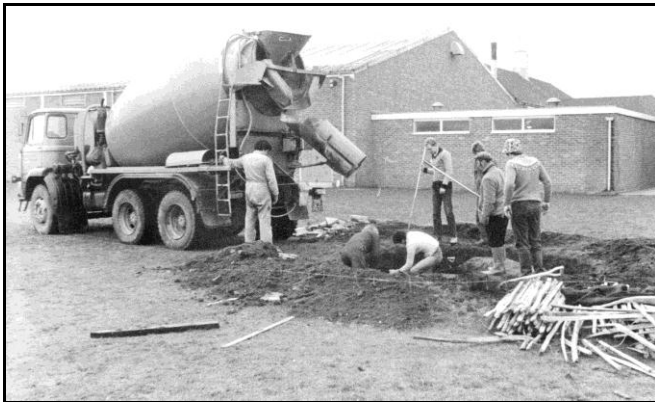
At that time, fate fell their way in the shape of a brick and mortar building and a 12" reflector that was used at Kirkley High School, formerly known as the Alderman Woodrow Secondary Modern School.

The telescope was built by an astronomer in Norwich, but during the hurricane in the 1970s it incurred storm damage. Being damaged, it was no longer wanted and was eventually passed on to Kirkley High School.

However, the school didn't obtain the telescope until after the observatory was in the process of being built as a project during the time when astronomy 'O' level became part of the school curriculum. The scope was kept in storage for quite some time until it was finally released to the school who took it on as a restoration project for housing in their new observatory that was being built.

Lowestoft College were invited to help build the observatory, which they accepted. Students of the college used the invitation as an opportunity to take on a building project to hone their skills. Not being the conventional square building had placed them in a situation where they had to learn how to construct a circular building with bricks, which no doubt tested their abilities.

The project commenced in the summer of 1980. The ground was dug, foundations put into place, and the building began to progress.

