

1st April, 2002 Vol. 4 No. 1

**In This Issue:**

- **ETA CARINAE TO GO SUPERNOVA!**
- **RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN COMET-HUNTING TECHNIQUES**
- **THE PHILOSORAPTURES: AN UPDATE**
- **SETI FUNDING URGED**
- **THE SOUTHERN MESSIER CATALOGUE**
- **SNAKE ADOPTION AT WIRUNA**
- **GALAXY COLLISION INSURANCE**
- **UFO ORIGINS IN CENTRAL AUSTRALIA**
- **DOINGS AT WIRUNA**
- **NAMING RIGHTS FOR STARS AND BLACK HOLES**
- **STAR PARTY RECIPES**
- **APRIL'S HORRORSCOPES**
- **ASTRO-CLASSIFIEDS**
- **PRIME OBSERVING LAND NOW AVAILABLE**
- **UFOs OVER DUNN'S SWAMP**
- **EXCITING DOINGS AT DUNEDOO**
- **PRODUCT REVIEW: PORTABLE INSTANT OPTICS DEMISTER**
- **ASTRONOMERS INDICTED OVER GLOBAL WARMING**
- **UP-COMING SOCIETY EVENTS**
- **DISCLAIMER**

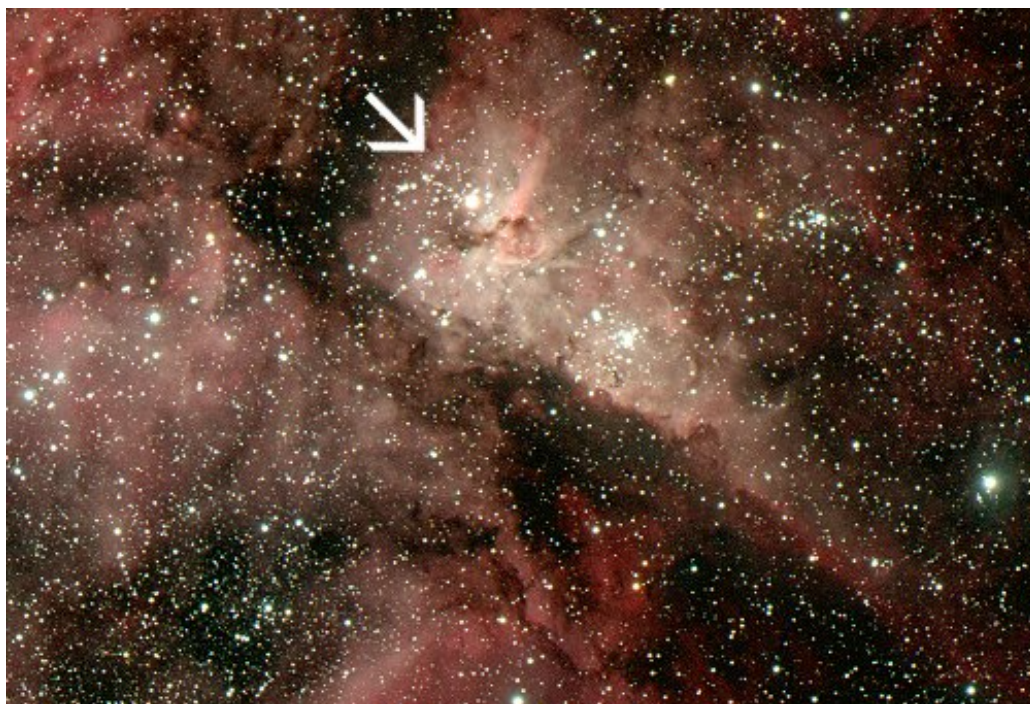
**OBSERVATORIES:**

WIRUNA 33° 01'S 149° 46'E  
CRAGO 33° 33'S 150° 37'E

## **ETA CARINAE TO GO SUPERNOVA**

### **DENSE STREAM OF PROTO-NEUTRINOS ON COLLISION COURSE WITH EARTH!**

In a shock announcement made last week by scientists aboard the International Space Station and the Hubble Space Telescope, amateur astronomers worldwide have been put on notice that Eta Carinae, the jelly-baby shaped nova in the heart of NGC 3372, is about to go supernova!



*Eta Carinae showing the Dense Stream of Proto-Neutrinos - Photo: John Cepheid*

Eta Carinae is generally considered by southern-hemisphere observers as one of the best and brightest objects visible in amateur telescopes, and even in binoculars. However, with the announcement of the candidacy of this object as a supernova, amateur astronomers' worst fears are that when the light from the explosion finally reaches the Earth, the entire sky will light up, causing up to several months of constant light pollution from what is estimated to be a supernova of magnitude  $-18.4$ . This would be considerably brighter than the Full Moon which averages magnitude  $-12.7$ !

Once the light from the supernova has faded and the shockwave finally hits the Earth, propelled by a "howling wind" of high-velocity Proto-Neutrinos, Gamma-Rays and X-Rays, it is anticipated that amateur astronomers will be confronted with the light show of their lives: an aurora, anticipated to cover the entire sky at an apparent magnitude possibly in excess of  $-13$ . An Aurora of such epic proportions would be clearly visible in a fully moonlit sky, even from within the heart of the world's largest cities, and depending on the intensity of the radiation hitting Earth, the result may be a rainbow of colours covering the entire electromagnetic spectrum on both hemispheres of the planet.

---

**ETA CARINAE  
TO GO SUPERNOVA**

---

*(continued from page 1)*

This is causing a great amount of anxiety and excitement amongst the Aurorae Hunters and Deep-Sky Astro-photographers of the world.

Use of a strong Sun block is highly recommended during the months of the supernova's light and radiation bombardment of the Earth, and it is also advised that humans and remain indoors during the time when the constellation of Carina is more than 7° above the local horizon.

