

The Observatory

The David Le Conte Astronomical Observatory is open alternate Tuesday evenings 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 roll-off roof houses a permanently-mounted computer-operated 16-inch Meade Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope and a 5-inch Takahashi refractor. Two additional GOTO telescopes (8" SCT and 12" Dobsonian) are also available for visual observing.



The Summer Milky Way (J.M. Dean)

In addition, there is a GOTO equatorial mount and astrophotography grade refractor for imaging.

Outside there is a mixture of lawned and hard surfaces for telescopes.

Meetings and observing activities

The Section meets alternate Tuesdays, from around 8.30pm. If the weather is clear the telescopes are used for viewing the night sky. Otherwise, there may be a short presentation on an astronomical topic by a member or a video looking at current astronomical topics or space missions.

Members may, if they wish, learn how to use a GOTO telescope.

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.



Comet Hale-Bopp (1997, David Le Conte)

The Observatory library contains a large collection of books, which members can borrow. 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.

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

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 Horsehead Nebula (J.M. Dean)

Members also receive an annual newsletter, *Sagittarius*, which contains Section news, details of forthcoming events, and articles written by members.

To become a member of the Astronomy Section please go to the La Société Guernesiais website where you can join:

<https://societe.org.gg>

Remember, you do not have to know anything about astronomy to be a member – just have an interest in the subject. For new members we run beginners' nights where we give an introduction to the night sky. If you have a telescope, but are not sure how to use it, you can bring it along and we will assist you.

Outreach activities

Public open events are held during the year. They may be either in the evening to view the night sky or during the day to view the Sun. For the evening events they include observing with the telescopes and a talk in the meeting room. Many locals, children and visitors attend these events. The observatory is run by members as volunteers and a small donation is suggested to help with running and maintenance costs.



The Observatory hosts many educational outreach events where children and youth groups can learn about the solar system, deep space, astrophysics and cosmology.

The Astronomy Section also runs courses on stargazing, the solar system and astrophotography. The courses can be a mix of practical and theory. To find details of courses keep an eye on our website:

<https://www.astronomy.org.gg>

and Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/AstronomyGuernsey>

Courses are ticketed and run through Eventbrite. You can follow us here:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/la-societe-guernesiaise-astronomy-section-31040695447>

Did you know?

- You are made of star-stuff. The lighter atoms in your body are made inside stars and the heavier atoms are created when stars explode!
- The furthest object you can see with the naked eye, the Andromeda Galaxy, is over two million light years away.



The Andromeda Galaxy (J.M. Dean)

- Colours of stars indicate their surface temperature. Blue stars are hot, red stars are cooler.
- We are moving eastwards at 675 miles per hour as the Earth spins on its axis once every 24 hours.



Guernsey's astronomical society is a Section of La Société Guernesiaise, the local studies society. An active group of some 70 members, the Section runs the David Le Conte Astronomical 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



Pickering's Triangle supernova remnant (J.M. Dean)