

Edited by Robert Shanks



Welcome to the newsletter of the Blackburn Leisure Astronomical Society. The one stop shop for news, future projects, events, visits, lectures and general communications. Many thanks for your kind words on this venture. There have been some positive suggestions so far for what you would like to see in here, including a readers' scopes paragraph, so please send your details to me for publication. Can I please ask that when you submit news or suggestions, you use the title BLASNEWS for me to make it easier to search my emails. Don't forget that the observatory is open all year round on Tuesday and Friday evenings and any other by arrangement. In general as per the BLAS moto 'If its clear we'll be here !'

Last Months Meeting

As a reminder BLAS meetings are held every 4th Monday of each month all year round. Last month's meeting covered an introduction to this newsletter; the passing of moonwalker Alan Bean; effects of the new rules around General Data Protection; current funding bids for improved access; the updated Google Earth view of our observatory; ex pat member Paul Read's visit; Comet Hale-Bop photographs from 1997; Photographs of Venus at sunset & M13 taken by members; as well as some interesting facts and stunning time lapse photography of our Milky way which can be found at on Youtube by searching 'The Milky Way, A Journey Through The Sky (4K)- A Barry Chall Film' In regard to data protection Brian Davies needs a consent form from each of you.



M13 (21st May 2018) - G King

New Equipment

Some years back, a telescope and various books were bequeathed to our sister society, the Hull and East Riding Astronomical society by Miss Wilson in Bridlington who wanted to ensure her passion was passed to a local Astronomy club. Her Televue 80mm telescope and eyepieces including white light filter are now based at BLAS and add to the inventory of portable scopes.



The new Televue 80mm, eyepieces and books

National Spaceflight Centre Visit

A reminder that there is a visit to the National Space Centre in Leicestershire on Wednesday 8th August. The cost is £26 to cover a coach and the entrance fees. Those wishing to go should speak to Helen Marshall or George King as soon as possible as the list is being finalised. A £10 deposit secures your place.

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Facilities

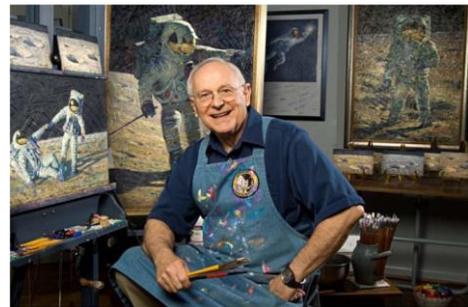
A new funding bid has been submitted for a grant to improve the roadway & security. If successful this will provide better public access during events and help protect the condition of the Blackburn Leisure field. Security fencing will also protect the domes from vandalism.

Work has also begun on improving the access to dome 1. Whilst the current access has served us well for many years, the journey to the stars has been quite difficult for some. The extra headroom in the access doorway will be improved in two stages. The brickwork for stage 1 is now complete and an extra 18 inches of headroom has already been gained. Stage 2 will see modifications to the rotating dome to allow further headroom.

Members are asked to be careful until stage 2 is complete as you can bang your head. You have been warned ! The club will sue for damages.

Apollo 12 Signs off

2018 has already seen the passing of pioneering Astronauts including John Young (Apollo 16 and Shuttle Enterprise among many other vehicle tests) and Don Peterson (First shuttle EVA). This month also marks the passing of astronaut Alan Bean. Alan will be remembered for a lecture he gave in Pontefract in 2007 attended by BLAS members. He was the 4th man to walk on the moon was also an artist who's works provide a view of the moon in its raw beauty as apposed to the 'Magnificent Decollation' described by Buzz Aldrin. Alan Bean was the last survivor of the Apollo 12 crew. His artwork can be viewed at www.alanbean.com



Alan Bean RIP

Did You Know ?

The angular size of the sun viewed from Earth is approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ a degree and this is the same angular size of our moon at its current distance from the Earth. As our Moon will move away from the Earth in years to come, the correlation of angular size will mean that full solar eclipses will become so bright they will eventually not be able to be seen as they are today.

Also, if you were stood on Mercury the sun would only be $1\frac{1}{2}$ degrees across. See Brian Davies for mathematical proof !

General

Every £1 spent on a raffle ticket goes toward new equipment to further the aims of the society. Your contributions to the raffle on meeting nights are invaluable !