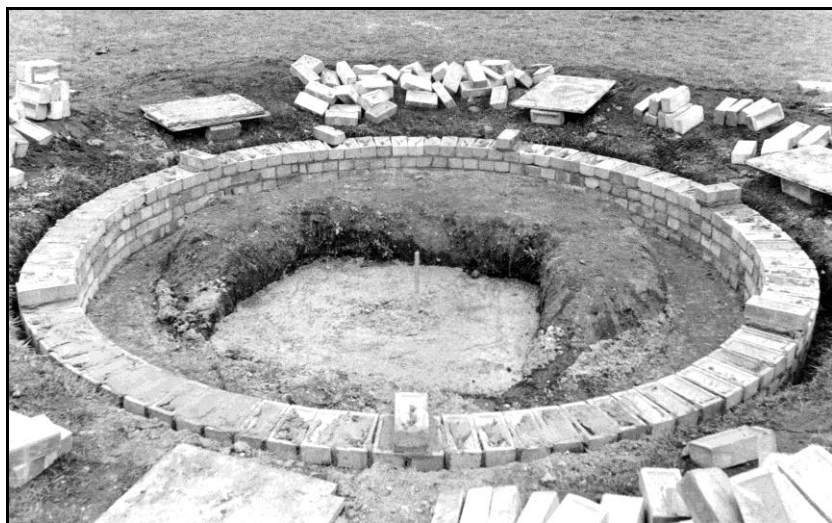


Working on the foundations of the observatory





Cement now in and setting



First bricks in place



The building progresses



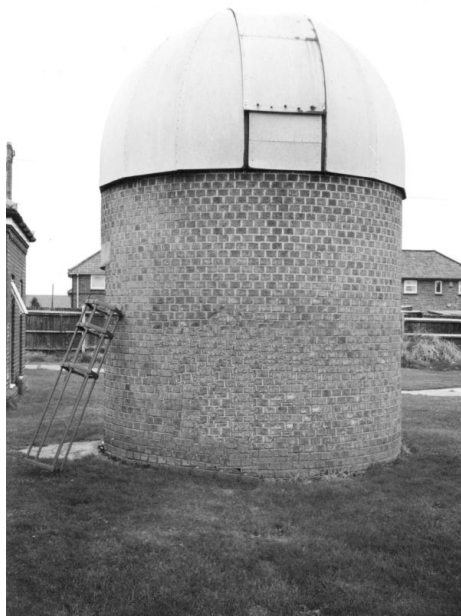
Almost complete



*Two lads of Kirkley High School
restoring their acquisitioned scope and drive.*

With the observatory completed, Kirkley High School, after restoring the scope and having it placed into the upper section of the observatory, was now ready to implement their GCSE Astronomy for any student wishing to pursue it as part of their curriculum.

The scope was well used by the school, but due to a change in the school curriculum, astronomy was no longer part of the programme. The scope then fell into disuse, which became rusty and corroded through damp. Even the locks on the observatory door became rusted, which gives an indication of how long the scope was out of use.



As fate would have it, LYRA's move from Lowestoft College to Kirkley High school as their meeting place around 1998/99 led to the acquisition of the scope and observatory.

The head teacher, Rick Turrell, felt that the disused scope would be better placed in the hands of LYRA, but there was a condition – it had to be made available to all schools and the community at large, to which LYRA agreed.

With the scope being in a poor state, members of LYRA grouped to make plans for its restoration to get the scope back to its former glory.

About that time, when the scope was being restored the observatory was in an ideal position for observation. It was situated on high ground isolated from buildings, plus there was very little light pollution. Then along came the big bad wolf to upset the apple-cart. The school decided to

expand its sports centre and club house and place floodlights around the sports field.

This was a big blow for astronomical observations and the LYRA committee was totally disappointed with the school's new proposals, especially now the society had possession of the scope and was spending good money for its restoration. All the added facilities, especially the floodlights, would make observations of the night sky much more difficult. But, there was nothing LYRA could do to persuade the school to reconsider, so the society decided that the only way to solve the problem was to move the telescope to a new site.

Possible sites were indentified, including the disused MOD site in Hopton. LYRA wrote letters to the appropriate departments expressing their interest to purchase the land at Hopton its through member, John Nicholls, who announced that he would put up the money for the site. If successful in buying the land, Mr Nicholls planned to live on the site, allowing LYRA to build an observatory and use the site for meetings and observation nights.

John Nicholls placed a substantial bid of £20,000, but to his and LYRA's disappointment, it was won by the bidder, Frank Brown, who made a tempting bid of £90,000 and won the purchase.

But all was not lost. The new owner, Mr Brown, through befriending LYRA members, offered part of the site for storage space for equipment and for observation nights. Although LYRA didn't take up the offer to use the land for storage, members did however, take up the offer to use his site for observation nights, and still do to this today.

With LYRA having lost a promising site as a permanent base for an observatory, it didn't deter them from continuing their search for a new site. In fact, letters were being sent in response to a second possible site – the site of the disused water treatment based at Corton close by the parish church.

It had a parcel of elevated ground that would be ideal for erecting an observatory, plus an outbuilding that could possibly be converted into a meeting room.

Anglian Water Company was contacted with a request to use or buy the land for astronomical purposes, but the request drew a blank response, and nothing positive materialised. The land and site remains redundant to this day and is used as a bird ringing station.

Letters were also sent to Potters Holiday Camp and Somerleyton Hall with a request to allow LYRA to erect an observatory on their land, but to no avail.

Despite these failures, LYRA continued with the restoration of the scope and observatory and applied for funding from various quarters. Some were rejected, but a few were positively helpful.

Anglia Water and Shell awarded £100 each, Birds Eye awarded £60, Witham Paint Company in Oulton Broad donated paint for the exterior of the observatory and Smith Brothers contributed paint for its interior with a 20% discount.

Work was slow but positive. The Observatory roof was insulated against leaks, a new door was put in place, paint applied etc.