As the star of Eta Carinae is around 3,000 light years distant, it is difficult to estimate the exact time and date of the first impact on the Earth's upper atmosphere, however, it has been suggested by Dr Emmanuel Snodgrass of Dunedoo, that the first impact may be between 4:14pm and 6:47pm on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2002, which coincidentally falls on the Saturday during the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual South Pacific Star Party at Wiruna.

It has been suggested that Star Party attendees consume as much Star Port as possible to enable adequate constriction of blood vessels in the eyes, to enable far more effective dark adaption for the evening hours of observing the Large Cloud at Wiruna.

Neolithic Astrophysicists from the University of Allbeqwerky in New Mexico have recently discovered a number of Petroglyphs left by the Anuswhami people.

It is understood from the translation, that these Petroglyphs reveal that Eta Carinae has already gone supernova twice before, and Carbon-dating of these Petroglyphs suggests that the last such occasion coincided with the end of the last glacial melting which ushered in the end of the last ice-age.

This has raised exciting possibilities about the impact of supernovae on global warming.

Baron Beavis von Buttköpf theorises in consequence that perhaps the present temperature readings suggesting global warming in recent years, may well be the result of a so-far undetected supernova which exploded in the core of our galaxy about 3 years ago.

In order to verify this, the Baron is experimenting with un-sharp masking techniques so as to filter out the light of the hub of the galaxy, thus leaving only the supernova remnant to be photographed by the new Astrocamera in his observatory at Schlöss Ratzhärz.

---

**RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN  
COMET-HUNTING TECHNIQUES**

---

The keenest observer of heavenly bodies South of the Mason Dixon, Mr Mick Gowan of Bullspiddle County, Alabama, not only has the biggest telescope in the county, but recently visited Australia to make a pilgrimage to Dunedoo to study comet hunting at the knee of it's famous son, Emmanuel Snodgrass.

Emmanuel became famous with his innovative use of the humble Telrad in comet seeking, and Mick wished to learn first hand, the skills of the master.

Since his return to Bullspiddle, he has not been content to copy, but has made some important breakthroughs. Initially experimenting with green rather than red LEDs, he then made the daring decision to remove the batteries altogether, which had the advantage of reducing the glare from the reticle when looking for faint comets.

Another advantage was the fact that it also reduced the mass of the Telrad, thus removing any gravitational lensing caused by the combined mass of the batteries.

This also prevented the electrical field of the batteries from distorting the light path through the instrument.

Indeed, Mick has achieved such fame by his inventiveness and his observing skills, that for two successive years he has been voted the astronomer most lady amateurs would like to be in the dark with.

While observing with Emmanuel in the beer garden of the Commercial Hotel at Dunedoo, Mick decided to compare the iris-dilating effects of both Fosters and Cascade beers with scientifically measured doses of his favourite Old Crow Bourbon. Emmanuel had to act as his detached observer, as the greater the dilation, the less clear his memory seemed to be.

A half bottle of Bourbon, or seven bottles of Cascade beer brought optimum results, however above that level, the reflection of his bloodshot eyeballs on the reticle of the Telrad totally obscured the focussing circles, leading to endless confusion and the occasional bout of regurgitation.

Spurred on by this, Mick is currently testing the prototype of his multiple Telrad system, where a dozen Telrads are mounted in an array using a six inch refractor as a guide scope.

At the same time, he has used himself as guinea pig by establishing that a mere half bottle of Old Crow Bourbon ingested between sundown and midnight can expand the exit pupil by at least 50%.

He is currently experimenting with some herbal products, produced in some of the finest old amateur distilleries in Alabama and Georgia, in search of the legendary "Elixir of Light", which is reputed to make the drinker very sensitive to light.

His further findings will make exciting reading in his biography currently being written by Kibitzer Prize-winning author, Lucy McKilroy. Lucy's best-selling book: "The Wit and Wisdom of George W Bush" is currently in its 29<sup>th</sup> edition!

---

**THE PHILOSORAPTURES:  
AN UPDATE**

---

Further reports from Harry Janos of Coober Pedy, speak of an amazing discovery in an open cut opal mine near

the Breakaways in South Australia, where further fossil remains, both of Philosoraptures and other Dinosaur species were uncovered in recent months.

Associated artifacts suggest that the area may have been some sort of base for the Philosoraptures' space vehicles.

Remains of several Tyrannosaurus Rexes, one with a gold tooth, vindicate records in the data banks of the buried space craft recovered at Coober Pedy which stated that these awesome creatures had been trained and used as guard dogs at selected Philosorapture installations.

Indeed, when the fossil remains were sent to the Fort Davis Field Station of the University of Texas for further study by the visiting Professor of Saurian Prosthetics, Dr Tom Cometencke, it was established that evidence of extensive root canal work and sophisticated oral surgery demonstrated that Philosorapture medical science was well advanced.

Selected specimens have been re-assembled and put on display by the University's Curator of Vertebrate Fossils, Dr Rob Vanderson, at Starsend observatory which houses one of the top ten telescopes in Fort Davis.

---

**SETI FUNDING URGED**

---

Senator Richard Head, leader of the Bananas Republican faction of the GOP urged the US government today to drastically increase funding to operation SETI (*Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence*).

The Senator said that there could be many alien civilizations in respect of which the US military might have to install anti-missile defence systems.

Such missiles could include not only nuclear weapons but also asteroids, comets, black holes, anti-matter, millennium bugs etc.

A test of the newly developed anti missile system is planned later this year.



*Gold-Toothed T-Rex Specimen under study by Dr Tom Cometencke*

This is part of an exercise designed to test ways and means of destroying Near Earth Asteroids which may be found on a collision course with planet Earth.

A consideration has always been that merely exploding a bomb and breaking an asteroid into smaller components, which then continue on to collide with Earth, does not solve the problem, but merely changes the outcome.

