

Edited by Robert Shanks



Welcome to the February 2019 newsletter of the Blackburn Leisure Astronomical Society, the one stop shop for news, future projects, events, visits, lectures and general communications.

The Blackburn Leisure Astronomical Society would like to extend its deepest condolence to the family of Jane Anderson, her partner Phil and the Blackburn Leisure committee. Jane & Phil have supported BLAS ventures from day one and it is hoped that Phil will find the strength to continue the support.

Last meeting

The last BLAS meeting was held Jan 28th. Tim Old gave a presentation at the meeting covering the Insight Mars lander & an update on the New Horizons fly-by of Kuiper Belt object Ultima Thule.

AGM & Future Plans

January's meeting also combined the BLAS AGM which covered the 2018 BLAS objectives and achievements. A final electrical test certificate has now arrived. This important mile stone brought to a close the building work projects of previous years extending the main building and completing dome 2. A sponsorship wall of fame has been completed to show BLAS funders of recent years. All of the clubs 2018 objectives were achieved. In 2018 BLAS saw some 212 people (109 from local groups), visiting the club last year. Along with 426 visits by members, this brings the total to 747 visitors! A remarkable year and a big thank you from the committee for all involved. Several members contributed to the club knowledge with their own experiences throughout the year. The society is in a good solvent cash-positive position.

Grant applications for improved access roadway & security; general repairs; plans for a 14 inch EQ8 mount upgrade and new funds for radio astronomy ventures are being considered for 2019.

Following the AGM, a 2019 plan has been matured by the committee to enable short and longer term aspirations to be achieved. Along with future plans for a youth section, these include the additional costs to replace the aging chairs & carpets; extend internet access into the building, replace the aging desktop computers and projectors. Costings for phase 1 & 2 ventures into Radio Astronomy are also being matured and all suggestions are welcome.

BLAS Outreach

A proposed ten day course to be held fortnightly covering the basics of Astronomy has also been put together. The course is intended for members and non-members. Promotional posters below along with further details are available from Brian Davies.

Astronomy for Beginners



No previous knowledge required!

Interested in Astronomy?
Want to know more about the night sky?

A series of 10 fortnightly sessions, starting from the very beginning, will take place at our observatory in Brough.

Starts on Thursday March 14th 2019, at 7:30 pm

Each session will be about an hour long, with half an hour afterwards for tea or coffee, biscuits and questions/chat, just £3 per session. All ages welcome, but under 16's must be accompanied by an adult. We are a friendly society where we always endeavour to make you feel welcome, and we have facilities for disabled users. Send an email to the address below for more details or to book a place... visit our website for a map and directions to find us!

Brough Astronomy
At the Blackburn Leisure Social Club,
Prescott Avenue, off Skillings Lane, Brough HU15 1BB
Home of one of the largest observatories in Yorkshire!

www.broughastronomy.co.uk
email: brough.astronomy@gmail.com

BLAS Poster for proposed new course

Membership Subscription Reminder

If you have not already done so, please download and print your Membership subscription form from the link [here](#) and bring it along with payment to next meeting.

For publication in this newsletter and general feedback, please contact Bob@5150time.co.uk
www.broughastronomy.co.uk Providing a window on the Universe for all !

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Photographic Exhibition

You may recall that in 2018 the Petuaria Library in Brough hosted an art and photographic display in which astronomical photographs were entered by the membership promoting BLAS awareness to local people. Members who would like to contribute their works in this year's display should speak to George King. Frames will be provided. Click [here](#) for details of submissions so far.



2019 Photo Competition Entries.

Sky & Telescope Magazines

The club would like to extend their thanks to Mr John Baines who has donated his extensive collection of Sky & Telescope magazines covering the years from 1996 to 2018. This adds to the clubs veritable library of information available to members. This important source of information provides a vast insight into the changes in Astronomy and the way we view the sky over the last 30 years if anyone would like to research the subject for a club night talk? Members wishing to borrow magazines can do so at their leisure. Voluntary donations into club funds are encouraged. Along with the raffle contributions every little helps to fund projects and further the knowledge.

Spaceflight Then & Now !

In 1969, preparations for the launch of Apollo 9 on the 3rd of March were well underway. The engineering aspects of Apollo 9 should not be forgotten. This was the first time all of the modules that would take man to the moon were flown together for the first time. All docking manoeuvres, vehicle engines and operational procedures had to be tested and debugged. Despite being mission number 9 on the Apollo program; this was only the second crewed launch of a Saturn 5 rocket and the first crewed flight of a Lunar Module required for a landing on the Moon.



Apollo 9 Mission Patch - Courtesy of NSA.

On February the 14th NASA announced the end of the Opportunity Mars Exploration Rover mission after being unable to raise the robot since June.

The rover was intended to last only 90 days on Mars but functioned for 14½ years ! traveling more than 28 miles.



RIP Opportunity - We salute you !

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