Because there appeared to be no success at finding a site, LYRA, feeling somewhat defeated, decided to make the best of what they had. Having rebuilt confidences with Kirkley High School authorities and to mark that relationship, a new entrance gate was jointly financed by LYRA and installed by the school.

When work on the restoration of the scope and observatory was completed it was opened by the well known celebrity, Patrick Moore on a flying visit after finishing his presentation on an astronomical subject at the Marina Theatre.

However, as time moved on, Colin Watling suggested two possible sites in Kessingland; one was a piece of farmland that had a disused WW2 bunker, that could be converted into a meeting room; and the second, which appeared to be a more promising site, was on the grounds of the Kessingland Sports and Community Centre.

The second option appeared to be the more fruitful one, with an agreement having been made by the Kessingland Parish Council to allow LYRA to build an observatory on the sports field. The agreement however, wouldn't allow LYRA any leasehold on the site. But even this promising option fell through when new ideas were being implemented by the council about the sports field, which in turn forced LYRA to put their plans on hold yet again.

The observatory is still on the grounds of Kirkley High School and the society is now divided by two thoughts. Some members feel perhaps they should give up on their search for new premises and make the best of what they had, while others are of the opinion that the society should

continue trying to find a new site and purchase a new scope to boost the image of LYRA as a society..

In fact, at one particular AGM meeting the differences between the two schools of thought had caused an uproar to the point where some committee members had simply walked out in disgust. The dispute centred on the use of SCC funding of £1,500, either to improve the present scope or remove and replace it with an 'off site' self remote control scope. The decision was not an 'open and shut' case, but the walkout of some members led to the remaining members voting to remain with the present scope given to us by the school.

Although some eventually returned and remained members of LYRA, others never returned, but instead, they created a small society called the Waveney Astronomy Group, which eventually fizzled out.

LYRA, after all the times of trying has a working observatory ready for use. Of course, it has to work within the viewing window either after 10pm on weekdays or at weekends when the floodlights are off.

It's a good scope, which has been used many times successfully, but it now has to compete with members who have their own scopes and observatories allowing 'remote control' and 'ease of use' observing.

Tribute

John Meadows, who died of cancer towards the end of 2009, dedicated much of his time in the late 1990's and early 2000's to the restoration of the Kirkley Observatory. He built and installed the ladder leading to the upper deck, laid the timber for the upstairs floor, added rollers to the dome's sliding shutter as well as carry out other smaller restoration jobs. The society is indebted for the work John Meadows had voluntarily undertaken and he will be sadly missed from our team.

Prominent Speakers

As already mentioned earlier in this book, the society had two prominent speakers, Heather Couper and Nigel Henbest, who gave a lecture at the Star Hotel in 1981.

After the lecture Heather Couper was interviewed for the Albireo newsletter which was to be their very last publication. The following is a copy of that interview.

The Albireo Interview: Heather Couper.

Q. When did you start astronomy?

A. When I was nine.

Q. In theory you go in a black hole and come out of a white dwarf. Could you then go in a white dwarf and come out of a black hole?

A. No, because white holes spew out and black holes suck in.

Q. Have any black holes been discovered?

A. No, and I don't think black holes exist because the snag is, it seems that you can't travel through black holes. It seems to be a fundamental point that the Laws of Physics behave rather differently inside black holes, so that you get to such high densities you can't get through a wormhole to another universe.

Q. Time would stop wouldn't it?

A. Theoretically, time and space would stop, but astronomers thought there might be some very clever way you could wriggle through and defy those laws. But it seems that might not work. Steven Hawkins, the black hole expert throughout the world, has said that after a point matter is so tightly compressed that it simply won't behave in the way people think. And the fact that we haven't found white holes is a bit puzzling isn't it? People used to think quasars might be white holes, but

now they can be explained quite happily to the accretion discs around galaxies.