The ideal solution is, of course, to divert the asteroid off it's dangerous orbit, into the Sun or Jupiter. Accordingly, a missile carrying a 100 megatonne nuclear device is to be targeted onto an asteroid not currently heading towards our planet, the impact being designed to scatter any residue into Saturn.

The selected asteroid is (9984) *Gregbryant* = 1996 HT and this is appropriate for two reasons:

Firstly, it is about the same size as the one which caused the great Cretaceous extinction, and secondly, computer studies of it's orbital elements for the last 67 million years have established that it is the surviving half of that same asteroid which apparently broke in two, one half colliding with Earth and the other diverted into a new orbit.

This discovery may well confirm the historical records concerning the Philisoraptures' attempt to save our planet, an attempt which reduced the impact sufficiently to ensure the survival of us mammals. When our reporter suggested that alien civilizations, if

any, need not necessarily be our enemies, or even be aware of our very existence, the Senator said that the Bananas Republican's Foreign Affairs Committee could easily attend to both of these objections.

He said that his elderly father, retired Colonel Richard Head (the first) commonly saw UFO's on his way home from Fred's Bar and Grill in Boondocks, Alabama, and feared that he had been probed on several occasions, when he had woken up in his car with only a hazy recollection of the previous night's events, and feeling a little tender.

Such treatment of a much decorated Veteran of the Palm Springs Golf War was intolerable, the Senator said.

Colonel Head had received the Purple Heart (with oak leaves) after being run down by a golf buggy while leading an assault by the Republican Old Guard on the 19<sup>th</sup> hole, then occupied by the Marine Corps Red Eye Platoon.

---

#### **THE SOUTHERN MESSIER CATALOGUE**

---

As is well known, the young Charles Messier arrived in Paris in 1751, having come from his native Badouville in Lorraine to seek employment.

His drafting skills secured him a job with astronomer Joseph Nicholas as a draftsman.

However, not until last year was it discovered that the young teenaged Messier had actually produced a southern hemisphere Messier catalogue.

Orphaned while young, Charles had lived with his paternal grandmother, a noted cook, and famed for having perfected the Quiche which took it's name from her province.

When young Charles turned 12, Madame Messier used her Gastronomical connections to secure him an apprenticeship with the French East-India Company, as a trainee working under noted seacook Roger La Roue, famous throughout the fleet for his Coq au vin.

His first voyage, to Madras, was made in 1742 aboard the Good Ship Aphrodite, and during his off duty hours the young Charles was entranced by the changing aspects of the sky as the ship sailed south towards the Cape of Good Hope.

In this he was assisted by Captain Marquis deSade, who took a shine to the young lad, introduced him to the rudiments of celestial navigation, and let Charles play with his telescope.

Using both a 20 x 50mm spyglass and a low powered "night glass" he compared the appearance of different celestial objects and wrote his observations, with sketches, in a small log book updated from time to time on later voyages when he got access to somewhat bigger telescopes.

At that early stage he was not looking for objects that resembled comets, and as a result his list first includes a wide range of objects.

His practice at drawing honed his drafting skills and helped him in his subsequent employment.

To encourage the lad, his grandmother published his catalogue in an appendix to her cookbook of 1749, particularly as most of his descriptions were food-related.

As this book had limited circulation and was published in an obscure regional dialect, it was not re-discovered until 2001, when a PhD student discovered the only copy to escape the ravages of the Revolution, the Alsace Lorraine question and several bus loads of British soccer hooligans. His descriptions clearly mirror his training aboard ship. For example:

*MS 1: Object in Carina. One and a half hand-spans West of Crux Australis, resembling a very small but bright, lightly fried, double-yolked egg, surrounded by a mottled field of castor sugar.*

*MS 2: Large diffuse object in Doradus, about 4° x 5°, resembling an omelette with scattered particles of cheese.*

*MS 3: Small bright object adjacent to MS 2 looking like an overcooked starfish with bent legs.*

*MS 4: Diffuse object in Tucanae about 3° wide, resembling an oval soufflé scattered with weevils and accompanied by a small soft truffle.*

*MS 5: Neat cluster of evenly matched faint stars near Beta Crucis, one being ruddy in hue, triangular in overall shape, rather like a wedge of Camembert.*

*MS 6: Dark clouds in the milky way extending from Crux Australis to Scorpius, shaped like a leg of ham, much eaten, and with it's*

*widest part in the East.*

... and so on...

The catalogue is only partly complete, and it is not clear if some observations were lost, or whether Charles had intended to make further observations on later voyages.

However, losses suffered to the British in the ongoing trade war in the East resulted in a marked reduction in activity by the French East-India Company and the premature end of Messier's career in cooking.

Gastronomy in the end lost out to Astronomy.

---

**SNAKE ADOPTION  
AT WIRUNA**

---

ASNSW Chief Conservationist, Mr Col McMickle has spent the past year working with native wildlife, most notably the Eastern Grey Kangaroos he has trained as Nagler carriers (See Alternate Universe, April 2000).

In the course of his study, Col has noted that some native animal species can become stressed when larger than usual crowds frequent the grounds of Wiruna, particularly Elapid Snakes, which can become unusually shy and retiring.

Accordingly, during the New-Moon weekend in February 2002, Col experimented by coaxing a snake to take refuge under the snug and dry canvas floor of his tent and established that the creature seemed to enjoy the experience.

Being careful and safety-conscious, Col selected an Eastern Brown snake for this exercise, as, although it ranks among the top three deadly snakes in this country, it's fangs are relatively small, relying on venom quality rather than quantity to deliver a lethal dose, and consequently it would have difficulty in piercing the canvas floor.

If you are a little timid, Col would advise you to stick with Eastern Browns, or Red-Bellied Black Snakes, and to generally avoid the Death Adders, Tiger Snakes, Copperheads, or King Browns that frequent the area, as these generally have longer fangs. He also suggests you not try to pat the snake, as when he tried this, the animal took fright and slithered out from under his tent.

