

UNIVERSE

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TACHYON UNIVERSE DISCOVERED

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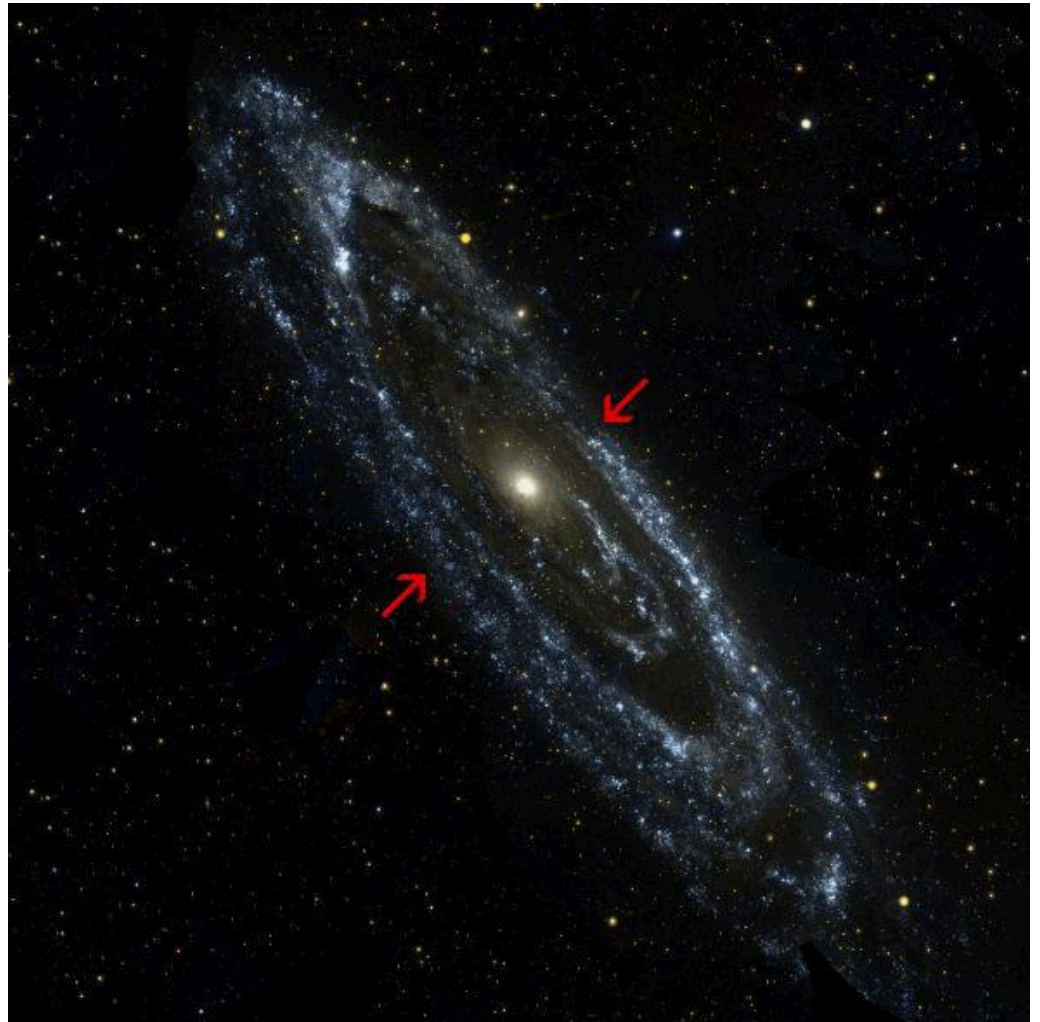
SPSP Recipes

Observatories:

Wiruna	33° 01'S	149° 46'E
Crago	33° 33'S	150° 37'E
Antarctica	89° 56'S	149° 64'E

The theory of multiple parallel Universes has gained growing acceptance amongst the top echelons of the Astronomy establishment in recent years, while at the same time positive evidence of such Universes has eluded researchers. Now for the first time there has been a breakthrough.

The 5km diameter Particle Accelerator at the Fort Davis Research Field Station of the University of Texas has been modified by the addition of four flux interferometers and a high-speed blink-comparator at the epicentre of the 200,000L hyperboloid tank of Carbon Tetrachloride situated in the Accelerator's focal plane.



*A Galaxy in The Tachyon Universe
(Arrows indicate the Tangents of Contraction)*

This modification was intended to measure the reactions of tachyons during neutrino surges in the continuing study of sub-atomic particles, but the accidental discovery was made during periods of solar maxima that the instrument had in fact become a gigantic wide-field telescope capable of electronically imaging, in a way not yet fully understood, a Universe composed entirely of combinations of tachyons.

(continued, page 2)...

TACHYON UNIVERSE DISCOVERED (CONT'D...)

(Continued from page 1)... Project Director Professor Audi Biemer announced preliminary findings yesterday at the University tricentenary dinner where he was keynote speaker.

Professor Biemer said that superficially the limited view so far obtained of the Tachyon Universe resembled our own with a significant exception.

It had been known that tachyons hitherto examined in our Universe had the ability to travel briefly back in time, but it seems that the Tachyon Universe is not expanding as is ours, but is actually contracting, while star forming as we know it is replaced by stars degrading into rotating masses of tachyon gases.

Also, some gas clouds are contracting into supernovae and shortly afterwards into massive stars.

In a mirror image fashion, the Tachyon Universe is contracting towards its very own big bang.

What the black holes are up to all this time nobody has yet figured out - maybe a blip between supernova and big star.

The Tachyon Universe seems to occupy the same time and space as ours but does not interact with it except in the limited fashion so far demonstrated by the modified Particle Accelerator.

LAWS OF SCIENCE REFORMED

Fresh from its reform of Australian Industrial Relations laws, the Australian Government has announced it will be introducing legislation to

implement long overdue reforms to the over complicated and unnecessarily lengthy body of scientific laws now burdening the Australian community.

Government spokesman Senator R.E. Taard said that going back to basics would make science simpler, easier to comprehend and cheaper to teach.