Q. How did you get into TV?

A. Well, three years ago I appeared on the Patrick Moore show...I mean the Sky at Night...and I was seen by a Yorkshire TV producer called David Taylor who came straight to my office one day and said, 'Hello Heather. Would you like to appear on, 'Don't Ask Me', to present biology' and I said, 'No, I don't know anything about biology.' He kept on at me and I kept saying, 'No, no way!' So I asked him 'How would you like a series on astronomy?' He said, 'OK. Love that!' He came back about 2 weeks later and said he only has money for a series for children. I wasn't very interested because it would be much too simple. He said he could make it a bit more difficult. That was two years ago. ITV went on strike twice. We eventually did 'Heavens Above' last Christmas time. Apart from the film of the 28 inch telescope at Greenwich when I jumped down that little pit. That's genuine actuality. I know I joke that that's where we send the naughty astronomers, but in fact it's so you can read the R.A scale, which is worn clean and you can't read it anyway. When you try to look at where the scope's pointing in declination, you need a telescope for the declination scale because the telescope is so long.

Q. Do people ask you to write a book or do you write one then send it in?

A. People ask you to write a book. That's the usual way it's done. A publisher will decide there is a gap in a given season's book. They might think they are short on a book on space. That's how 'Exploring Space' came about. Octopus got onto me said they wanted a book on space – simple Daily Mirror level, will you write it? So I said ok, yes. Then other publishers will see your books and get back to you. The worst bit is getting together pictures and things like that. You have a picture

researcher and you have to send him in the right direction. The pictures for the book 'Exploring Space' were done by a guy called Chris Moore. He drew the black hole picture and we had masses of fun trying to get together ideas on how star would look when getting gobbled up in a black hole.

Q. Has a ring around Neptune been found or is one expected?

A. One hasn't been found yet, but astronomers are pretty sure they will find them when Neptune next occults a star...1986 is the next good chance I think.

Heather Couper, Thank you very much.

The above interview was taken on the 22nd May 1981 as soon as the lecture had finished. The interviewers were: Sean Smith, Jason Smith, Alastair Boyd, Richard Lambert and David Miles.

LYRA Today

Despite its many knocks and falls, LYRA has made steady progress over the last few years holding regular club nights, observation nights, socials, visits to other groups as well as astronomical fairs and of course not forgetting several thought provoking lectures given by professional astronomers and distinguished amateurs, much to the credit of committee members but more notably by secretary, Richard Chilvers and treasurer, John Perring.

Included in the list of events are news items that have given the public an insight of what LYRA is about and what they do, and there have been several successful local road-shows at clubs and schools as well as exhibitions as part of LYRA's programme to take the subject of astronomy to the community.

Finding a new site for the society's scope is still 'just holding' on as part of LYRA's agenda. Further attempts to have news items published will be ongoing to continue to inform the general public of specific astronomical events and programmes. It would be a real help, if we could after all these years of trying, get a regular monthly 'Stella Corner' slot in the Lowestoft Journal or Waveney Advertiser.

However, despite the apparent lack of interest by local papers, apart from a solitary news item here and there, the Lowestoft Library on the other hand has shown quite the opposite. They have shown immense interest in promoting astronomy and the great success of local exhibitions LYRA has had at the library shows the way to achieve success as a society and to take this fascinating subject to the public.

It's also hoped more schools and local clubs might wish to arrange road-shows to instruct and entertain children and adults on the subject of astronomy and the many facets it can offer. One of the highlights of the road show has been Leonard Brundles home built orrery, which at a touch of a switch sets the solar system into motion.

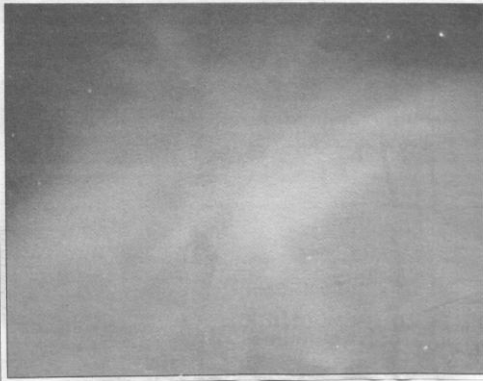
News Items:

SPECTACULAR DISPLAY: The northern lights, aurora borealis, seen just north of Lowestoft this month.