---

**GALAXY COLLISION  
INSURANCE**

---

It has recently been confirmed that the famous Great Nebula in Andromeda, M31, is on a direct collision course with our own galaxy.



**A McMickle-Preferred Eastern Brown Snake**

Approaching one another at a frightening 200km/sec, impact is certain within the foreseeable future and the implications must be faced.

Although actual stellar collisions would be relatively rare, the shock of gaseous nebulae impacting would trigger off a whole new burst of star formation.

Of more relevance to our planet, gravitational distortions stemming from the passage of M31's stars past our Sun would certainly cause perturbations in the orbits of many comets within the Oort Cloud, while the orbits of many Near Earth Asteroids could be seriously affected.

It is definite that the number of cometary and minor planet impacts with our planet would rise dramatically.

However, you could insure right away with the Gröseblurter Insurance company, of Area 31, Nevada, USA.

For as little as a dollar down and a dollar a day, you can insure against total destruction of the Earth for a total payout of up to US\$100,000,000.

Claimants can receive their pay-out at the Head Office at area 31, Nevada, in US dollars or gold bars 24 hours after the Earth's destruction has been confirmed.

Australian customers may insure with the company's Sydney Agent, Mr Spike Myth, of the B and D Shop in Sydney, NSW.

**UFO ORIGINS IN  
CENTRAL AUSTRALIA**

Noted Ufologist, Barry von Münchhausen, of Andamooka, South Australia, is currently undertaking field studies amongst the Devil's Marbles, south of Tennant Creek in Central Australia.

Following on from the abduction of a US Navy aircraft from an aircraft carrier moored in the Todd River at Alice Springs last year, Barry's attention was drawn to the area near Wycliffe Well - reputed UFO radiant point for the southern hemisphere.

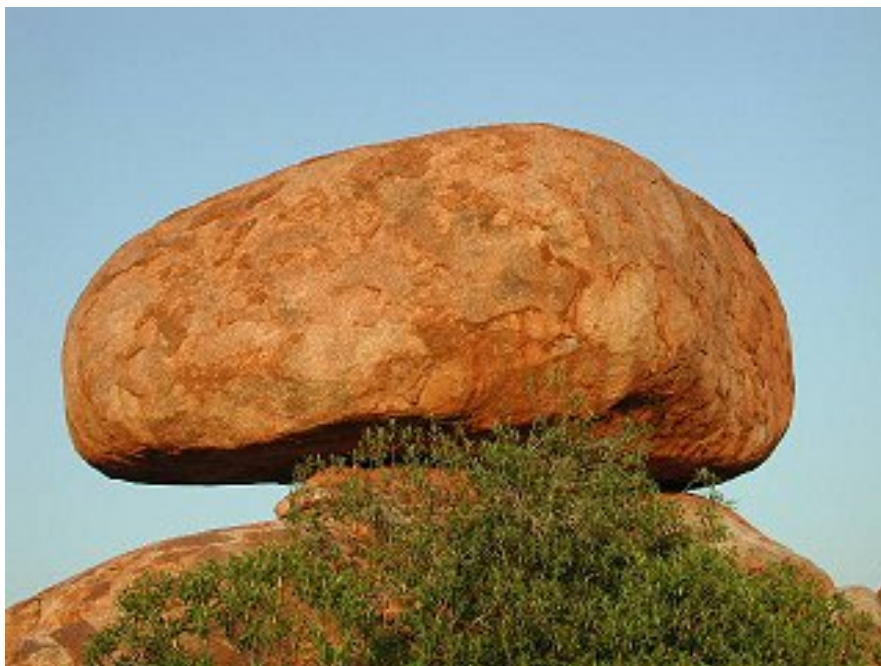
Having worked his way through the writings of various seers and prophets, he was particularly taken by the writings of the legendary Mother Shipton. Disdaining modern translations, Barry went back to the text in the original Sanskrit and the quatrain - *"From the sky to rocks, growing through the matrix, the quick and the dead, crystals and the flesh, combine to rise again"*.

Based on his extensive theoretical work into UFO origins, Barry concluded that UFO's are actually flying cyborgs, part machine and part organic constructs, which are both sentient and self-replicating.

He contends that an amalgum of essential minerals and biological material is activated by a consortium of nano mini robots working to a digital DNA-type plan over many months.

The trajectory of the UFO involved in the aircraft abduction, took it towards Wycliffe Well, and then on to the site of the nearby Devil's Marbles, consisting of thousands of rounded granite boulders ranging in size from a few metres to house-sized.

He argues that a percentage of these are actually replicas, or UFO "eggs", installed at night after the original rock is removed, and coated with a few millimetres of granite so as to escape detection.



***A Suspected UFO "Egg"***

Barry is examining each boulder in turn using his newly developed Sonic-Sigmoidoscope - a slow, painstaking process that can take up to four days per boulder.

He says that the strange behaviour attributed to many UFO's can be explained by this being juvenile jinks by newly hatched, immature models whose programs are not yet fully installed.

Although he has identified no eggs so far amongst the 27 boulders probed to date, he is confident that he will find many amongst the 2,794 remaining.

---

**DOINGS AT WIRUNA**

---

**Instrumentation**

A 40 inch F/6 Newtonian (see photo, right) has been erected adjacent to the house on the western (or upper) observing field.

Utilising an obsidian mirror figured by noted optician David Colouredbudgy, the telescope is not driven or moveable, but scans that section of sky made available by the Earth's rotation.

**Biological Rodent Control**

As some of our members have been startled by mice near the club's Quadrophonic Neutrino-Detector, Club Conservationist Col McMickle considers that establishing a colony of snakes therein is a means of biological control.

He has selected Red Bellied Blacks as the appropriate species, being good rodent hunters, but shy, retiring snakes with such a low

toxicity in venom that some persons bitten have recovered, and lived, without the need of medical assistance. Initial tests have been encouraging.