He said that the pure and logical science of Aristotle and Ptolemy had been burdened by a hodgepodge of unplanned add-ons by such persons as Galileo, Halley, Newton, Gauss, Fraunhofer, Franklin, etc, and particularly by the incomprehensibles e.g. Einstein, Fermi, Rutherford, and most recently by Hawking whose books he had read three times without understanding a word of them, not to mention those upstarts at NASA.

"Protected by Law" - Senator Taard said that the new, simpler laws of science would be protected by Federal law enacted by reliance on the corporations power contained in the Constitution.

"Corporations", he said, "manufacture things like toasters, cars and aircraft, and as they must use at least some scientific principles now and again, this clearly enables the Federal Government to do what it liked to scientific laws."

"The Astronomy of Ptolemy would be reinstated. The system of epicycles elegantly demonstrated what the Sun, Moon and planets appeared to do so what they actually did was not of much importance - let NASA worry about that."

"Besides, epicycles were easier for students to draw with high school geometry sets than those messy and complicated ellipses."

Also, the fact that the world was actually round ran contrary to popular concepts - road maps and atlases were flat, so that Flat-Earth concept would be restored and much easier for students and country members to understand.

As for chemistry, everything had been mixed with everything else and we knew what blew up, or made stink bombs or whatever so why all this stuff actually happened was not really important to know and damned expensive to research, so best left alone.

Medicine can be left to the doctors and drug companies, who have probably been improvising anyhow and giving everyone nothing but aspirin or snake-oil in different colours under a variety of labels at big mark ups.

There had been some discussion in Government about whether Intelligent Design should be taught as an alternate and this has much going for it. For one thing, you don't have to try to explain how and why. The science committee of the Snakey Gulley branch of the National Party had been asked to investigate this option and their preliminary report was positive.

They considered that there was strong evidence that the world and all in it including God himself was designed and created by the Grey Aliens as an intellectual exercise, with the exception of course of the US state of Kansas which had been sub-contracted to the Wizard of Oz.

The committee is still trying to figure out why the aliens designed nasal hair and nipples in men, the apparently redundant appendix in everybody, and Malaria,

Smallpox etc, but branch President Trevor Cowpat, Dip. Ed. who says he has been abducted and probed on several occasions, will ask them next time he is taken. He thinks that there must be an intelligent reason... Somewhere.

Meanwhile, there will be great savings in getting rid of thousands of science teachers and University science faculties.

The new (old) laws of science will be protected by law, and regulation making power will be delegated to the Science Committee of the Snakey Gulley branch to update, change, or rescind these laws any time they feel like it. They will, under the guidance of Trevor Cowpat, be carefully reviewing every episode of the X-Files and similar documentary programs.

And they maintain open minds, being quite prepared to accept the possibility that the Moon is not actually green cheese as per popular belief.

MONASTERY FOR WIRUNA

Inspired by the visit last year of a US philosopher-turned-Astronomer and in appreciation of the spiritual aesthetics of Astronomy, the "Awfully Clever Ideas Sub-Committee" of the Astrological Society of New South Wales has decided to establish a monastery on suitable acreage to be selected at Wiruna.

The main building will be a recycled, larger scale version of the eat-in-kitchen, and to encourage the true spirit of self-denial, sleeping will be done on grass mats on a concrete floor in sleeping bags fabricated from desiccated eucalyptus leaves.



*The New Monastery for Wiruna
(Currently Located in the Victorian High Country and under offer by the Society)*

Meals will be served once daily and will consist of a nourishing Vegan-approved soup rich in paspalum seeds, wattle pollen, and fine-ground gumnuts, while the purest water drawn directly from the dam will purge away all bodily impurities.

As well as contemplating each other's navels, novices will also learn to lie under the stars metaphysically hearing the music of the spheres and comparing naked eye observations of the Helix Nebula, Jupiter and Saturn's moons, and structural changes within the Homunculus. Approved attire will be saffron T-shirts and bicycle shorts and footwear will consist of Ho Chi Minh sandals.

A telescope will be provided but for ceremonial purposes only, inmates being expected to indulge their imaginations and spirituality rather than confuse their minds with perhaps unfortunate and incontrovertible observational evidence.

Society conservationist Col McMickle, an honours graduate of one of Australia's finest ashrams, has been asked to act as honorary guru until a full time guru can be found, and to carry out preliminary instruction in levitation, astral travel and vegetarian barbecue during the first semester.

It was intended that the first sod be turned at a ceremony at Wiruna on 1 May 2006 by the President of the United States Society of Astrologers but unfortunately his much anticipated visit to Australia has been cancelled owing to unforeseen circumstances.

**US APPOINTS FIRST
ASTRONOMER ROYAL**

Having put up with that candy-assed Constitution for over 200 years, the United States has finally come to its senses and restored the Monarchy under King George the W who assumes all the powers and functions as established in the reign of King Henry II.

This ensures the return of the strong and decisive government Americans enjoyed under George III without those wimps in congress trying to act as though they had some role in government. As a result, the White House has been re-named the Summer Palace, and the Senate becomes the new House of Lords with ceremonial functions only. Congressmen will be offered a handsome redundancy package.

Lord Cheney becomes Prime Minister & Master of the Hunt and Countess Condry the Foreign Minister, while Earl Rumsfeld

also assumes the duty of nine-star General. Exciting news for Astronomers comes from the fact that the post of Astronomer Royal is to be re instated.

Summer Palace spokesman the Honourable Orville T. Butmuncher said that a Knighthood had been conferred on Sir Rob Vanderson of Starsend Observatory, Fort Davis, and that Sir Rob would henceforth be America's first Astronomer Royal.

A Royal Charter has been conferred on the observatory, while Fort Davis becomes a Royal Duchy, with Sir Rob doubling as resident Squire.

However, as this new status raises security implications, the Director of Homeland Security has engaged retired General Oscar Bozo to survey the Duchy to ascertain whether additional permanent defences need to be installed to supplement the great wall of cactus currently being planted along the Rio Grande.