Pictures: SUPPLIED
by SIMON BRIGGS



Nature's very own light show



THESE spectacular pictures of the aurora borealis — the northern lights — were taken by Simon Briggs just north of Lowestoft.

Simon, together with two fellow members of Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth Regional Astronomers, David Wheeler and Malcolm Robertson, went to Dip Farm, Pleasurewood Hills, to observe the aurora borealis after their meeting on Thursday, April 4.

The lights were the brightest display for many years, as shown by these photographs which were taken between midnight and 12.30am.

The light display is caused by particles from the solar wind interacting with the earth's magnetic field giving rise to the splendid colourful display.

"This was certainly the best I have ever seen," said Simon Briggs.

Lowestoft Journal

12 April 2000

Cloud hides comet

LOCAL stargazers took the opportunity at the weekend to search the heavens for the latest comet — but were frustrated by poor weather.

The comet Ikeya-Zhang is now visible in the northern skies, and the Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth Regional Astronomers organised a skywatch evening on Saturday when intrepid stargazers converged on Radar Lodge, formerly RAF Hopton but now owned by Frank Brown, a good friend of the society.

But except for a glimpse of Jupiter and Venus they were disappointed as the weather turned from bad to worse.

They now hope to view the comet on another night — Ikeya-Zhang being able to be seen through binoculars in the evening sky for the first time since 1661.

Its orbital period of 341 years makes it the longest period comet known to be sited at more than one approach to the sun.

Found on February 1 by Kaoru Ikeya and Daqing Zhang in China, astronomers can find it during mid April under the 'W' shape of Cassiopeia in the north north-west at nightfall.

Colin Watling, resident comet watcher and Skywatch organiser based in Kessingland said: "It looks great in my Tal 4.5in telescope and also with my Russian 20x60 binoculars.

"At present it can be seen in the evening from 8pm to 10.45pm or if you wish to view it in the early morning sky from about 2-4am.

"You will need binoculars to pick it out as it is has only a small tail. In my opinion it is probably the best comet seen in our skies since Hale-Bopp several years ago."

If anyone wishes to view the comet, take a trip down to Kessingland sports centre off Field Lane, Francis Road, either on Friday or Monday from 8pm onwards (weather permitting).

Colin and other Kessingland astronomers will be there to guide you through the other wonders of the night sky.

■ The next meeting of LYRA is on Tuesday when Anna Meek, from the Breckland Astronomical Society, will be giving a talk and slides on astronomical holidays in Arizona, USA.

CONTACT: The meeting begins at 8pm in the function room of the Elizabeth Denes Hotel, and everyone is welcome. Call Richard on 574010 or Colin on 07769937630 for further details.

Lowestoft Journal
5 April 2002

Perfect sighting of Venus



■ Local astronomer Kevin Wright shows Rosa Vanhinsbergh, 86, how to witness the transit of Venus

KEEN astronomers from a local club could claim to have been the most easterly people in Britain to witness the transit of Venus on Tuesday.

Members of the Lowestoft and Yarmouth Regional Astronomers (Lyra) were delighted with the 'perfect' weather conditions for the event, which had not been seen by anyone alive today.

After setting up their telescopes shortly after dawn they welcomed a steady stream of visitors, many of the public to see Venus pass across the face of the Sun. For the first time since 1882 Venus appeared clearly as a black dot at about 6.21am, until disappearing six hours later.

Lyra member Kevin Wright said: "It's really impressive. I know astronomers who travelled to Egypt in case bad weather in England made

viewing difficult but I'm glad I didn't do that because the conditions here were perfect - clear skies.

"The great thing is that people came down to see it then came back with more friends - and a lot of children have come down and been interested in it."

By 9am, halfway through the transit, more than 50 people had dropped by to watch Venus's progress.