40" f/6 Zenith Scope

**Grazing Occultation**

There was a large turnout at Wiruna for the new moon weekend in February 2002, in the hope of observing the rare and elusive grazing occultation of Mars by Aldebaran, which is currently in the constellation of Taurus.

However, gravitational lensing caused by an inconveniently placed cluster of near earth asteroids meant that the objects were too widely separated for Australian observers to witness the event.

**Phone Box for Wiruna**

Having established which part of the eastern (or lower) observing field, has the best mobile phone reception, astro-photographer Monte Willsin has been negotiating for the acquisition of a surplus phone box currently in the Central Business District of Sofala.

The phone box is scheduled for removal from Sofala's main street to make room for the new Cinema complex, Shopping Mall, and Opera House currently being planned by the Darwin Awards Foundation, of Walla Walla, Washington, USA.



The New Phone Box for Wiruna

Fully restored to it's former glory, the phone box may well be installed at Wiruna in time for SPSP 2003, enabling Star Party attendees to utilise their mobile telephones from within a genuine antique phone box.

**Radio Telescope**

There have been ongoing problems in getting our vintage radio telescope to do a little more than establish the comforting fact that the sun is still radiating.

After some careful research, the simple expedient is being put into effect - that of placing it closer to the radio sources being studied. A surplus 35 metre high tower has been secured and will be dismantled and re erected on the western (or upper) observing field by April 2003.



**35m Radiotelescope Tower**

The radio telescope will then be hoisted to the top of the tower so as to be able to undertake some serious work.

**Observing**

Members attending at new moon weekend at Wiruna enjoy the advantage of advice from experienced members on observation techniques, telescope construction, collimation etc...

Pictured (above, right) is a typical healthy debate concerning the controversial question of which end of a Newtonian Telescope the primary mirror works most effectively.

In the healthy traditions of the society, all conflicting opinions were taken into account and a vote was

taken on the matter before the telescope was finally assembled.



**Which End Does the Mirror Go?**

**Lawn Cemetery**

As part of the service offered to members, a portion of the Wiruna site is being developed as a lawn cemetery. A tasteful selection of trees has been planted, and a wheeled coffin carrier and wheeled pulpit are being trialed to determine the size of wheel necessary to negotiate the turfed area of the site.

Members are asked to postpone dropping off until at least 2004, as we do not feel that the site will be ready to receive guests until then. As a special public duty, the Society offers to the Australian public at large a free service to self confessed intellectuals, retired politicians, and media gurus.



**Preparation of the Lawn Cemetery at Wiruna**

They can have their ashes interred free of charge by having them reverently deposited with the biomass of the Society Quadrohonic Neutrino Detector, and in such manner continue their public service by being part of on going scientific research.

**Wiruna Tree Plantation**

As there is experimental evidence suggesting that increased Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) levels can accelerate plant growth, ASNSW Horticultural afficionado Don Whitelight has been conducting a controlled experiment on the new tree plantation at Wiruna.

Inspired by the steady growth of grass on the roof of Parliament House at Canberra, prompted by prodigious outpourings of Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), Hydrogen Sulphide (H<sub>2</sub>S), and associated Bullshit (BS) during Parliamentary debates, he has had volunteers undertake sessions of breathing into the plastic enclosures protecting the young seedlings (see photo opposite page, top).



**Heavy Breather At Work**

Initial results are so encouraging that Club Conservationist Col McMickle is now training the resident Eastern Grey Kangaroos to deposit their droppings adjacent to the plants.

While admittedly not of the same awesome quality as Parliamentary Bullshit, Col feels that this may be made up for by the equation of native trees plus native droppings.

---

**NAMING RIGHTS FOR STARS AND BLACK HOLES**

---

In recent years, many institutions have offered the public the chance to own, adopt or name a star. However, in a dramatic move, Gröseblurter Enterprises offers you the marvellous opportunity to name a Black Hole.

Name one after your Boss, your Mother-in-law, ex-girlfriend, ex-husband, favourite politician...

A wide variety to choose from: Massive Black Holes in the centres of active galaxies, former supernovae become black holes, or the bargain basement theoretical mini black holes.

Know someone who sucks in matter, money, food, affection etc, but gives nothing back?

Pick the appropriate black hole and their name will be recorded in the Official Black Book in the Registry.

Contact us at Gröseblurter Enterprises, Area 31, Nevada, USA.

Contact us at, or, if an Australian customer, our Sydney agent, Mr Spike Myth, of the B and D shop.

An inscribed certificate under the seal of Gröseblurter Enterprises will be forwarded to you, mounted in a frame suitable for presentation for only \$25, plus \$99.95 for postage and handling.

ADDED BONUS! With every Galactic Central Black Hole, an extra naming option is available absolutely free.

Know someone who out-gasses to excess? Name an out-gassing star in their honour.

Limited stock so act now!

---

**STAR PARTY RECIPES**

---

**Hangover Cure**

Take half a glass of vinegar, one teaspoon of coarsely-grated nutmeg, one teaspoon of epsom salts, one egg-cup of tomato paste, a pinch of black pepper, and a teaspoon of curry powder.

Stir well and skull the lot. Guaranteed to either cure your hangover or take your mind completely off it!

**Coconut Crumble.**

Fill a 1500mm length of 20mm PVC tubing with grated coconut. Take one mature Witchetty Grub and have it eat it's way from one end to the other.

Then, before it has had time to fully digest the coconut, remove the Witchetty Grub and roast lightly over the glowing embers of a eucalypt-fired wood fire. Serve with room temperature white wine - A gourmet delight!

**Chicken Chernobyl**

Take one Ukranian Chicken (either 3 or 4-legged is suitable). Cut off both heads and remove all feathers using a blow-torch or angle-grinder. Stew in a lead-lined pot, preferably whilst wearing a cast iron Sporran.



**Sampling a Gourmet Recipe**

When the glow from the chicken turns from green to blue it is ready to serve - Ideal for that romantic candle-lit dinner when you have run out of candles.

