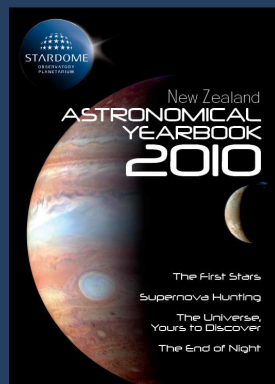




2010 NZ Almanac

More than just a calendar, each monthly calendar includes the phases of the moon, the rise and set times of the Sun and Moon, planetary phenomena, meteor activity, solstices and equinoxes, historical astronomical events, ancient star lore pertaining to each month, plus much more. For details & pricing please visit [Phoenix Astronomical Society www.astronomynz.org.nz](http://www.astronomynz.org.nz)



New Zealand Astronomical Yearbook 2010

The 2010 NZ Astronomical Yearbook is now in stock and looking better than ever. Please order your copies today by contacting Stardome Observatory **Email:** info@stardome.org.nz
The recommended retail price for this book is \$21.95 however all NZ Astronomical Societies can purchase their copies for \$16.50 + \$2.00 postage and packing. Ordered numbers will determine the cost of packaging.

Upcoming Events

- **Winter Gissy Gathering – Gisborne, July 9 to 12 July, 2010**

An informal winter gathering of likeminded astronomers under dark skies is being held at Possum Observatory, 23 Billingham Road, Patutahi, 11kms to the west of Gisborne. John Drummond from Gisborne astronomical society hosts this event. Further details regarding the Gissy Gathering can be found below. Everyone is welcome to come along, join in and have some fun.

Contact: John Drummond - john_drummond@xtra.co.nz **Mobile Phone:** 0275 609 287

Directions: www.possumobservatory.co.nz/gissy_gathering-2005-directions.htm

- **Heather Couper and Nigel Henbest Lecture Tour - July 14 to 18, 2010**

Several public presentations from two of today's leading science communicators will take place this month; Full details of where the presentations will take place, including dates and times can be found below.

- **2010 Harry Williams Astrophotography Competition – Entries Close September 19**

The Auckland Astronomical Society's 2010 Harry Williams Astrophotography competition is underway again. The competition is open to all New Zealand residents including all NZ astronomical societies, clubs and groups. Winners will be announced at the AAS Burbidge Dinner on October 9, 2010. Further details regarding this competition will be sent out to all astronomical societies by the end of this week and posted on the Auckland Astronomical Society website – www.astronomy.org.nz

- **Auckland Astronomical Society Burbidge Dinner – October 9, 2010**

The Auckland Astronomical Society's 2010 Annual Burbidge Dinner will be held at the Rutherford Room, Alexander Raceway, Greenlane. This year's after dinner speaker will be Professor John Hearnshaw, from the University of Canterbury. Further details will follow later in the year.

Contact: Andrew Buckingham - treasurer@astronomy.org.nz

- **2011 RASNZ Conference to be held in Napier**

We have been promised by Gary Sparks, President of the Hawkes Bay Astronomical Society that next year's RASNZ conference is sure to be an exciting event. With a Sci Fi theme and a nice new observatory complex this conference promises to be something special and certainly not to be missed. Further information will be posted when it comes to hand.

Contact: Gary Sparks - ghsparks@xtra.co.nz

Web: www.skyhigh-photography.com/Main/HB_Astronomy_Society.php



Architect's impression of the new Pukerangi Observatory, Napier

Almanac 2011 – Images and Copy Required Now!

Richard Hall from The Phoenix Astronomical Society has started preparing the Almanac for 2011. If you have any images you would like to submit or information or notices you would like included, please contact him ASAP. At this stage, until the selection has been made, thumbnails of images should be emailed to the contact address below.

Email Contact: Richard Hall, Almanac 2010 - hamal@xtra.co.nz



ISSUE

09

July 2010

QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER of
THE RASNZ
AFFILIATED
SOCIETIES

RASNZ



This issue

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Two New Observatories for the Eastern Bay

Whakatane Astronomical Society

Norman Izett and his industrious team at Whakatane Astronomical Society have been hard at work building a beautiful new extension and an entirely new observatory to add to their facilities high on the hill above the city of Whakatane.



Pic Courtesy Norman Izett

They now have everything they require to offer a first class public visitor experience, but more importantly, to cater to their members; whether that be observing the night sky just for fun, taking part in astrophotography or joining in on serious research projects. This society has it all and on their very own door step. It certainly is a wonderful new facility and well worth a visit if you are in the area.

"After all the many years of slugging out the hard work, the future is looking decidedly brighter for us here." Norman said, Well done Whakatane, certainly a place to be proud of.

