

# Thanet Astronomy Group

Astronomy for Everyone in Plain English

## NEWS LETTER

October 2014



**Gill's MAD Four**  
music Arts Dance  
Children's Entertainer  
Old-fashioned Parties with a Madonx Theme!  
Suitable for ages 4-11 yrs  
£50 prices supplied  
Contact 01843 848064 E-mail gillpalmer13@gmail.com

This space is reserved for promoting member's businesses. You can place an advert here for a donation to the group. Minimum Donation value is at the discretion of the Executive committee.

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## About the Cover Picture



Pleiades

This is a picture of the open star cluster Pleiades, also called the Seven Sisters. Pleiades is part of the constellation of Taurus and marks the shoulder of the bull and can be seen in the evening sky at this time of year.

You may have noticed that we like this open star cluster a lot, so much that we chose it as our logo.

Pleiades is one of the nearest star clusters to Earth and is the clearest and easiest to see by eye of all the clusters. When looked at with even a small telescope the true beauty of the cluster begins to be visible.

When looked at with a large telescope you can see the illuminated dust cloud around the stars glowing as in the picture above. This cloud of dust was thought to be leftover from the formation of the cluster, and this is why the Pleiades is sometimes called the Maia Nebula.

Today we know the dust cloud is nothing to do with the cluster and that it's just an unrelated cloud of dust the star cluster is passing through.

Danny Day.

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## **Thanet Astronomy Group Contact Details**

### Executive Committee

Chairman	Daniel Day	01843 228 904
Treasurer	George Ward	01843 292 640
Secretary	Gill Palmer	07543 943 245

### Committee

Volunteers	George Cozens	07970 181 395
Members	Sheila Bull	07791 892 057
News Letter	Carol Butt	TBA
Library	Janet McBride	01227 364 092
Web Site	Danny Day	01843 228 904

## **Member's Meeting Dates and Times**

### **Thanet Astronomy Group** **Member's Meetings** **Dates and Times**

4th June 2014 at 8pm

2nd July 2014 at 9pm

6th August 2014 at 9pm

3rd September 2014 at 8pm

1st October 2014 at 7.30pm

5th November 2014 at 7.30pm

3rd December 2014 at 7.30pm

7th January 2015 at 7.30pm

4th February 2015 at 7.30pm

4th March 2015 at 7.30pm

1st April 2015 at 7.30pm

6th May 2015 at 7.30pm

All Member's meetings will be held at the West Bay Cafe,  
Sea Road, Westgate-on-sea, Kent. CT8 8QZ

## What we did last month

Our Saturday afternoon sessions at West Bay Cafe continue to be popular and attract much attention, as do our Thanet Gazette monthly article and our website, which Danny is continually expanding, ( the website not Danny ). We also have the welcome support of many of our members, some of whom bring along their scopes, which makes for a great atmosphere and a pleasant way of spending a Saturday afternoon with like minded friends.

Our monthly meeting on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September, coincided with the first anniversary at the West Bay Cafe, so we marked the occasion with a buffet and social evening. It was a well attended and successful event. After expenses we improved the bank balance with some much needed funds.

The raffle prizes were, I think, unique. One year's free membership, won by Tony Clifford. Danny offered an hour of his IT services, won by Tony and Shirley Palmer. Gill offered a multiple choice (typical teacher) of a Drawing of your house, a Mad Children's Party or a Music Lesson, won by Carol Butt.

Sheila, (Membership secretary) suggested that the Star Prize should be auctioned. This prompted a bidding war. The prize was an evening with George W in his observatory, looking at the stars with his 925 Celestron telescope. We are delighted to say this was won by our youngest astronomer, George Harvey, with a winning bid of £67. Congratulations to all winners.



One year at West Bay Cafe Celebrations



TAG at the Ramsgate Vikings Model Boat Club.

A big thank you to everyone who helped - to Gill for baking the cake, her sister Lin who organised the music, to George C, Freda, and Sheila for their assistance.

Donations this month include magazines, books and a very impressive telescope. To find out more go to the donations page on our website. To date we have 33 paid members, and it's worth mentioning that, apart from Westgate and Margate, we have members from Ramsgate, Broadstairs, Birchington, Herne Bay, Beltinge and Canterbury.

We were invited to set up a stall at two local events. The Ramsgate Vikings Boat Club and the Westgate Community Centre Family Fun Day. These events were very well attended and helped to raise the public awareness of our group. Thanks to the organisers for inviting us and those that helped.

George Ward.  
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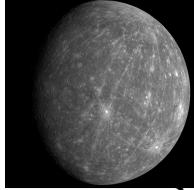
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## Junior Members Page

George Harvey (JAC & Gill Chairman) has suggested this very useful way to help remember the planets and their order from the Sun.