Don't worry about finishing off in the dark, as the bones should also glow for some time thereafter, in fact you should feel quite that warm inner-glow yourself.

---

**APRIL'S HORRORSCOPES**

---

♈ Aries - With Mars in Aries be particularly careful this month. Do try to avoid being shot in any significant area of your body as this could be injurious to your health, and if in Afghanistan, keep hitch hiking to a minimum. A month of bed rest could be prudent.

♉ Taurus - Saturn is in Taurus and on 20 March is occulted by the moon, along with Vesta - a serious omen for anyone with a valuable ring, as being mooned in a public place would likely be an embarrassment.

♊ Gemini - Jupiter is in Gemini along with three girlfriends and a boyfriend, Europa, Io, Callisto, and Ganymede, and snuggles up to compact cluster M35.

If you plan multiple partners to add lustre to your cluster, stoke up on vitamins and a well balanced diet to build up your strength.

♋ Cancer - SFA happening in Cancer this month, except that the moon should lurch by eventually. Enjoy your quiet time and simply contemplate your navel for a few weeks, or the navel of your choice.

♌ Leo - With any luck, a meteor may pass through Leo this month.

On the other hand, the Trio in Leo could be worth observing, so stick to quiet observing and do not expect much in the way of excitement, unless you are an exciting Leo, which is not likely.

♍ Virgo - Though Virgos are in short supply these days, your star sign is a happening place this month.

The Virginids are active all this month, while a few photons are likely to drift our way from it's general direction.

For Virgos, this is exciting stuff, so try not to get too carried away - get a script for Valium or Senna Pod tea.

♎ Libra - With any luck, SOMETHING may happen in Libra this year, although until then, the scales are in balance, so to upset them you will have to do something dramatic yourself.

Take out a second mortgage to buy that 150mm Takahashi Flourite, or go on a bicycle tour taking in all major US Observatories. Live a little, if only for a month.

♏ Scorpio - Pluto is sniffing your tail from nearby Ophiuchus, so don't be caught bending, and watch your rear at all times. If visiting Singapore, avoid hot dogs as they may not be RSPCA-approved.

♐ Sagittarius - A bit of action this month with comet C/2000 WM1 (Linear) moving through, while comet 57P / Du Toit - Neujmin-Delporte is also in your sign.

You may feel torn between two brilliant things of little substance, like the Greens and the Democrats, so choose carefully.

♑ Capricorn - with Mercury, Uranus, and Neptune in your sign, the name planets are on your side, while minor planet Melpomene is also around.

What all this means is bloody confusing, though it may be that a quick dip of your nether regions in the sea could be risky if there are hungry sharks nearby.

♒ Aquarius - It may be your age. Neptune moves in at the end of the month, and Mercury passes through in a great hurry, while minor

planet Melpomene also moves in.

This all means you are artistic, sensitive, intelligent and utterly cool, and likely to win the lottery if you buy in excess of 75,000 tickets.

Ignore the envy of lesser star signs.

♓ Pisces - Mercury moves in at the end of the month. While Alpha Pisces had not gone supernova at the time we went to print, neither had any other star in Pisces so it is all going your way.

Have a great SPSP, but avoid eating yabbies from the dam at Wiruna, unless, of course, you wish to collect on your Life Insurance Policy.

---

**ASTRO-CLASSIFIEDS**

---

**Comet Seeker**

Super Rich-Field 8" f/3.2 Newtonian Dob. Full range of Huygens eyepieces from 4mm to 50mm, shows spectra of all bright objects automatically, so diffuse objects can be easily distinguished.

1/900 wave optics (10m band). Price: \$1,000.

**Mirror Grinding Kit**

2x30cm plate glass blanks, 30mm thick, Ryobi angle grinder, Black & Decker Disc Sander with 10 spare sanding discs ranging from coarse to extra fine.

Empty tin-can with pin hole, candle, and new razor blade. 1kg of Blue-Gum sap, 100g of rusty nails, 2m of self-adhesive aluminium foil. Price: \$500.

Contact Barry von Münchhausen, No-Through Road, Andamooka, SA

**PRIME OBSERVING SITES  
NOW AVAILABLE**

**Ideal Astronomy Ranch**

10 hectare building block - former Hotel site, 60km East of Boulia, Queensland. Original Fireplace still standing.

Prime dark-sky conditions - only light pollution is one night per year during the annual carnival at Boulia when both street lights are turned on for outdoor line dancing, but always during a Full Moon.

Short drive from Longreach Airport.

Attractions in area: Stockman's Hall of Fame; Eulo Lizard Races; Lark Quarry Dinosaur Tracks; Camooweal Caves; Walkabout Creek Hotel; Mt Isa McDonalds Restaurant. Price: \$17,500

**Comet Hunting Site**

Disused 1 hectare former UFO landing pad at Wycliffe Well, nicely situated half-way between Tennant Creek and Alice Springs.



**UFO Landing Pad**

Council approval to build multiple pit-toilets.

Heavy equatorial mount on site, fixed to three-tonne concrete pier, 100mm solid steel polar axis - can support up to four (4) Telrads. Price: \$2,000.

Applications to: Emmanuel Snodgrass, c/- Beer Garden, Commercial Hotel, Dunedoo, NSW.

**UFO'S OVER DUNN'S SWAMP**

Exciting news has just come in from the local district.

A number of witnesses have reported that they have, on a regular basis, seen UFO's both flying over, and even appearing to land on the surface of Rylstone's Riviera, Dunn's Swamp, formerly known as Kandos Weir.

All the witnesses are well known long term local residents, each one having been a regular drinker at the Railway Hotel in nearby Kandos for at least thirty years.

Although few have ever travelled either West or South of Ilford, all are familiar with the Wollemi Wilderness, where they have, from time to time, gone in company to commune with the spirits, and in recent months, towards the end of these spirituous sessions, one or more UFO's have appeared.