Sir Rob has proposed a modest upgrade to Starsend Observatory, beginning with a 120" optical telescope and a wine cellar with small bar and grill.

Sir Rob has also graciously condescended to formally become the patron of the Texas Star Party.

APRIL'S HORRORSCOPES

♈ Aries

Your big thrill is the moon passing vaguely through your sign this month, with the backup position of your stars shining on 160 million Australian sheep.

As all accredited astrologers know, this means you are woolly minded but cuddly until the

shearing season. Try to restrict your decisions to whom you should cuddle until then - though New Zealanders be warned that there are different laws in Oz.

♉ Taurus

Mars is in Taurus early in the month, parked between Zeta and Beta, and then wanders off to Gemini. This clearly means that any Taureans driving brewery wagons in Iraq this month had better be very careful to never park between an Abrams tank and a car bomb, without a valid parking permit and comprehensive life insurance, of course.

♊ Gemini

Taurus gets rid of Mars and flicks it to you later in the month to join minor planet 3-Juno, consort of the God Jupiter, top dog on Mount Olympus and a jealous bastard at that.

Geminis be warned - no hanky panky with the boss's wife, or hot pants secretary this month or war will be declared followed by unfair dismissal.

♋ Cancer

Saturn is in Cancer and for quite a while. Gloomy old goat, he was one of the geriatric Gods and not much help to you hard shelled crabs who will have to do intelligent tasks, like the Herald crossword puzzle, reading the Principia in the original Latin, or computing the value of pi (π) to 15 million decimal places to keep from going prematurely gaga. If this is beyond you, as most cancers are already well on the way, you may not be noticed.

♌ Leo

You noble, regal Leos will be heartened by minor planet 40-Harmonia in your sign this month, meaning you are in complete harmony with a stable government and stable Universe.

Our beloved Prime Minister John Howard is a Leo and nobly intends to not desert his post as Prime Minister until the job in Iraq is done, which means he will witness the next apparition of Halley's comet as Prime Minister.

♍ Virgo

Minor Planets 230-Athamantis and 30-Urania are in Virgo, while Jupiter is hanging about in the general direction of Libra.

Horny old God that he was, ravishing virgins in his various guises was his speciality, so female Virgos had better regard all propositions from attractive strangers with suspicion.

Keep a pepper spray or small cattle prod in your handbag and use it readily, or wear a badge proclaiming you carry the H5N1 virus.

♎ Libra

Jupiter is in your sign but leering at Virgo, so well balanced Librans should find their virtue to be not at risk. This may upset unbalanced Librans who usually find their virtue to be totally expendable and get uptight if nobody gives a damn, so burn your bra, or wear it outside your T-shirt, which should grab attention - particularly if you are male.

♏ Scorpio

Antares gets occulted this month, but this is not visible in Oz, so your personal star will shine brightly, helped by nicking that comet from Ophiuchus. In fact the brute bounces off the Trifid and M21 and M22. Result is that you shine, but bounce around like a hula dancer on a trampoline so do try to keep a sense of direction, avoid bumping people on public transport or being accused of sexual harassment - more often than usual, that is.

♆ Ophiuchus

Comet 71P-Clark is in your sign for a while before nicking off, so at least the solar system is paying you oppressed Ophiuchans SOME attention, which is more than most dumb astrologers do.

Flaunt yourself out socially any evening you can manage, and shimmy and shake that tail like a comet on heat and you will be the life of the party / pub crawl / group therapy session.

♐ Sagittarius

Having just flirted with Ophiuchus and Scorpio, that damned comet Clark invades your sign, which is your thrill of the month.

Having your luck determined by a used comet is a bummer, but it does mean that you draw on the experience of two lesser signs and as a result your usual wisdom, sagacity, and tendency to be a boring old fart will be mega enhanced. Bore away.

♑ Capricorn

It's all happening in your sign. God of the sea, Neptune is parked there (damn near forever) while Comet Linear is also there.

Keep the 19th free as minor Planet Ceres, Goddess of the harvest moves in. This clearly means that Capricornians who make a buck harvesting seaweed are in for a bumper crop on the 19th, particularly if they work by the light of the comet. Fortune is yours.

♒ Aquarius

Uranus, God of Dementia is in your sign and has been for a lifetime or two. This could be serious except that Aquarians are wise, gifted and artistic enough to shrug off such baleful influences.

Also helped by the fact that as the creative, artistic and musical aquarians generally aren't playing with a full deck anyhow, their generally rigid weirdness totally defies enhancement.

♓ Pisces

SFA happening in your sign this month unless a stray Puppis passes by, so Virgin Airways has been asked to route a few economy flights through on April 1st to give you a lift and a sense of being at peace with the Zodiac.

Generally this means you cold fish are keeping yourselves in your usual state of walking hibernation, undisturbed during April except by travel type experiences, so visit SPSP, or live it up.

Dine out at KFC, Burger King, or McDonalds, or if you are one of those rare Pisces with a devilish sense of adventure, ALL THREE in the one month.

TRUE REASON FOR GLOBAL WARMING

As all well read people know, anyone who does not subscribe to the currently fashionable theory of global warming being caused by human activity is either a fool or unfit to hold their job.

Consequently, whether they are academics determined to hold on to their tenure, journalists doing the usual newspaper beat up, or politicians travelling on the politically correct bandwagon, our opinion leaders flood the community with dire predictions and dodgy evidence.

Every time a beach erodes on some Pacific Island or a jerry-built shack falls into the sea we

are told the oceans are rising, despite the fact that citizens of Holland, Venice, and Bangladesh have not noticed a rise of as much as a millimetre.

All is due, we are told, to mankind sinning against the Earth Mother Goddess by burning fossil fuels and creating a runaway greenhouse effect and 99% of scientists say so.

Historically, 99% of scientists "knew" that the Earth was flat, that the Universe revolved around it, that the human heart and not the brain was the place of thinking and reasoning, that malaria was caused by bad air, and that Galileo and Copernicus were fruitcakes. All this has resulted in lots of energy being spent chasing after the wrong rabbit.

