CADAS 21 March meeting.

What a cracking meeting! Our main speaker was Bill Coombes who, apart from having many other interests such as being a skilled and active radio ham, is a NASA Educational Outreach Officer. Bill does much educational work with schools. In this context, Bill is able to not only communicate with the ISS but also capture images from its cupola! The fact that he is an excellent speaker made him an ideal person to tell us about the ISS. It is fair to day that our attention was held from start to finish. What a great session. Many thanks to Bill and to Bob for booking him for us.

Following our refreshment break, (loved the chocolate cake), Arthur Davis presented his Constellation of the month which was Leo. Arthur pointed out some of the main features in the constellation including the many Messier and NGC objects specially noting the Leo Triplet M65,66 and NGC 3628. He also identified the main stars both single and double. This is a constellation well worth exploring with binoculars and small telescopes. Thanks Arthur.

Our friend James Fradgley treated us to a short talk (and it *was* a treat) about work on the use of pulsars to determine position. Pulsars as GPS! It was a revelation to many of us that in principle at least, at a galactic level, pulsars could be used to determine position to within ± 1 km. Not only that, but there is ongoing work internationally to try use pulsar signals to detect gravitational waves. Whatever next! Thanks James, for a clear and lively short session. Fascinating!

The evening was rounded off by Bud Budzynsky who shared some of the best lunar images he’s taken to date. It is hard to believe that Bud was able to improve on the great images he’s already done but thanks to the atmospheric conditions brought by the recent ‘Beast from the east’, Bud was able to capture some truly jaw dropping views of the moon’s surface. As one member remarked, it was like flying low over the moon. Totally outstanding work. Congratulations, Bud, and congratulations on your article in this month’s Astronomy Now. You’re a man of many parts. ☺

Thanks to all who helped make this such a memorable meeting.

Next month Bud will be our speaker and his talk is entitled, ‘taint rocket…

Now what can that mean? Come and find out. See you on Wednesday 18th April.