



Hubble 1990

WIGTOWNSHIRE

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

Chairman: Dr Robin Bellerby; "Glenamour", Newton Stewart, DG8 7AE
01671 404 387; astro@glenamour.com
Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of each month (talk)
4th Wednesday of each month (observing session)



Hevelius 1600s

The Wigtownshire Astronomical Society
are organising a *Star Party/Camp*
from **Thursday 12th until Wednesday 18th November**
Drumroamin Farm, South Balfern, Kirkinner DG8 9DB
Website www.drumroamin.co.uk

Commercial, family-run, low-cost site - tents, caravans, campervans, static hire or B&B. Some sites have electric hook-up. Superb Dark Sky site, New Moon on 16th, Northern Taurids shower and better than average forecast Leonids Shower on the 17th (500/hr possible). Early booking essential as places limited, deadline mid September.

We are a small society and this Camp will be a low-key affair, with the minimum of organisation on our part – participants will determine the success of the meeting by their efforts. We will invite dealers/traders but our remote location is a problem.

The Society itself is making no charge to participants or dealers, beyond recovering what costs we may incur.

We have exclusive use of a small caravan park (4 Star rated by the Scottish Tourist Board), with 50 pitches for tents, motor homes or caravans, 20 of them with electric hook-up (10 amp) points. (If we get more than 50 units filled, I am sure we will be able to offer alternatives on the border of the camp, but on rougher ground). There are two static mobile homes for hire, one sleeping 4 and one 6 persons – these include all gas and electricity. There is plenty of accommodation in the area, from excellent hotels to economy B&B. Mike Alexander, a former Chairman of this Society, runs the Galloway Astronomy Centre – B&B plus observing, including an excellent 16" machine, but if you wish to stay there – book early! The site has a 4 star Scottish Tourist Board rating, and no security lighting! To get the top 5* award, they would only need to put in lighting – aren't we lucky!

We've arranged for a burger/hot dog/chips caravan to be there from 5 pm until 9 pm each night. Most pubs serve food and meals vary from cheap and cheerful up to very good indeed – Newton Stewart has an Indian and a Chinese restaurant. There is no shop or bar on site – small shops in Whithorn or Kirkinner, and three supermarkets plus other shops in Newton Stewart – 11 miles away. We are considering an on-site beer stall, but need to negotiate licensing laws very carefully, so no promises.

Excellent toilet/shower block; small heated TV lounge, Coin-op washing machine and dryer.

It is virtually essential to have your own transport. Beeching axed the train service into the area, and there are not many long distance buses.

All the usual star camp rules apply – cover all car lights, including interior ones, with red cellophane or equivalent, red torches and NO LASERS – they can ruin an image, I am told. (If you need a source for cellophane, I've just ordered mine from TheCarrierBagShop via Google. Pick up/clear up all litter as you produce it, please. Quiet generators permitted – be considerate!

The site owners have offered the following rates, applicable to tents, caravans or motor homes. I hope you agree that these are exceptionally generous?

£4 per person per night – plus **£2** per pitch (not per person) with electric hook-up. First come first served for hook-up, and preference given to those booking at least 4 nights. Note that U/16s are

welcome but **MUST** be accompanied by parent or responsible adult nominated by them. Well-behaved dogs are also welcome (no charge), to be exercised off camp – lane, fields or a large Forestry area.

The two static caravans hold 6 and 4 persons (bedding provided for this number), although for ‘rough’ sleeping I am sure one or two more could be accommodated. Gas and electricity included in the price. Price is the same for each static, regardless of numbers, at **£220 for the whole period or £40 per night. Booking preference will be given to those staying at least 4 nights.**

Non-refundable* (see below) deposit £10 per unit – pay rest to site owners on arrival – prior booking through WAS is essential. Each application will be dated and numbered on arrival, and acknowledged.

In addition, we are offering a tour of a local Distillery on the Saturday morning at £3 per head, (pay at the door) and an afternoon of astronomy lectures in nearby Wigtown. We will invite dealers to set up stalls at the same indoor venue, with possibly another talk in the morning. You are asked to indicate on the form whether you prefer the distillery visit or an additional lecture.

The price for the afternoon for participants of the camp will be £5 per head, to be booked in advance. If numbers permit, members of the public will be invited to attend at a higher fee (probably £10 per head). Lunch will be available in the hall – soup and a roll at cost, or there are cafes and pubs in the immediate vicinity.