Water vapour creates a much stronger greenhouse effect than CO² and other greenhouse gases, while as for the latter, all human activity only accounts for 5% of the greenhouse gases released annually in to the atmosphere.

Human industrial and technical activity is far out-produced by farting ruminants - cattle, deer, zebra, wildebeest, kangaroos etc, so closing down coal fired power stations or banning motor vehicles will not amount to much - just a fraction of that damned 5%.

What is glibly overlooked in the debate is the infinite variability in the Earth's climate over millions of years.

Geological history indicates that for millions of years, ice ages have been the normal situation, while the interglacial periods such as we now enjoy are relatively short intervals between them.

It was significantly cooler 10,000 years ago and it might be said correctly that we are still emerging from the last ice age, an event which may well have wiped out the Neanderthals.

20,000 years ago, during the last glacial period, the dry windswept desert basin that is lake Mungo in western NSW was a watery Garden of Eden teeming with fish and wildlife, but there have been constant fluctuations.

Greenland was habitable by Norse settlers for the early part of the Middle Ages before a return to colder conditions.

There was a little ice age in Europe during the Napoleonic Wars at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century when the River Thames froze over during winter at London and fairs were held on the ice. If not greenhouse gas, what else?

What else has happened on a cyclical basis like ice ages?

Well, there have been regular reversals in the Earth's magnetic field at intervals ranging from as little as 5,000 years to as much as several millions of years with an average of around 200,000 years (the last being around 700,000 years ago), all identified by the magnetic signature in cooling materials containing iron, from pottery to lava and basalts, which can be historically or geologically dated.

And the precise location of Earth's magnetic poles vary, the North Pole by an average of 10 metres a year, but latterly 40 metres a year.

Hundreds of years of such movement are recorded in the ship's logs of Royal Navy

warships kept by the British Admiralty.

A full reversal can take as long as 5,000 years to complete, with weird effects going on, like the Earth having several different magnetic poles at the same time.

Also, since the 19th century, the intensity of the Earth's magnetic field has decreased by 10%.

Whether this signals that another reversal is imminent is not clear, as this may be a normal variation, but this decrease could still be enough to account for the slight global warming detected over the same period.

Weakening of the Earth's magnetic field results in a decrease in dangerous radiation being directed to the North and South Polar Regions where they produce Auroras, and an increase falling on the rest of the planet - the solar wind and what were popularly known as "cosmic rays".

During a full reversal, it would result in a dramatic increase in radiation-induced cancers, perhaps resulting in hundreds of thousands of deaths annually, and kinky effects from the multiple magnetic poles, like dramatic Aurorae being seen from Cairns or Tahiti.

That this increase in radiation can have significant effects on the Earth's weather processes and temperature has been totally overlooked by the global warming movement, which seems to be dominated by masochists driven to atone for imaginary guilt and able to duck and weave to avoid inconvenient facts.

And the mechanisms involved in the role played by the magnetic/radiation duo will

undoubtedly be established by accident during research directed at something else, as the scientific establishment, like petrol sniffers on a high, are too busy inhaling greenhouse gases to dream of being politically incorrect enough to look elsewhere.

Remember that Alternate Universe got there first.

REMOTE OBSERVATORY FOR ANTARCTICA

The CCD user group within the Astronomical Society of New South Wales has announced plans for the establishment of a remote observatory on the 3230 metre high summit of Mt Terror on Ross Island, Antarctica.

One of three volcanoes on the island, Mt Terror is safely dormant, not having erupted for at least a million years.

Adjacent Mt Erebus is still active, but is a safe distance away, and warm air flowing from this crater creates a steady laminar air flow, which is very dry, over the summit of Mt Terror that makes for superb seeing, while the altitude of Mt Terror and the fact that cloud cover does not extend to higher than 2,000 metres means that viewing is possible for 365 evenings a year.

Initial proposal is for a C-14 with an ST-11000E on a Paramount powered by a small NASA surplus plutonium reactor and installed in a Sirius dome.

A satellite dish will provide a remote link to the radio telescope dish at Wiruna via a geostationary satellite and will allow members to conduct some quality imaging.

Group member "Scratchy" has volunteered to spend the initial

month of operation camped at the summit for fine tuning and adjustment, pointing out that though a little chilly, the temperatures were not much lower than at Wiruna on a winter night, and that in any event his tent would be warmed by a two bar radiator powered by the reactor.

Proposals for imaging time on the telescope can be submitted to the group for discussion and approval at its monthly meeting.

AMAZING NEW REFRACTOR OBJECTIVE

For many years now fluorite apochromats have been the benchmark for excellence in compact short focus refractors, but this may change with the foreshadowed release of new diamond-based apochromats manufactured in the outback Queensland town of Winton.

Developed by the Arno Optical Company, of Wall Street, Winton, the prototype 3.7" f/6 diamond apochromat was secretly field-tested last year under the pristine sky found above the Paroo lizard-racing track at Eulo during the Eulo-Cunnamulla Festival Of Opals.

The light dome from the only building in Eulo was effectively masked using a standard beach umbrella.

Initial results were extremely promising: Sirius B was clearly seen using a 4.8mm Nagler and triple-Barlow, Beta Centauri was split without the need for a neutral density filter, and Deimos, Phobos, as well as Pluto's moon Charon were seen by using an occulting bar.

The objective consists of a triplet of a new complex optical design

to take advantage of the superior refractive index of diamond.

This has hitherto not been practical owing to the rarity and high cost of large, optical-quality diamonds.

However, after unsuccessful attempts to fuse low-grade industrial diamonds from the Argyle mine in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, a new direction was taken in synthesising diamonds using pure graphite.

The Arno Optical Company pioneered an explosive forming technique, and while precise details remain a trade secret, it is known that an explosive chamber was constructed using three surplus 3.7" anti-aircraft gun barrels.

A suitable amount of graphite was placed in the chamber and a carefully calculated amount of semtex exploded to crush the graphite under enormous pressure and heat against a precisely curved tungsten steel base, corresponding to the common curvature of one face of each of the three objective components.

