

The Observatory

The Observatory is open every Tuesday evening for members' informal meetings and observing if the sky is clear. It is in Rue du Lorier, behind the large bunker which is about 100 metres up the road from La Houquette School. Telephone 264252.

The meeting room includes seating for 20 people, a ceiling-mounted projector, computer with broadband internet access and astronomical software, a library and basic kitchen.

A separate building with a run-off roof houses a permanently-mounted computer-operated 16-inch Meade Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope and a 5-inch Takahashi refractor, with a laser pointer. An 11-inch Celestron telescope is mounted on a trolley, and is wheeled onto a concrete pad with electricity supply. Imaging can be carried out with a webcam, a CCD camera, or members' own equipment.



There is additional lawned space for further telescopes. A 6-inch sidereostat is used for observing the Sun. Hand-held lasers are used to indicate constellations, the positions of celestial objects, and passing satellites.

Meetings and observing activities

The Section sometimes holds talks and discussions during its Tuesday meetings. Frequently these focus on questions raised by members, and personal research into them. Meetings are also held when there are special events, such as eclipses. Occasional formal lectures are held, given by members or visiting speakers; some are held at La Société's lecture theatre at Candie Gardens.

Observing and research projects are carried out by groups and by individual members, according to their own interests. These include, for example: imaging, spectroscopy, celestial mechanics, planets, the Moon, comets, eclipses, double stars, deep sky objects, history, satellites and cosmology.



Comet Hale-Bopp (1997, David Le Conte)

The Observatory library contains a large collection of books, which members can borrow, together with some DVDs and CD Roms. The Section has subscriptions to the major astronomical magazines, and is a member of the British Astronomical Association, the Federation of Astronomical Societies, and the Society for Popular Astronomy.

Each August we hold a barbecue to coincide with the Perseid meteor shower. In December we gather for a Christmas dinner at a local hostelry.

Membership benefits & how to join

Members can attend all meetings, and have access to the telescopes and other equipment, learning from the experience of other members.



The Orion Nebula
(Matt Skillett)

Members also receive an annual newsletter, *Sagittarius*, which contains Section news, details of forthcoming events, and articles written by members. An annual Astrocalendar provides monthly star charts, planet positions, and other phenomena.

If you are interested in joining, we suggest that you first come along to one or two of our Tuesday meetings as a guest.

Members of the Astronomy Section must be members of La Société Guernesiaise, the details of which are available at www.societe.org.gg, tel 725093. Current (2017) annual subscription rates are: single £25, double/family £30, students £5.

Section members are asked for a small additional annual subscription to cover the cost of newsletters, etc and support the Section (single £7, family £10, student and OAP £4).

For further details email astronomy.gg@cwgsy.net.

Remember, you do not have to know anything about astronomy to be a member – just have an interest in the subject. To join, please complete and submit the form overleaf.

Membership application form

La Société Guernesiaise Astronomy Section

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Post code _____

I confirm that I am a member of La Société Guernesiaise.

Signature _____

Telephone: Home _____ Work _____

Email _____

Type of Astronomy Section membership (tick one):

Adult (£7) Family or double adult (£10)

OAP (£4) Junior or student (£4)

(Juniors may also be interested in joining the Junior Section of La Société Guernesiaise.)

Please send this form, with payment (to La Société Guernesiaise Astronomy Section) to the Section Treasurer: Colin Spicer, 60 Mount Durand, St Peter Port, Guernsey GY1 1DX.

If you are not a Guernsey resident and not a member of La Société Guernesiaise you may subscribe to *Sagittarius*, the Section's newsletter, and come to the Observatory when visiting the island. Tick here as an overseas subscriber (£7)

Outreach activities

The Section is keen to encourage public knowledge and understanding of astronomy, and to extend its facilities to the wider community. Open evenings are held on some Thursdays, particularly during the summer school holidays. They include observing with the telescopes, talks and PowerPoint presentations. Many locals, children and visitors attend these events. A small donation is suggested.

The Observatory is a popular venue for group visits, by



adults and children, primarily during the winter months. Many schools and youth groups take advantage of these evenings. Individual members also give outside talks, for example to schools, Women's Institutes, and church groups, and write articles for several publications.

Representatives of the Section are frequently called upon to speak on BBC Radio Guernsey, and to provide material for the Guernsey Press.

Each year the Section runs a six-week course under the auspices of WEA Guernsey (www.wea.org.gg). The course focuses on practical observing, supported by theory and descriptions of celestial objects, including the planets, evolution of stars, and cosmology. The course is very popular, and has always been fully subscribed.

The Astronomy Section of
La Société Guernesiaise



Guernsey's astronomical society is a section of La Société Guernesiaise, the local studies society. An active group of some 50 members, the Section runs the island's Observatory, and welcomes anyone with an interest in astronomy, whether beginner or more experienced. The Observatory is well equipped with modern instruments, and is used as the centre of the Section's activities.



For full details visit our website:

www.astronomy.org.gg