Using a telescope fitted with a solar filter, observers at the Lyra club managed to squeeze in a sighting at the Pakefield viewing base before lessons.

■ On Thursday, June 24 at 8pm Dr Cathie Clark from the Institute of Astronomy in Cambridge will give a talk to Lyra on "Where do they all come from? Stars and their planets."

It will be held at the Kirkley Vocational Centre at Kirkley High School in Lowestoft. Everyone is welcome.

FACTFILE Transit of Venus

- From our standpoint on Earth transits occur only with Mercury and Venus as they are the only planets between us and the Sun.
- Captain Cook's 1769 voyage in the Endeavour enabled him to see the transit of Venus from Tahiti.
- Astronomers in the 18th century used the transit of Venus to calculate the distance from the Earth to the Sun.
- The first transit to be witnessed was in 1639 and seen by just two people in the world.
- Venus is named after the goddess of love.
- Often known as the evening star, Venus is the brightest object in the sky after the Sun and moon.
- A day on Venus is longer than a 'year', because it revolves faster than it rotates.
- The temperature on Venus is about 350 degrees Celsius.

Gt Yarmouth Advertiser

10 June 2004

Time theory the work of 40 years

By **ADRIENNE SCHUTER**

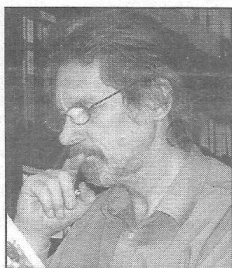
adrienne.schuter@archant.co.uk

THEY say time waits for no man, but for Ron Larter it has taken 40 years to develop his theory of time resulting in considerable interest from the scientific establishment world wide.

Studying between jobs and early retirement, because of illness, Mr Larter is now in the second year of an advanced maths course with the Open University on the path to becoming a physicist.

What started more than 40 years ago as a boyhood interest in astronomy has turned into a lifetime's dedication to proving time exists.

"I had learned that when we look out into the starry heavens we are actually looking back into the past. Light emanating from stars takes thousands and even millions of years to reach us so when we see a star we are looking at starlight that was



DEDICATION: Ron Larter.

Picture: ADRIENNE SCHUTER

emitted at a time before the Earth came into being."

According to the physics buff from Hollingsworth Road, in Lowestoft, he is trying to prove that matter travels through time and has been taking steps to work towards a degree in physics with the Open University.

"In the past there has been lots of conflicting theories about time. Even the physicists can't agree. Some say it exists, some say it is a figment of our imagination."

Mr Larter says that his theory identifies that time has a relationship with matter

rather than space and the protons and neutrons which give matter bulk and electrons that go round the outside resulting in combinations of the elements.

Because of the controversy over time in the scientific world Mr Larter's theory has caused growing interest among scientists, philosophers and even a few writers of science fiction.

Two years ago Mr Larter's paper was read by retired senior physicist Lambert T Dolphin, of the Stanford Research Institute, in California.

He was impressed enough to send a copy to his colleague Barry Setterfield, a researcher working on new theories, who advised Mr Larter to continue his investigation and post his paper on the internet for a wider readership.

Now from his home Mr Larter is exchanging e-mails with other scientists round the world discussing his work, but is still very modest about his achievement.

"It seems my work on time is drawing some interest from various corners of the world," he said.

Lowestoft Journal
21 January 2005

■ They're partial to a bit of star-gazing: LYRA members (left to right) Ivan Barber, Colin Watling and John Perring on Lowestoft seafront on Tuesday morning.

Picture: Neil Watson



Excellent eclipse

IT MAY only have been a partial eclipse of the sun that took place on Tuesday, but it was a 'total' success for the Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth Astronomical Society (LYRA).

While most people were getting into work, oblivious to the natural phenomenon taking

place in the skies above them, LYRA was setting up a powerful telescope on Lowestoft seafront so that members of the public could safely witness the moon block out part of the sun.