Some of these objects exhibit peculiar characteristics when viewed through the filter of an Old Crow Bourbon bottle, and sometimes exert a physical influence over those brave volunteers who have emptied

enough Bourbon bottles to allow for a joint viewing.

When contacted with the news, UFO expert Barry von Münchhausen could hardly contain his excitement, as although he has observed a number of UFO's over his home town Andamooka, none have attempted to land on water.

When our reporter pointed out that this may well be because there is no bloody surface water within 500km of Andamooka, Barry pointed out that this was not the only reason.

He said that the water in Dunn's Swamp is known through the Alternative Society folk as being the wettest water on Earth, possibly because fluoro-luminescent studies have established that the bottom layers are actually rain which fell in the area 117 million years ago, and has been protected from evaporation by a layer of liquid molecular iridium, and over that period has become super saturated with wetness.

Barry theorises that UFO's are powered by fusion reactors, and that this particularly wet water is perfectly suited to efficiently convert into helium.

The UFO's, he says, are tapping into a rare and valuable resource - using Dunn's Swamp as a refuelling station.

Alarmed by this report, Rylstone Shire Council has decided to change the name of Dunn's Swamp so as to throw new UFO's off their navigation.

It was tentatively suggested that, to confuse them, a sign reading "Dunn's Swamp" might be erected next to the dam at Wiruna, although reservations have been voiced by our deep-sky observers that an increase in UFO traffic over Wiruna could ruin their dark adaptation.

Furthermore, Society Research Officer Chris Cross considers that any attempt to use the water from the dam at Wiruna for any purpose other than perforating mirror blanks for Cassegrains could be highly dangerous.

---

**EXCITING DOINGS  
AT DUNEDOO**

---

Australian towns have the Big Banana, the Big Merino, The Big Lobster - etc, but now a proposal to erect a giant, three storey country dunny as a tourist attraction at Dunedoo, pop 829, has divided opinion in the town.

However, just when the proposal seemed doomed by local objections, Dunedoo's most famous son, Emmanuel Snodgrass came to the town's rescue once again.

Emmanuel's compromise position was to erect a three storey roll-off roof, or more correctly, a roll-off skylight) observatory to house his Telrad quartet, but still resembling the classical outback country dunny.

In this way, tourists can be attracted by the exterior aesthetic appearance and cultural antecedents, while locals who formerly objected to the scheme are attracted by the prospect of the town secretly containing a world-

class scientific facility, and unique in the astronomical world - a Quad-Telrad Comet Seeker, the only one residing inside a giant replica of an Australian icon.



***Two-Storey Prototype of the Proposed Three-Storey Dunny***

Downstairs rooms would function as living quarters for Emmanuel and visiting astronomers who may well make a pilgrimage to Dunedoo, and would also house his star-charts, maps and observing records.

A competition will be held to select a design for this structure, and this is expected to attract a strong field from amongst the world's most famous architects.

In the course of his recent tour of Australia's leading observing sites, Emmanuel recently visited Wiruna on his turbo ride-on lawnmower, and was hugely excited by the Quadruple-neutrino detector located in

the Eastern (or lower) observing field.

He took several rolls of film of the facility to assist in his preparation of the list of conditions governing the contest.

Once these have been published, entries should be sent to Emmanuel Snodgrass, c/- The Beer Garden, Commercial Hotel, Dunedoo. First prize will be one year's supply of unused three-ply toilet paper.

---

**PRODUCT REVIEW: PORTABLE  
INSTANT OPTICS DEMISTER**

---

Many amateurs find electric dew zappers effective but expensive - sometimes the cost of a quality eyepiece.

However, from New Zealand again, the Land of the Long White Cloud, lots of rain, fog, dew, and damn few clear nights, comes a product designed to maximise those clear nights and give instant dew zapping.



***The Portable Instant Optics Demister In Action***

This neat device, The "Auckland Mini Volcano", consists of an aerosol can full of a secret volatile fuel, a

detachable cigarette lighter, and a directional nozzle capable of a broad or narrow plan.

So quick is it's action that you are advised to initially experiment with a piece of dewed-up window glass or beer bottle so as to get the hang of the device.

In such manner, you can quickly become skillful enough to zap that dew without damaging your optical coatings, aluminised surfaces etc. In this manner, you quickly get back into action when fogged up. The device is also useful for deterring mosquitoes, wild pigs, grizzly bears etc, as well as warming up cold fingers and underwear.

The "Auckland Mini Volcano" is now available in Australia at all good telescope shops, and some stalls at Parklea Markets, for only \$9.99.

Richmond Windsor of the Hawkesbury Astronomical Association (HAA) says: "I have caused a minor sensation at HAA observing nights using this device."

Cautionary note - if the Society President is wearing a loose hanging flannelette shirt, try to keep the device pointed away from his rear end.

---

**ASTRONOMERS INDICTED  
OVER GLOBAL WARMING**

---

In a shock announcement, conservation movement guru and former green-machine driver Andrew Moral said that the Astronomical community bore heavy responsibility for much of the global warming evidenced in recent years.

From complex Radio Telescope arrays trapping solar radiation in large, paraboloid dishes, to optical telescopes collecting masses of photons and associated electromagnetic energy sources, often computer or CCD enhanced, the increased intake of energy in the biosphere has a significant effect on temperature rises and the melting of the glaciers and polar icecaps.

Even though the oceans have not risen by as much as a millimetre over the last 30 years despite dire forecasts by conservationist doomsayers, Mr Moral said that they would be proved right any millennia now.

"Besides", he said, "the glaciers at the top of Mt Kilimanjaro have retreated to the position they occupied in 1962", while the Southern California Conference of Doomsayers Inc, forecast as recently as last month that most of the snow cover used to host the 2002 Winter Olympics near Salt Lake City would have MELTED by August 2002 - serious stuff indeed!

