



CORNWALL ASTRONOMY SOCIETY

Member of The Federation of Astronomical Societies
Affiliated to Spaceguard UK

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Minutes of CAS Meeting Held at Degibna Chapel at 2000 on Tue 14th Jun 16

Members Present: Simon, Pete, Ruth, Preston, Gareth, Greg, Ann, Dave C, Rob and Dave S.

Apologies: Colin and Marianne.

Visitors: Dave H and Alec.

- Chairman's Report and Welcome:** In Helen's absence Simon opened the meeting at 2000 and thanked everyone for coming. By way of an introduction, he explained that three members had volunteered to give short talks and that they had been designed to appeal to the different levels of knowledge within the Society.
- Secretary's Report:** Programme - Simon thanked those who had been able to arrange visiting speakers or volunteer to give talks themselves. As a result, only one vacant slot now appears on the programme. This is for the August 9th meeting. If anyone has a talk they would like to give or perhaps a discussion they would like to lead, please speak to Simon asap.

3. **Treasurer's Report:** Dave reported that the bank balance is £888 with the donation of £90 for the use of Degibna until the end of the year still to be accounted for. Dave has suggested that, at the end of the year, the Society's bank balance will be about £100 down on last year. This was not deemed to be too much of a concern as a number of 'one off purchases had been made this year.

4. **Website:** Greg reported that he had received an Email asking if any member was available to give a talk to a couple of friends as a Birthday present. Because of the distances involved (St Austell) Greg and Gareth suggested they liaise with our friends at the Roseland Observatory to see if they could provide what is required.

5. **Publicity:** Nothing to report.

6. **MWP** - Gareth reported that the Setting Circles YouTube video had received over 200 'hits'. There is still an intention to produce a CAS broadcast about the PST on YouTube.

7. **Talks - There then followed three talks:**

- **Cepheid Variables** - Gareth gave a very interesting talk (with historic and character filled black and white photographs and illustrative diagrams) on Cepheid Variables. These are stars which pulsate radially, varying in both diameter and temperature, producing changes in brightness with a well-defined stable period and amplitude. His talk initially centred on the work completed by 'Pickering's Computers' in the very early 1900s and particularly Henrietta Swan Leavitt's discovery / suggestion that all the variable stars in the Small Magellanic Cloud are roughly the same distance from Earth. This led to the modern understanding of the true size of the universe.
- **June Highlights** - Simon gave a talk on some of the observing highlights in June (which included the Lyrid Meteor Shower - which may be a bit of a damp squib) together with information about a 'landmark' on the Moon (an A-Z guide to be continued!) and the galaxies around the 'Plough'.
- **Future Launch Vehicles** - Greg gave a revealing talk on some of the launch vehicles being developed by India the US and China. Using models, slides and videos he explained how, by replacing humans with the latest 'drone technology', the hardware weight and cost of getting payloads into orbit can be dramatically reduced. The US shuttle cost / per kg of payload was about \$20,000. The Indian unmanned shuttle in development could provide the same service for just \$500 per kg! The talk also covered the scram jet technology and the Space X programme.

The talks prompted fascinating discussion which continued until about 2120 when Simon thanked the speakers for providing such interesting and well presented talks (post meeting note - and Ruth for the tea and coffee!) and closed the meeting.

8. **DONM:** The next CAS Meeting will be on Tue 14th Jul (1930 for 2000) at Degibna Chapel and feature a talk by Gareth on Solar Telescopes.