LYRA member John Perring said he was "quite surprised" at the interest from passers-by. "In three hours we must have had well over 100 peo-

ple. It was a very, very good morning for us."

And, while much of the country was under a blanket of cloud, conditions on the east coast were perfect for viewing the eclipse. "We had beautiful, clear blue skies," Mr Perring said. "It was only this little bit of north east coast that had a good view of it."

Waveney Advertiser

7 Oct 2005



LUNAR PHENOMENON: Colin Whatling with the eclipse image projected on to a viewing screen.

Picture: TERRY REEVE

Best view for eclipse

By **TERRY REEVE**
 terry.reeve@archant.co.uk

PEOPLE at Lowestoft had some of the best conditions in the country to view a partial eclipse of the sun on Monday morning.

While people in some other areas were frustrated by cloud, there was bright sunshine on the seafront as the moon passed in front of the sun, causing a 60 per cent eclipse at its maximum.

Members of the Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth Regional Astronomers Group set up three telescopes in front of Royal Green for people to take a look at the eclipse safely, and around 100 took the opportunity between 8.30am and 11am.

They were able to see a sharp image of the sun with a segment cut out by the moon with children

able to see the image reflected on to a screen so it could be easily seen.

A group of students from Lowestoft College were among those taking a look.

John Perring, LYRA treasurer who was there with members Ivan Barber and Colin Whatling, said the image was so clear through their Orion SX150 reflector telescope that they said they could see mountains on the moon.

The full eclipse of the sun was visible in Spain. There will be a full eclipse visible in Britain in March, though Mr Perring said at this stage he did not know which part of the country would be the best to see it in.

● Astronomer and broadcaster Paul Money will be the guest speaker at the next LYRA meeting at the sports centre at Kirkley High School, on Friday, October 21, at 7.30pm. His topic will be Exodus — the Death of Stars. Everyone is welcome and admission is free.

Lowestoft Journal

7 Oct 2005

LYRA's public lectures

TO celebrate 2009, the year of astronomy, Lowestoft and Yarmouth Regional Astronomers (LYRA) is hosting three public lectures.

The simple story of what is in the sky above us has fascinated many for centuries and this year marks 400 years since man first looked at the universe through a telescope. Astronomers are marking this special milestone by informing, educating and entertaining the public about the universe.

The first of three open lectures takes place this Monday at Gorleston Library. The Sun: A Biography by BBC and science journalist David Whitehouse starts at 8pm, with doors opening at 7.30pm. On April 14, Jerry Workman will present Revisiting the Apollo missions to the moon and the great solar eclipse of Siberia 2008 at Kirkley High School. On June 9, Andrew Green presents Infinity & Beyond, the journey of an astronomer, also at Kirkley High School.

For more details on the events and the club call 01502 563670 or 01502 574010.

Waveney Advertiser

6 March 2009

Fete date with stars

A DISPLAY of telescopes and astrophotos was hailed as a great success for Lowestoft and Yarmouth Regional Astronomers (LYRA) at Kessingland Fete.

Visitors to the event on Saturday stopped to ask questions and show an interest in photos taken by LYRA members Peter Boon and Ron Larter.

Some also had a safe look at the sun through a solar scope and a 5in refractor with a special sun filter.

Representatives of the society were John Perring, treasurer, and committee members Dennis Woodhead and Mr Larter. Colin Watling, also a committee member as well as the head of LYRA's associated group, the Kessingland Astronomers Group (KAG), was also present.

The aim of the display was to celebrate the International Year of Astronomy 2009, to promote LYRA and KAG and to take astronomy to the community.

● LYRA has a monthly club night on Tuesdays from 7.30pm to 9pm at Waveney Gym Club, in Notley Road. The society also has observation nights and lectures given by professional astronomers, as well as owning its own observatory housing a 12in telescope in the grounds of Kirkley High School. For further details call 01502 574010/563670.