In this way, thin lenses of high refractive index can be produced after grinding and polishing with diamond dust.

A dozen gun barrels had been secured which was fortunate, as during initial trials there were several explosive disassemblies until the right graphite/explosive combination was determined.

The diameter of the objective and hence the telescope was related to the size of the barrels, but the company is negotiating with the Australian War Museum for the loan of the 11" Amiens trophy

gun barrel on display outside the War Museum at Canberra.

Though not as long as the three combined 3.7" barrels welded end-to-end, it's greater thickness and quality Krupp manufacture, designed to send heavy shells for 30km, means that the shorter length can be compensated for by using a greater amount of explosive. The prospect of quality 11" apochromats will have CCD imagers world wide in a state of high excitement.

Though initial pricing of the 3.7" tube assembly is yet to be announced, the low cost of graphite and semtex suggests that once mass production commences, the finished telescope will cost less than half of the price of similar sized quality apochromats.

STONEHENGE REVEALED

For most of the past century, British historians had been trumpeting about and tarding up the Neolithic structures at Stonehenge in an attempt to paint a patina of respectability on our unwashed ancestors, for so long outclassed by the pyramids, the Parthenon, the cities of Babylonia, and Meso America, the Great Wall etc.

All sorts of cosmic, religious, cultural, scientific and mathematical intentions have been inferred by loyal Brits doing their damndest to turn a pile of old rocks on Salisbury plain into something greater than a pile of old rocks.

In recent months there has been a dramatic breakthrough.

Work was being carried out to enlarge the car park to cater for the hordes of re invented latter day Druids who descend on the

place to cavort around in bed sheets or surplus Ku Klux Klan outfits chanting the Welsh Edition of Lord of the Rings, for the amusement of US tourists, when workers uncovered a large stone, similar to those in the circle but which had collapsed owing to dodgy foundations and been buried by wind-blown dust.

Inscribed on the stone in the Phoenician script was a long diatribe in primitive Gaelic, which has just been translated by scholars from the University of Dublin.

By analysis of the allegory and other references, it seems clear that Stonehenge and similar Neolithic circles were constructed on behalf of interstellar visitors who spent the best part of a millennia bringing their anthropology students on field trips to Earth to study the development and interactions of primitive tribal society over several centuries, the visitors being a long lived species.

They engaged as building contractors Phoenician traders who had long been visiting Britain to trade for tin, and the Phoenicians employed as labourers local tribesmen who were instructed how to cut, haul rock, and arrange said rocks into totally useless structures so as to ascertain what social and developmental effects would take place over the centuries.

There was no suggestion of slavery being imposed, as this would have totally defeated the purpose of the exercise. The aliens had discovered that you could buy any British tribe for 6 months with 10 barrels of mead, a bucket of woad and a sack full of bronze ingots distributed by the Phoenician overseers.

Some interesting findings emerged.

It was seen that however useless the work or stone circles were, the workforce was happy to keep at it so long as the booze, war paint and metal was coming and if they could have regular work breaks for drunken orgies.

Though they did not have a clue or give a damn about the reasons they were doing all this work, the bludgers among them: shamans, prototype Druids and assorted self-appointed seers spent many happy hours trying to dream up likely reasons, when not heavily hung-over, and came up with much of the philosophical claptrap that their present day descendants have re invented.

The work came to an end after a thousand years, around 2000 B.C. as apparently this represented one semester at the University of Alpha Centauri A (Planet 4) and the funds allocated had by then been expended.

By this time, however, the ancient Brutish had finally figured out how to brew their own booze and make bronze without having to haul around rock and reverted to boozing/fighting/bludging type - in fact DNA testing of neolithic remains has established that the present generation of soccer hooligans and the Barmy Army are pure-bred descendents of the builders of Stonehenge.

The new findings will not be well received by the current load of academics making a career out of these old rocks and in fact one respected Professor has already been apprehended while trying to explode a truck load of ammonium nitrate on top of the inscribed stone, while the Druids, or those currently out on

day release, are rumoured to be positively livid under their nighties.

This unfortunate reaction totally overlooks the exciting fact that the existence of intelligent life in outer space has thus been confirmed, even if THEY utterly failed to find any intelligent life on Earth.

AUSTRALIAN SCIENTIST CAUGHT DEFYING GRAVITY

Google Earth has just provided proof of the successful outcome of recent anti-gravity experiments being conducted under the leadership of Professor Swanbrew of the Physics Department of the University of Western Australia.

In his thought provoking paper "*Gravity And Other Laws To Be Broken*", Professor Swanbrew had proposed that gravitational effects on Earth like planets could be neutralised for largely ferrous objects by careful alignment with the Earth's magnetic field.

By turning an elongated metal object into a bar magnet and aligning it's south pole with that of the Earth's, and vice versa, he considered that a sufficiently strong magnetic field could induce sufficient repulsion to neutralise gravitational effects on the metal object and lift it clear of the ground.

He said that the University had funded a series of experiments to be conducted on a 20-year-old 1.8 tonne Mitsubishi Pajero Station Wagon, as vehicles of this model and vintage had an almost uniquely uniform Ferro-luminescent signature along their whole length.

A series of four specially designed 9.8-volt turbo deep-



Satellite photo of the "floating" Pajero parked at the University's Physics Department (Photo courtesy of Google Earth)

cycle batteries strategically placed along the length of the car and wired to the iron chassis was to be used to generate the magnetic field while gyroscopically controlled-ion thrusters powered by solar cells were to be used to stop lateral movement.

The professor conceded that from a practical viewpoint, the inability of such a vehicle to point in any but a north-south direction could represent a serious inhibition in its use for general transportation.

However, as the wheels would not be in contact with the ground except when at rest, this objection could be overcome by moving sideways, though this could result in multiple lane use and some confusion for other road users trying to figure out just what direction the vehicle was moving at any given time.

These objections would, he said, be outweighed by less wear and tear on road surfaces, no costs for replacing tyres, and no emission of greenhouse gases.

Transportation companies using road trains between Perth and the eastern states were showing great interest, but as such vehicles were up to 50 metres long, they would need their own right of way, which would not require a hard surface but could be dirt cleared of obstructions.

