

2008 ASTRONOMY FESTIVAL SPEAKER INFORMATION SATURDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2008

In addition to the admission charge, there will be an additional charge of £2.00 for each lecture

Will Gater, BBC Sky at Night Magazine (speaking from 2.45 pm to 3.45 pm)



“Before becoming a full-time science writer in 2007, Will studied Astrophysics at University College London. He has written for the UK’s top astronomy magazines and has appeared on television and radio (including the BBC’s The Sky At Night) to promote astronomy and science. He has worked for the European Space Agency’s Hubble Space Telescope press office in Germany and is a former News Editor of Astronomy Now magazine in the UK.

Today Will writes for BBC Sky At Night magazine. His first popular astronomy book is due to be published by Springer in 2009.” For more information about Will visit www.willgater.com

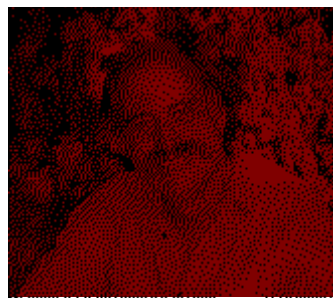
Title: “Not just pretty pictures - The science behind Hubble’s greatest images”.

When Will worked with the European Space Agency’s Hubble group last year he compiled a lecture of some 60 high resolution images and videos taken with Hubble. For each slide he explains the amazing astronomy going on in the vista in a simple and hopefully understandable way.

Heather Couper and Nigel Henbest, Hencoup Enterprises (speaking from 12.00 pm to 1.00 pm)



Nigel Henbest and Heather Couper, are two international science communicators based in Oxford. Astrophysicists by training, they now popularise astronomy and space - not to mention weather, volcanoes,



the countryside and archaeology. Between them they cover all the media, from TV to newspapers, voice-overs to corporate presentations, radio to books. In addition to their own separate professional lives (see www.hencoup.com/Heather.htm and www.hencoup.com/Nigel.htm) they also collaborate on projects where they can bring together a synergy of their combined skills and enthusiasm. And with names like Henbest and Couper, what else would they call ourselves but "Hencoup Enterprises"?!

Title: “From Babylon – to the Big Bang”

This presentation has been distilled from a 30 part series “Cosmic Quest” which will be broadcast on Radio 4. The material is derived from a book Heather and Nigel researched by interviewing leading experts all over the world. The book is entitled 'The History of Astronomy'.

Nik Szymanek, British Astronomical Association (speaking from 4.00 pm to 5.00 pm)



Nik Szymanek has had a lifelong interest in astronomy and has been involved with astrophotography since 1990. He regularly travels to La Palma in the Canary Islands where he has teamed up with a lot of the professional astronomers and on numerous occasions has been invited to apply his image processing techniques to professional data taken with the 4.2m William Herschel, 2.5m Isaac Newton and 1m Jacobus Kapteyn telescopes located there. Recently he has become heavily involved with the Faulkes telescope Project. In July 2004 he

received the Astronomical Society of the Pacific’s Amateur Achievement Award. He writes prolifically for many astronomy magazines and has published a book in collaboration with Astronomy Now, on astrophotography entitled “Infinity Rising.” For more information about Nik Szymanek click on www.ccdland.com

Title: “Photographing the Night Sky”

This will cover film, webcams and CCD imaging. The talk is designed to show people who may be starting out in astrophotography that good results can be

obtained with very basic equipment. Part of the talk will show what it's like to work under the beautiful dark skies of La Palma in the Canary Islands and Hawaii, including an 8 minute video with time-lapse photography. There is also something about more advanced techniques covering the use of CCD cameras to produce striking colour pictures of deep sky objects and the use of specialised filters to get round the problems of light pollution. This year there will be many new photographs from Nik.

Professor Bob Nichol University of Portsmouth (speaking from 1.30 pm to 2.30 pm)

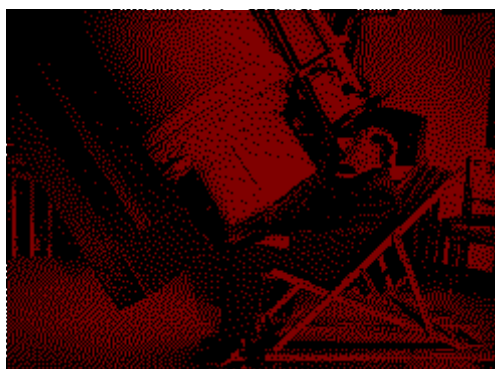


In May 2004, I moved back to the UK after 12 years in the US at Carnegie Mellon University and University of Chicago. It is good to be back, but I miss Chicago, friends, colleagues and American Football (Go Steelers!). In 2004 I was also awarded a Marie Curie Excellence Chair and thank the EU and University of Portsmouth for their

incredible support. I am now a Professor of Astrophysics at the Institute of Cosmology and Gravitation (ICG) at the University of Portsmouth. Bob is also involved with GalaxyZoo a project enlisting the help of the public in classifying galaxies www.galaxyzoo.org For more information about Bob please visit <http://dsg.port.ac.uk/~nicholb/>

Title: "GalaxyZoo."

Dr Graham Dolan, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich (speaking from 10.45 am to 11.45 am)



Graham Dolan is Senior Education Officer at the Royal Observatory in Greenwich and a fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society. His particular areas of interest include the Greenwich Meridian and the history of the Royal Observatory at Greenwich. He has written a number of books, including On the Line: the story of

the Greenwich Meridian. For more information about the National Maritime Museum visit

www.nmm.ac.uk

Picture credit © National Maritime Museum.

Title: “Connecting with the Past.”

50 years ago, in 1958, many of the equatorials saw first light in their new location at Herstmonceux. Of the five transferred from Greenwich, four were already over 50 years old, having been built in the 1880s and 1890s for William Christie, the 8th Astronomer Royal. This talk will look at how these instruments came to be commissioned, along with their subsequent history and use at Greenwich

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