**My – Very – Easy – Method – Just – Speeds – Up - Names**

**My**            **Mercury.....>**



**Very**            **Venus.....>**



**Easy**            **Earth.....>**



**Method**            **Mars.....>**



**Just**            **Jupiter.....>**



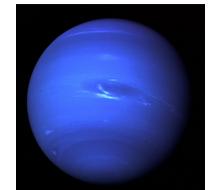
**Speeds**            **Saturn.....>**



**Up**            **Uranus.....>**



**Names**            **Neptune.....>**



If you really wanted to include the now demoted Pluto you could use :-**My Very Easy Method Just Speeds Up Naming Planets.**

George Harvey  
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# WEST BAY CAFE

Sea Road - Westgate-on-Sea  
CT8 8QZ



The Cafe is on the promenade at the bottom of the cliff, opposite the junction of Sea Road and Rowena Road.

**Access** :- via a flight of steps behind the cafe.

**Disabled Access** :- via the main entrance to the bay and a slope at the cafe door.

West Bay Cafe is your local Sea side cafe, Run by Alan and Kate.

It has a very friendly atmosphere.

There is a wide variety of good food and drinks at very reasonable prices and there are always special offers.

There is seating both inside the cafe and outside for those extra hot days.

# **WEST BAY CAFE**

**Sea Road - Westgate-on-Sea  
CT8 8QZ**

**Sun sets at the West bay cafe, with a meal some friends, and a pint or two. What more could you ask for!**



West Bay Cafe have hosted Thanet Astronomy Group since September 2013. We would like to say a

**HUGE THANK YOU to Alan and Kate**

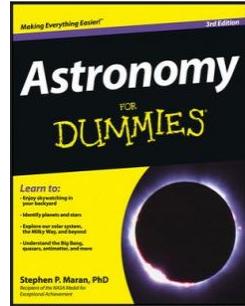
for all the help and support they have shown us over the last year.

Please use this Brilliant Seaside Cafe and Tell Your Friends.

## Book review

One of my many weaknesses (and I have a few), is for books, in particular, astronomy books. I have a collection of about 30 of them and growing. It's not often that I walk out of a book shop without a copy or two tucked under my arm, (after having paid of course).

Despite the wonderful array of information available to us on the internet,(**in particular our website**), I just love the feel and smell of a book.



One such book I bought earlier this year was, **Astronomy for Dummies** 3<sup>rd</sup> edition by Stephen P Maran, PhD, price £16.99, as with most things it pays to shop around. I think I remember paying about £5 or there about. I've bought many of my books from **The Works**, either at Wyevale at Dumpton or in Canterbury. Oooo! I almost forgot to mention, charity shops, a valuable source. I recently purchased a copy of **Astronomy Photographer of the year**, in a charity shop in Sittingbourne, price £2.50 and discovered later that it was signed by Brian May.

Astronomy for Dummies is not full of beautiful pictures, as are most astronomy books, but it has 338 pages packed mainly with text, including diagrams and useful tips. It will have most of the answers to most of your questions. It explains things such as gravity, black holes ,meteors and comets, the big bang, galaxies, nebulae, constellations and how telescopes and binoculars work. All in all a darn good read and great value for money.

George Ward

# What's in the sky this month

## Tip for measuring degrees.

Extend your arm forward palm facing outward. The width of your hand, including your thumb, represents roughly 10°.

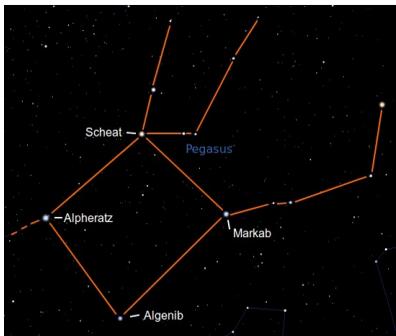
## **Great Square of Pegasus**

This is an asterism, (a recognisable formation of stars). It is a part of **Pegasus** the constellation.

At 8:00pm look East 90° and up 35° above the horizon, you will see the star. **Alpheratz** 97 light-years away, this forms the left corner of the square. It's one of a few stars to feature in two constellations as it's also included in **Andromeda**.

**Alpheratz** shares it's orbit with another star, making it a binary system. It's name is derived from the Arabic word meaning, "The Horse's Navel".

Up 10° and to the right 10° (one hand width) is **Scheat**, a red super giant, 196 light-years away. Below 10° and right another 10° is **Markab**, Arabic for "The Saddle of the Horse" 133 light-years away. Then below 10° and to the left 10° is **Algenib**. This completes **The Great Square of Pegasus** at a distance of 391 light-years.