Having their steering GPS-controlled was an obvious way to go.

Suitable operational altitudes were being debated, but initially it was considered that having east-west traffic travelling at 50 metres altitude and west-east traffic at 100 metres offered attractive safety features. Conservationists applaud the fact that Kangaroos and Wombats will no longer be hit by trucks.

An extension of the principle to shipping was also under consideration. "Had this been available during the 20th Century, the Titanic could have sailed 50 metres above that iceberg" he said.

For commercial reasons the University has kept the progress of its experiments secret, but by chance an aerial photo captured by Google Earth of the car park at the University physics department has provided proof of a stunning success. Professor Swanbrew has so far declined to comment, but said that a press statement would be issued soon.

JPL has shown great interest in using this system to power the launch of satellites and space probes, and has already commenced work of it's own, realising that as the strength of the Earth's magnetic field falls off rapidly with altitude it would be necessary to rely on initial velocity achieved at low altitudes and coast the rest of the way.

EARTH'S MOON TO ACQUIRE SATELLITE

The Near Earth Asteroid Survey being conducted at Siding Spring by the dynamic duo of Gordon Garage and Rob McZero has made an unusual discovery.

A 2km diameter asteroid designated 2006/6996 was initially detected in the southern constellation of Dorado, having an eccentric orbit considerably outside the plane of the Solar System.

Initial concerns that it was on a near collision course with Earth have been allayed by more refined calculations carried out at the Limpia Crossing Research Field Station of the University of Texas. These calculations show that en route to the vicinity of our planet the asteroid will pass near enough to the moon to be captured by lunar gravity and drawn into an elongated orbit around our hitherto only natural satellite.

In fact, at the extremity of this orbit the asteroid will sometimes pass as close as 400km from Earth, and approach the moon as closely as 200km in an 8 day long circuit.

The orbit is a degrading one, so while there is no long term prospect of the asteroid hitting the Earth, it will impact the moon in as little as 9,000 years.

NASA officials are jubilant at the use to which this can be put. Coming near the Earth to the same level as the uppermost ceiling of the space shuttle, a payload landed on the asteroid could hitch a ride to the moon and then detach itself from the asteroid's weak gravitational field and make a soft landing on the moon.

Alternatively, a space probe could hitch a ride and as the asteroid attains near maximum velocity launch itself towards one of the outer planets in a slingshot manner.

In addition, the asteroid could be developed as a space station, with on-site materials utilised in construction and the weak gravity of assistance to semi permanent residents.

The downside is of course that mental institutions are bracing themselves for an upsurge in the admission of patients with lunar related conditions, as the prospect of two moons could stimulate those with werewolf fixations or politicians with delusions of grandeur, which means of course most politicians.

In fact construction of an annex to Australia's Parliament house at Canberra to house an additional group therapy room and two extra padded cells has already been approved.

The Prime Minister is alert but not alarmed.

On the credit side, amateur astronomers have a whole new moon to observe, features to name, and mystery objects to look for or imagine and argue about.

However, a ferocious dogfight amongst astrologers for a permanent name of their choice has tended to overshadow the joy, because as we all know the name given to a heavenly body determines what beneficial or baleful effects it has on those whose zodiacal sign it invades.

For example, card carrying Republican astrologers in the US who are advising the White House on economic and foreign policy are pushing for a butch name, like Terminator while their Democrat rivals prefer something green like Kermit. British astrologers want Pooh Blair. Provisionally named Buffy, the new moon should be visible in amateur scopes from April 1 2006.

CLASSIFIEDS

For Sale: Thermal underwear. Hand knitted from extra fine Alpaca wool produced by the top Alpacary at Cooks Gap.

Three centimetres thick, the innovative design incorporates Bathurst Burrs carefully inserted at the rate of one per square centimetre, guaranteed to stimulate the skin and produce a warm glow or some sensation or other every time you move. One size fits all - \$99.95.

Contact: Scots Muesli at the Humpty, Wiruna any New Moon weekend, or Spike Myth at the Tee & Pee Shop, Sydney.

For Sale: Observing Elixir. A healthy tonic as developed by Albigenian monks in 1232.

Made from eleven secret herbs and spices, it stimulates night vision by expanding the eye's pupil to 3cm diameter, while inducing rhapsody and heavenly visions if more than one litre per night is ingested.

Also is effective for un-dewing optics and removing dried grasshoppers from car paintwork.

A mere \$50 per 10L barrel, from the Sofala fertiliser factory, Main Street, Sofala.

NEW SPACE SUIT SATELLITE

Big news for the Astronomical community on February 4, 2006, was the new and very temporary satellite launched from orbit from the partially completed International Space Station.

For the information those who were in deep sleep therapy at the time and so missed the news, the two resident Astronauts took an old space suit that had passed its use by date, stuffed it with junk they wanted to be rid of (empty vodka bottles etc, plus a small radio) and launched it onto a slow re-entry orbit.

This endeavour greatly edified amateur Astronomers who were trying hard to observe it, and ham radio guys listening for its death chant.

Spurred on by this success, the Astronauts have decided to do an encore to coincide with the principal day of the South Pacific Star Party, namely Saturday April 1, 2006.

Though the entire Space Station was only partly completed before

the temporary grounding of the Space Shuttle fleet, the Space Station's amenities block was the first module to have been totally assembled in anticipation of catering to the needs of a large multinational crew instead of, as has happened, the two or three who so far have been in residence.

However, this largesse has been compromised by the lack of the regular sanitation removal service following temporary groundings of the space shuttle fleet, with the result that two of the six zero-gravity toilet assemblies have, to put it politely, reached their design capacity.

As they are taking up valuable room and there is no Space Shuttle visit planned for the immediate future it has been decided to eject both into a degenerative orbit which should have them completing 97 circuits of the Earth before final re-entry after about a week. Forecast date is 8 April 2006 at 12:00 UTC.

True to their scientific principles, the Astronauts have rejected proposals to name these objects Uranus One and Uranus Two, but instead as they are full of it, have called them Johnny and Tony.