Lowestoft Journal

28 August 2009

Sky-high fun

THE Cambridge Institute of Astronomy gave a lecture at Kirkley High School library on the way stars and galaxies can be seen with modern technology. Imaging sources beyond visible light have opened up new frontiers for modern astronomers which has lead to new discoveries.

● For information on future talks call 01502 563670/574010.

Lowestoft Journal

11 Sept 2009

Exhibitions and Road Shows:

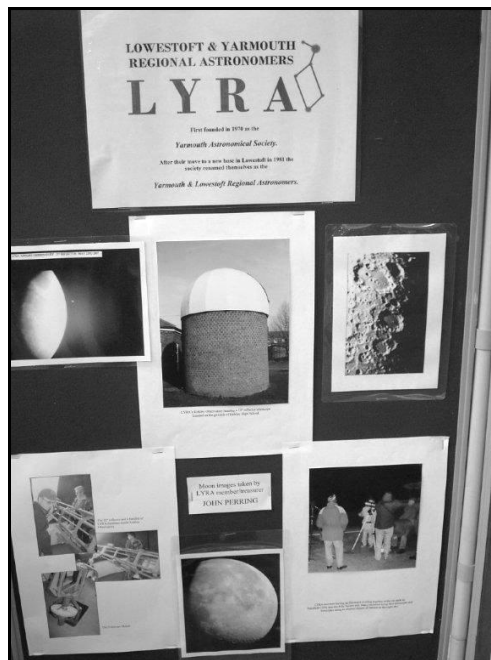


Kessingland Fete – 2009





Lowestoft Library - 2009/2010

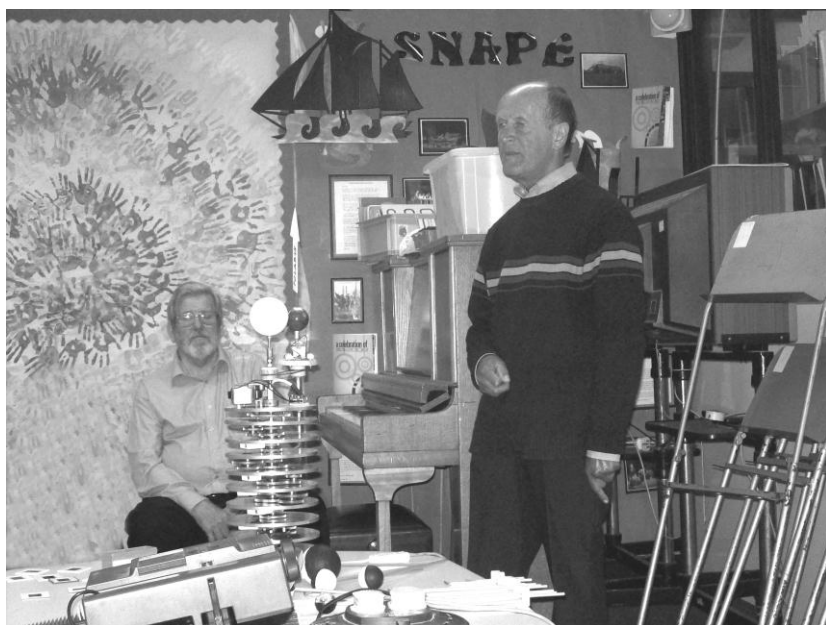




Lowestoft Woodcraft Folk – 2010



Social held at member Peter Boon's home, 2008.



Kessingland Primary School

Source Material

Michael Poxon, founder of the YAS

Michael Bean, co-founder of the YAS

Albireo Broadsheets, Yarmouth AS: Feb 1971 to Sept 1971

Albireo Broadsheet, Great Yarmouth Astronomical Society: Oct 1971 to autumn 1972

Albireo, Journal of the Great Yarmouth Astronomical Society, No1, Spring 1974 to spring 1975.

Colin Watling, Kessingland Astronomers Group.

Simon Briggs, KO Director.

Richard Chilvers, LYRA Secretary

Lowestoft Journal

Waveney Advertiser

Gt Yarmouth Advertiser