At the moment we have two speakers confirmed, both from Glasgow University. Dr Lyndsay Fletcher, Reader in Solar Physics, will talk on some aspects of the Sun, and Dr Martin Hendry will talk on "Galileo's Universe". This will focus on what Galileo's observations in 1609 taught us about the universe - a good way to summarise the IYA2009 celebrations. We have invited a third speaker, who appeared on the June ‘Sky at Night’, but will not hear if she is available for a couple of weeks. We will have three talks, come what may.

On the Sunday evening we will offer a trip off-site into a really dark part of Galloway Forest, near Glentworth. Perhaps those with cars will offer lifts to those without – we’ll see on the day. Some persons will remain on site for security, but this should not be a problem as the camp is well away from towns or villages. If this is a success we could repeat on another site on the Monday.

It is hoped that Galloway Forest Park will soon qualify for Dark Sky Park status. We spent several evenings last November under clear skies (but with temperatures -7 or lower) taking ‘fish eye’ images and light readings, and a group of university students plus a professional engineer are currently mapping lighting on the fringes of the area, in an attempt to moderate where needed – much of the land is managed by the Forestry Commission, with whom we have a good relationship.

In the unlikely event that number booking are so small as to make the event non-viable, we reserve the right to cancel - date of decision will be 14th September, and the deposit **WILL** be refunded (to the main contact person names of the application form).

Anything else you want to know – just ask!

Robin Bellerby, Chairman, W.A.S. June 2009. 01671 404 387 / 07966 413 679 or astro@glenamour.com



November 08. Horizon to horizon view near Glentroof, Canon, Fish Eye, 1,000 ASA, exposure time 2 minutes. Photoshop'd from RAW image. We really do see the Milky Way up here, and the imaging was to detect horizon light pollution – couldn't see this with the naked eye, and most was coming from Glasgow, 80 miles away!
Image copyright IYA 2009, taken by WAS members.

| | |
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| Date received: | Serial Number: |
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(The above for WAS use only)

WIGTOWNSHIRE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY.

STAR CAMP NOVEMBER 12TH TO 17TH 2009 (Including night of 17th)
(You may arrive earlier and leave later if you wish)

BOOKING FORM

Please POST this form (plus photocopies if you have a large party) when completed, with deposit, to: Chairman, WAS, Glenamour, Newton Stewart, DG8 7AE
 Applications/priority will be processed and allocated strictly in order received
 Full Names are essential for insurance purposes – tell us about any changes as they occur.

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Names(s): (Insert B&B after name if not staying on site) | 16yrs or under? Y/N |
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Please indicate number of units: Number of units? Hook-up requested? Y/N

| | | |
|---|--|-----|
| Tent | | |
| Caravan | | |
| Campervan | | |
| Static requested, and number of persons | | N/A |
| B&B | | N/A |

No deposit for B&B, but otherwise a non-refundable deposit of £10 PER UNIT (not per person) is required. Cheques made out to ‘Wigtownshire Astronomical Society’
 Balance is due on arrival, to be paid to the park owners. No penalty for cancellation, but PLEASE phone or e mail Robin 01671 404 387, 07966 413 679 or Astro@glenamour.com to notify.

Please complete the following for each unit you are booking on this form (times approx):

| Type of unit | No. of persons | Date and Time of arrival | Date and time of departure | Number of nights |
|--------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
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Tour of Bladnoch Distillery: Number of persons likely to be interested.....

If we do arrange a Saturday morning talk,
would you prefer that to the Distillery Tour? Y/N

How many persons will attend the talks on Saturday afternoon
(£5 per head, pay on the day)

Name and contact details of the person making this booking, etc, with reserve person:

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Name of Club or Society | |
| Name of main contact | |
| Address | |
| Home 'phone | |
| Mobile | |
| E mail | |
| Reserve contact | |
| Address | |
| Home phone | |
| Mobile | |
| E mail: | |

If I've omitted anything you think we should know, please don't hesitate to contact me.
For example, it might be useful to know, in strict confidence, if anyone in your party has a
medical problem – however, we don't insist on this. Minor injuries unit is at Newton
Stewart – otherwise either Stranraer (30 miles) or Dumfries (60 miles).

Robin Bellerby, Chairman W.A.S June 2009