Contact: Norman Izett normanizett@xtra.co.nz

Website: <http://www.skyofplenty.com>

Tauranga Astronomical Society

Just recently the Tauranga Astronomical Society celebrated the opening of their brand new observatory which is fully equipped with a new Meade LX200 14" ACF telescope. The observatory is situated in Fergusson Park, Otumoetai, Tauranga and is housed in a new public facility which is home to the local sports club, Scouts, Brownies and Girl Guide groups. The society has full access to the

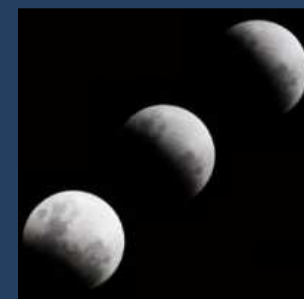


entire facility block, including a very large meeting hall for both its members and public visitors. The dedicated members of this society have worked long and hard to fund-raise and establish the city's first major observatory. If you are visiting Tauranga please call in and check it out. RASNZ wishes them all, the very best of luck and great observing.

Contact: G Stewart geo_dorothy@vodafone.co.nz

Website: <http://tauranga-astro.150m.com>

June 26th Partial Eclipse, Auckland



Photograph by Shaun Fletcher
Image from AAS Journal,
July 2010

Aff Society Reps Contact Details

Email
Jennie McCormick
farmcoveobs@xtra.co.nz

Peter Jaquiere
peter.jaquiere@ihug.co.nz

Post
Aff Society Representatives
P.O.Box 3181
Wellington

Website
www.rasnz.org.nz/AffSocs/index.htm



Prof Joel Schiff is forming a consortium of 40 people and organisations from NZ who are planning on obtaining a small satellite that will be put in low-earth orbit for a month or more. Launch will take place in 2011. He would really like to hear from groups etc who may be interested in taking part.

Entry fee is US\$200 per person or group to cover the US\$8000 cost of launch of the satellite. Those who join will decide and or construct the electronics package of 250 grams that will make up the remaining part.

Contact: jschiff@xtra.co.nz

Web: For further information www.interorbital.com/TubeSat_1.htm



Cosmodome

Free visits Organised

Cosmodome is planning a national tour and welcomes a free visit from your society!

Cosmodome is New Zealand's leading portable planetarium service available to schools and organisations across the country. We would like to extend an invitation to all astronomical societies interested in having the Cosmodome visit them.. Cosmodome comes with an experienced star guide ready to share knowledge about what is out there. Visit our website for more information and contact us today if you are interested!

Email: info@cosmodome.co.nz

Web: www.cosmodome.co.nz

Heather Couper and Nigel Henbest visit New Zealand – July 2010



Several meetings, including public presentations have been arranged by New Zealand Astronomical Societies for this tour. All are welcome to attend, see details below

“Cosmic Quest” A history of Astronomy

Our glorious night sky is the ultimate landscape. But where do we fit in? For thousands of years humankind has sought to find our place in the Cosmos. Starting with superstition, astronomy has flourished into the most all-embracing of the sciences. This presentation concentrates on the people and personalities who have asked questions about the Cosmos. Starting with the Greeks, humans have striven to understand the Universe. Does the Sun travel around the Earth; or the Earth around the Sun? What are fearsome looking comets? How big is the Cosmos? With each question answered, dozens appear as if from nowhere: black holes, dark matter, planets around other stars, and the ultimate future of our Universe. And ... is there life out there?

Nelson: A211 Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology, Wednesday 14th July, 7.30pm