Indeed, the loss of snowfall on the Australian Alps could jeopardise Australia's historic bid to host the 2010 Winter Olympics announced at Salt Lake City during this year's games, as instead of only having to raise the height of the Snowy Mountains by 350 metres, it might be necessary to raise them instead by 500 metres - a much more daunting task.

Mr Moral has asked astronomers, both amateur and professional to do the right thing, a sort of penance for their past sins.

As a health and fitness conscious freak, he has designed a series of meditations to slow the heart rate, and hence the rate of breathing and CO<sub>2</sub> exhalation.



***Spontaneous Combustion  
of a Telescope due to  
Global Warming***

He has also urged the society to ban campfires and cooking fires at Wiruna, as well as smoking and the ingestion of beans during New Moon weekends in general and the South Pacific Star Party in particular.

In view of holistic theory, holding that trees and plant life respond well to love and affection, he has organised Wiruna's trio of harmonious troubadours, the Three Crooners, David Colouredbudgy, Les Ara, and Don Whitelight to serenade the vegetation on a daily basis to the accompaniment of, and often in tune with, tastefully chosen guitar music. This is calculated to stoke the intake of CO<sub>2</sub> and production of O<sub>2</sub> by all plant life within hearing range, which should be a lot when the surplus Sydney 2000 Olympics sound system has been installed and the pedal-powered generator perfected.

### COMMITTEE

President	Don Whitelight	4642 1574
Vice-President	Joe Grouchy	4636 3878
Vice-President	Adrian Felt	4572 1568
Treasurer	Max Guardian	4337 3371
Secretary	Nadia Plateglass	4702 5960
Editor	Janet Felt	4572 1568
Education	Illuminay Ted	4858 1484
Technical	Mike Err	4311 6100
Librarian	Irene Knows	4629 8079

### SECTION LEADERS

Crago (Bowen)	Adrian Sawn	4572 1568
Wiruna (Ilford)	Joe Grouchy	4636 3878
Astrocomputing	Chris Plateglass	4702 5960
Astrophotography	Joe Grouchy	4636 3878
Deep-Sky	Scott Muelish	4344 7754
Solar System	Greg Burnt	4638 5266
Telescope Making	Don Whitelight	4642 1574
Variable Stars	Illuminay Ted	4858 1484
Solar Observing	Ben Schmidtelescope	4123 7654
Double Stars	Richard Jaywalker	4871 3019
Radio Astronomy	Roger Roger	4379 1234
Junior Section	Allesandro Spica	4809 7340
Public Officer	Richard Jaywalker	4871 3019
Astro Cards	Greg Burnt	4638 5266
Archivist	Les Ara	4558 8523

### HOW TO GET TO MEETINGS

Meetings are held in the ATNF Headquarters Building located in the CSIRO Department of Radiophysics complex on the corner of Pembroke Road and Vimiera Roads, Marsfield. If arriving by car, turn right through the main gate, then immediately right past the main office entrance, proceeding about 50 metres to a small car-parking area. Adjacent to this is the "West Door", which is our entrance

All meetings commence at 8pm sharp. The doors will be opened at 7.45pm, 7.55pm and 8.10pm only. If you arrive after 8.10pm, please knock loudly on the door to attract the attention of someone, as most people will ignore you if you are late and expect to be let in without reasonable cause or explanation. There may be a slight delay before permission is granted for late entry, as DNA sampling will need to take place from the skin which is grated from your knuckles from knocking so arrogantly loudly - Get over it, because whinging will certainly not assist in the whole process!

### ALTERNATE UNIVERSE EDITOR

Lachlan MacDonald  
4 Mitchell Street  
LALOR PARK NSW 2147  
Email: asnsw @ asnsw.com

### UPCOMING SOCIETY EVENTS

16 March, 2002	<b>New Moon</b> <u>Wiruna</u>	<b>The Incredible Bylong Mouse Races.</b> Co-incidentally falls on the same weekend as the Annual South Pacific Star Party. An excellent entertaining side trip for the Saturday!
5 - 6 April, 2002	<b>Last Quarter Moon</b> <u>Crago Observatory</u>	<b>Charcoal Gathering</b> from recent bush fire remnants to stoke the ASNSW char-grill at Crago Observatory.
12 - 13 April, 2002	<b>New Moon</b> <u>Wiruna.</u>	<b>Messier Marathon.</b> Contestants will run from Wiruna to Sofala along the Sofala Road, and back via Razorback Road. Photos of all 111 Messier objects will be pinned to individual trees along the way, and the winner will be the runner who collects, and returns, with the most photos. Prize is a Quiche Lorraine, cooked to Charles Messier's Grandmother's recipe.
19 April, 2002	<b>First Quarter Moon</b> <u>Meeting Hall</u>	<b>Technical Meeting.</b> Barry von Münchhausen speaks on How to love your abductor. A preparation for observing at night in the Great Australian Bush.
27 April, 2002	<b>Full Moon</b> <u>Crago Observatory</u>	<b>Male Bonding Exercise.</b> A "Barking and Howling at the Full Moon" session by dedicated deep-sky observers. Special prize for the one who produces the most effective stream of invective against this potent source of light pollution

### DISCLAIMER

The Fine Print follows: Rumours have reached us that some sceptical readers have cast doubt on the veracity of some articles published in Alternate Universe. Rest Assured that this publication fully meets Australian Standard AS42 for Tabloid Journals, and exceeds the standards of accuracy required of British and US Tabloid newspapers. With any luck, some material contained in this publication will offend some readers, and those readers are encouraged to read on, to ascertain for themselves, just how offended they may become. Readers should remain aware that any correspondence regarding the offensive nature of this journal should be forwarded to the nearest paper recycling depot. The publishers of this journal will not be liable or responsible for any injury caused by this journal's contents, whether physical, psychological or otherwise, however any such injuries should be reported in full detail to the publishers immediately in order for new articles to be published in the following edition regarding such injuries.