Both will be fitted with radios, which, from an endless circuit, will broadcast the most stirring and erudite speeches of John Howard and Tony Blair respectively. Political opponents have suggested that no better way could be devised to keep unfriendly aliens well clear of planet Earth.

Calculations suggest that the chances of the resultant debris reaching the ground are a virtual certainty, so in order to make their return to Earth a very

special event, the orbits are designed to terminate over Roswell, New Mexico, which has been waiting 50 years for something like this to happen again and which has arranged a tasteful and refined welcoming festival.

There will be twenty four Elvis impersonators in blue suede space boots doing line-dancing, a grey alien look-alike competition (no makeup allowed, in the hope that a genuine grey alien might be attracted by the \$10,000 first prize), five hundred chorus girls, each carrying a flag to represent the 500 Earth-like planets computed by the Roswell Astral Travel Agency to be orbiting between our Solar System and Alpha Centauri, and an open invitation and free seats to those visitors from the future who may decide to travel back in time to witness this historic event.

Ringside seats situated at Ground Zero, the E. New Mexico State Fairgrounds, corner of South East Main Street and Hobbs Street, Roswell, at only US\$100 (safety helmets \$10 extra) have been available for some weeks, while the organisers have announced plans to sell vitrified coprolites by the gram, handcrafted as costume jewellery.

RARE OCCULTATION

Observers at Wiruna during February new moon were able, in spite of the patchy weather, the view a very rare and fleeting event - the occultation of the South Galactic Pole (SGP) by newly discovered Near Earth Asteroid GPS-WD40.

Astroimagers Chris Cross and David Colored-Beard, the latter currently using an experimental superheated steam-powered

CCD camera, are reliably rumoured to have considered attempting to image the event, but at the point of publication any success by them has yet to be confirmed.

Asteroid GPS-WD40 was discovered during August 2005 during the Near Earth Asteroid survey conducted at Siding Spring Observatory by Gary Gordon and Rob McZero. Radar observations suggest that the asteroid is an irregular object about 5km by 2km and a high level of interest was shown by the international Astronomical community as to whether careful observation of the occultation could shed light on the size and nature of the mysterious SGP.

This latter object was discovered at the Cape of Good Hope by John Herschel during his famous southern hemisphere survey in the early part of the 19th century.

Herschel was not prepared to accept the existence of dark nebulae as conventional wisdom was that all nebulae were illuminated and that any dark areas were actually voids between the stars.

However, it has since been theorised by researchers at the Astronomy Department of the University of Burgerweldt that the rotation of the Earth creates vortices at the axis of rotation, that is, the North and South Galactic Poles, to which are channelled a quantity of the fine particles that normally make up the zodiacal light and the gegenschein.

The anomaly is that while such particles are seen by illumination when near the zenith, they do not apparently reflect light when at the North and South Polar Regions and it has been conjectured that the Earth's

magnetic field in some subtle fashion gravitationally lenses near Earth lighting sources at the North and South Poles away from our line of sight.

It may well be that a similar effect may diminish the light of the occulting asteroid, and that, for example, Polaris is actually brighter than Sirius but dimmed by several magnitudes owing to it's proximity to the pole. Results of observations by other Astronomy centres are awaited with interest.

HISTORIC TRACTOR AT WIRUNA

Visitors to Wiruna will be familiar with the wreckage of the old steam tractor in the clump of trees to the left of the entry road. It has been there so long that some trees are actually growing through components of the tractor.

Long assumed to be a relatively common and therefore worthless hunk of junk, Professor Eton Harrovian, Laucasian professor of Tautology at the University of Oxbridge, made an amazing discovery in January while visiting Wiruna in the course of his study tour of Australian rehabilitation facilities.

While photographing the tractor he decided to file away the rust obscuring the serial number and on obtaining and referring this to the Royal Society discovered that it was a long missing historical relic. It seems that the tractor had been sold direct from the factory to Lord Rosse of Parsonstown and used by him in a stationary capacity to provide power to grind and polish the 72 inch mirrors of the famous 6 foot telescope as well as the lathes, drills and shapers used to fabricate metallic components of

the big scope. On completion of the telescope, it had been known that Lord Rosse had sold the tractor to an export company, but just who the tractor had been sold to or even what country it had gone to was unknown.

However, knowing where to start looking, he now discovered NSW railway freight records showing that a steam tractor had been sent from Darling Harbour by train to Bathurst in 1861, and historical records in that city refer to Cobb and Co being contracted to transport the dismantled tractor to Sofala where it was used to power the hoist and the crushing battery at the Nuggetty Gulley mine until 1880 when the gold gave out and it was sold to a local farmer for farm work.

Great interest has been shown in Ireland to this discovery and an initial approach to the Society has been made on behalf of a distinguished Irish distillery which wants to buy the relic and present it to the Irish nation.

Debate is now raging amongst Wiruna regulars about whether to sell the tractor for cash or for whisky (for medicinal purpose only, on cold nights at Wiruna)

TRAVELLING ASTRONOMER

Darling of the Hawkesbury Astronomical Society, Richmond Windsor has just returned from the Kimberley region of Western Australia, where he was busy observing far northern objects with his travelling 12 inch dobsonian. He found that last October all of the brighter globular clusters in M31 were easily seen as the galaxy was very high indeed.

From latitude 18°S, he said he could easily see all but a handful of the more famous northern

Messiers and being in the Kimberleys, with an area as big as Texas but a population of less than thirty thousand, it was very easy to find a dark site, providing you did not mind sharing it with wild pigs, Taipans, Crocodiles and other noxious reptiles.

On his return trip in his famous FJ Holden Ute, he dropped in to Dunedoo to observe for a few nights with equally famous Emmanuel Snodgrass and to buy a few of his surplus tiger snakes to act as rat catchers in his barn on his farm at Wilberforce.

Richmond made several valuable suggestions to Emmanuel, including the idea of putting a red-dot finder on the finder scope attached to his binocular Telrads.