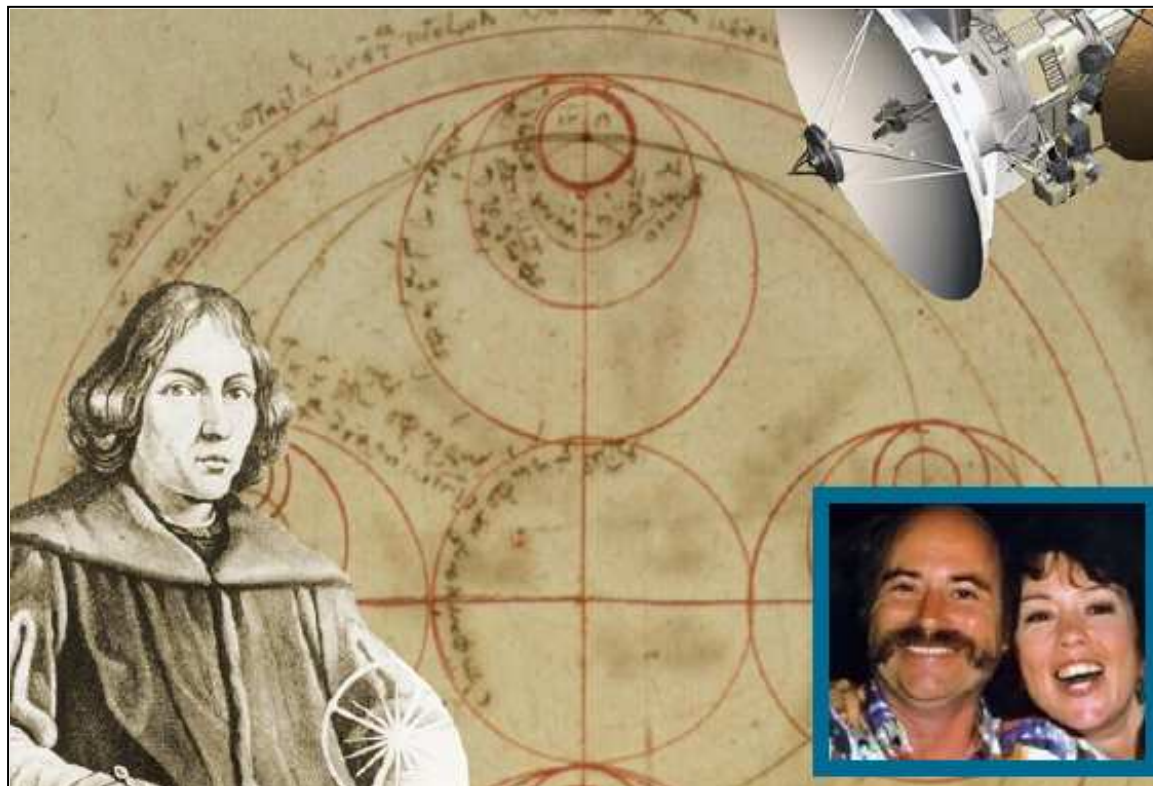
Contact: Robert Rea for further details - reamarsh@ihug.co.nz

Wellington, Carter Observatory: Thursday 15th July, 7.00pm (Gold Coin Donation)

Contact: Gordon Hudson - gordon@kpo.org.nz

Auckland, Raye Freedman Arts Centre, Epsom Girls College: Saturday 17th July, 7.00pm

Contact: Grant Christie - grant@christie.org.nz



Heather Couper & Nigel Henbest, two of today's leading science communicators and authors will be in New Zealand this month.

A Sojourn of NZ Astronomical Societies

Catching Up

Grant Christie and I visited a number of astronomical societies at the beginning of the year and had a great time doing so. Here are a few pictures from our week long travels, including a few pictures from this year's fantastic RASNZ conference held in Dunedin. The RASNZ council would like to thank the Dunedin Astronomical Society for a well organised and successful conference. We look forward to Napier in 2011.



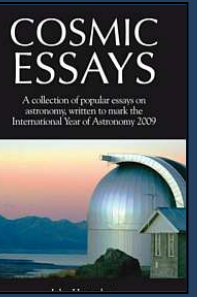
Tell us what your society club or group has been up to!

We would love to hear what your society, group or club is up to. Perhaps you have a member who deserves some special recognition, if so, don't be shy and send us the information; news items or special events that have taken place recently or are about to. We are happy to put together a short article and include it in these newsletters. Adding a picture or two really makes a difference and helps tell the story, so send those along these as well. Send your news items to Jennie McCormick: farmcoveobs@xtra.co.nz

Comic Essays

Written by John Hearnshaw \$25.00 + \$5.00 NZpp

A new book by Prof John Hearnshaw from the University of Canterbury is now for sale. Cosmic Essays is a collection of 53 popular essays on astronomy, written



to celebrate the 2009 International Year of Astronomy. This would make a great addition to all society libraries. To order your copy

Contact: Prof John Hearnshaw john.hearnshaw@canterbury.ac.nz http://www2.phys.canterbury.ac.nz/~jhe25/CosmicEssays/COSMIC_ESSAYS_order.htm



Winter Gissy Gathering July 9th to 12th, 2010

It's that time again, the winter gathering of astronomers from around NZ. It kicks off Friday 9th of July and runs through until the 12th. This event is held on John Drummond's farm, 11kms to the west of Gisborne near the little township of Patutahi. John offers a dark site and hopefully fine weather.

Bring your own accommodation tents, caravans etc or try sleeping communally in John's home. Please bring your own food, drink, telescopes, cameras etc and come along prepared for a good time.

Contact: John Drummond for further information and travel directions

Email: john_drummond@xtra.co.nz

Mobile: 0275 609 287