The Great Square of Pegasus



M31 and Andromeda

## Andromeda

Go left from **Alpheratz** 15° and down 4° this leads you to the red giant **Mirach** in the constellation **Andromeda**, probably better known for it's galaxy M31.

Now up about 11° and you arrive at the galaxy of **Andromeda**. The Galaxy of Andromeda is a fuzzy blob, our nearest galactic neighbour, 2.6 million light-years away. **Andromeda is said to be the furthest object visible to the naked eye** but, in our light polluted sky, binoculars will be helpful.

George Ward

## **Member's Page**

### Happy One Year at West Bay Cafe

A year ago, almost to the day,  
Whilst walking along West Bay  
I came across a very peculiar sight!  
A variety of telescopes  
With three clever looking blokes  
Who asked me what I did at night!!!

One showed me a spot on the sun  
Which I thought was rather fun  
But I didn't realize how hooked I would be!  
Since then, I've changed my view  
Followed by others, who are curious too,  
To share this amazing hobby of "Astronomy"!!!

At Alan's café, it's now a regular sight  
To see the Group both day and night  
Searching for planets, stars and even WW2 Forts!  
We look and learn about galaxies  
Constellations, ISS and satellites  
And often chat about our curious thoughts!

So Members...now it's over to you  
We welcome all your points of view  
On how to enlighten our Astronomical interest  
From talks and trips...  
To telescope tips...  
Together we'll make TAG our own Space Quest!

Freda Martin September 2014

## Telescope Review

This month we were very lucky to have been donated a Carl Zeiss Telementor 2 63/840 Refractor by Sally and Rob. This Telescope belonged to Rob's Dad, *Patrick James Madle, 1926 – 2003*.

The telescope has a well deserved reputation of being a quality refractor, not surprising as it is made by Carl Zeiss. We will be bringing this telescope along to some of the Saturday meetings and to night viewing meetings for the public and members to see and use.



Carl Zeiss Telementor 2 63/840 Refractor



*Patrick James Madle, 1926 – 2003.*

Above is a picture of the Carl Zeiss Telementor 2 63/840 Refractor telescope with George's camera attached and a picture of Patrick James Madle, 1926 – 2003.

The Telescope has an object lens diameter  $D=63\text{mm}$  and a long focal length of  $F=840\text{mm}$ . This makes it an  $F/13.3$  ( $840/63$ ). We have also tested it with George's camera attached and were surprised at the results. This is a truly nice telescope. We can't wait for a clear night to try it out on some planets and deep sky objects.

The telescope has a rare focusing system where it moves the objective lens (the big lens at the front) up and down the tube, rather than moving the eye piece. The lenses are of very good quality and will produce very good images of planets and deep sky objects.

Our thanks out go to Sally and Rob for this very kind donation.

Danny Day.

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## JAC & Gill

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2014

What a super Summer evening to go Shooting Stargazing with friends...except that the full moon was a little too bright! Together we counted 15 meteors.



A very big thanks to all 15 of our Juniors for staying up past their bedtime to help us to hunt for shooting stars and all the adults who helped to keep them safe on the promenade!

There were over 60 of us altogether on the night and although we did not see as many meteors as predicted, we were able to view many familiar constellations.

Cassiopeia (the big W in the North East), Ursa Major (the Great Bear), Ursa Minor (the Little Bear) and Cygnus the Swan flying through the Summer Triangle of Vega, Deneb and Altair. Reach for the stars everyone!

Gill Palmer.

## **Executive Committee Messages**

### Getting our group known

The Executive Committee would like to say a big Thank You to all of our members that helped us with the events at the Boating Lake Ramsgate and the Community Centre Westgate.

These events are very important to the group because they raise the level of public awareness that our group exists.

### Your News Letter

Welcome to the first Issue 001 of your news letter, we hope you find it interesting and helpful.

Remember this is your news letter, let us know what sort of articles you would like to see in it.

### The Web Site

There are a few changes/additions to the web site this month. We have changed the Links down the left side to be mostly in alphabetical order, with the exception of the Home Page link which remains at the top.

There are 3 NEW PAGES :-

Donations Page, where we have listed all the very kind donations we have received.

TAG & FAS News Letter Pages. Go to the Members page and these two new pages will appear in the links on the left under the Members link. You will be able to view, download and print the News Letters.

Note :-

The FAS News letter is 21 pages of A4

The TAG News letter is 12 pages of A5

(-: Wishing you all Clear Skies :-) Danny, George, Gill.

## **Member's For Sale and Wanted**

This page is for members to place items for Sale and Wanted adverts.

Please let us know if you have anything you would like on this page.

Email us at : - [thanetastronomygroup@gmail.com](mailto:thanetastronomygroup@gmail.com)