As nothing generating comparable excitement had happened in Dunedoo since the great cart-horse dysentery epidemic of 1892, and no other famous people ever condescend to actually stay at Dunedoo, town dignitaries were quick to arrange a Civic Reception for Richmond in the Mechanics Institute Hall, where after a sumptuous dinner of spit-roasted hairy-nosed wombat and hard-boiled potato he was presented with the symbolic keys to the town - actually in very practical fashion the keys to the toilets at the local service station, but gold plated and mounted on a handsome mulga wood shield.

Richmond will give an account of his travels during the next field night of the Hawkesbury Society held in the car park of the Pub just over the road from Richmond McDonalds.

Visitors from other clubs are cordially invited to attend and to consume all the beer they can keep down (and pay for).

EXISTENCE OF EXTRA TERRESTRIALS CONFIRMED?

Researchers from the University of Burgerweldt Radio Astronomy facility at Rattsharz have made a preliminary report in respect of mystery transmissions received over the past year by its BBA (Bloody Big Array).

While measuring the background microwave radiation in the interstellar region between members of the Virgo galaxy cluster, a highly directional recurring signal was detected and submitted for analysis by the university operation SETI facility which has supercomputer hardware and sophisticated software directed particularly at unravelling binary codes.

Initial decoding, subject to a 10% error factor relating to decoding and precise meanings assigned to certain terms infer that the 12 minute long message may well be a declaration of war on all neighbouring galaxies.

Attempts to pinpoint the actual source of the transmissions were assisted by their being from a spot on the ecliptic, and by timing the interruption of transmission by the passage of the Moon, the likely source was a small, 18th magnitude dwarf galaxy, apparently with delusions of grandeur or compensating for an inferiority complex.

Decoding suggests that those sending the message were declaring war on all neighbouring galaxies, but exactly what constitutes a neighbouring galaxy to a member of the Virgo cluster is unclear. Our galaxy is technically not a member though it could be argued that we are a fellow traveller on the fringe of

the associated Centaurus galaxy cluster.

Data and preliminary findings have been transmitted to other research facilities in other countries and apparently intercepted by the NSA security and surveillance program and referred by them to Senator Richard Head, Chairman of the Bananas Republican faction within the GOP.

Senator Head was reportedly incensed by the effrontery of such a declaration being directed at our galaxy and has pressed for a response, saying that "if they declare war on us then damn it we should declare war right back on them". He said that since the abdication of the Senate from the business of government, sorting out potential intergalactic problems was a useful new retirement role for Senators to play at. When told it would take approximately 43 million years for a radioed reciprocal declaration of war to reach the appropriate area within the Virgo cluster the senator said that this only demonstrated that there was not a moment to lose.

His Democrat opponents consider that this initiative by Senator Head is just an attempt to make trouble for an incoming Democrat administration as the war on terror could well be over by the time the aliens receive any message from Earth. The Australian ambassador in Washington said that Mr Howard was alarmed but not alert.

University of Burgerweldt researchers have asked for cross checking by other institutions in case the message is a hoax, has been wrongly decoded, is directed at someone else, or has passed its use by date.

As time is on our side, this publication will not over react but will await and report on further developments in its next issue.

SPSP RECIPES

Nicotine Patch Substitute

As all well informed amateurs know, US military research has established that nicotine severely degrades night vision by shrinking blood vessels communicating with eye and brain - about as lethal as a Hummer on high beam except for longer duration. Therefore, aversion therapy for smokers: Fine-grind six (6) pellets of freeze-dried kangaroo droppings, add a finely grated funnel web (preferably female - greater mass and less venom), soak in 30ml of cheap bourbon for two hours adding one drop of Tea Tree oil after one hour, and then dry in the sun for two days. Pack into a clay pipe and smoke for 10 minutes while gazing intently at a pack of your favourite coffin nails. Smoking will never be the same again.

Iris Coffee

Want to observe till dawn and then observe Sun spots all day? In a large coffee mug put six (6) dessert spoons of instant coffee, 300ml Red Bull, two crushed No Doz tablets and top off with high octane cola. Sip steadily until your eyes are like saucers - additional advantage is that no mosquitoes will fly within two metres of you. However, daylight COULD find you not commencing your Solar observing program, but instead stumbling around the eastern (lower) observing field bumping into trees, cars, people, pit toilets etc. Caution. Do not ingest if you are in frail health, taking any prescribed medication or are of tolerably sound mind.

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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, please dim your headlights, turn right through the main gate, then immediately right past the main office entrance, proceeding about 50 metres to a small car park area. Adjacent to this is the "West Door", which is our entrance. It is advisable to park your car in this area, and walk up the stairs to the Meeting Hall, as it can sometimes be a little difficult to hear the speaker if you are sitting downstairs.

All meetings start at 8pm sharp. The doors will be opened at 7.45, 7.55 and 8.10pm. If you arrive after 8.10pm, knock loudly on the door to attract the attention of the attendant, who works in the adjacent office. There may be a short delay before answering, and this is normal, however if, after 5 minutes, you are still waiting, try prying the doors open using a crowbar or similar, and if this is ineffective, the glass doors should shatter upon impact with a hard sharp blow with that same crowbar.

ALTERNATE UNIVERSE EDITOR

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SOCIETY DIARY

31 March to 2 April	South Pacific Star Party at Wiruna	A great chance for all astrologers to see what stars actually look like, identify a constellation for perhaps the first time, and generally have their faith tested.
7 April	Meeting	The Hon Emmanuel Snodgrass, JP speaking on how to collimate your Telrad and which Barlow to use with it. Includes a demonstration of binocular Telrads.
14 April	Full Moon-ish and Good Friday	1. Near enough to Full Moon to avoid certain members with excess body hair. Don't be accused of discrimination so stay at home and surf the net. 2. Arrival of Dr Tom Cometencke, visiting Professor of Saurian Prosthetics at the University of Texas for his State Visit.
22 April	Last Quarter Moon observing at Crago	Use various filters to see which best obscure the sky glow of Sydney. Also finish off any left over Star Port from the South Pacific Star Party.

DISCLAIMER

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