

CADAS November 2018 meeting

Those unable to come to the meeting missed a top rate double act from Pete Adshead and Bob Mizon; but I won't rub it in as they would know that already. It was a very well attended meeting with 34 of us enjoying a varied programme.

Pete and Bob took turns to present 'Astrophotography old and new'. Pete, described the stages of development of photography from the Daguerreotype process through the Wet Collodion and Silver halide with glass then the more familiar gelatin medium. He illustrated the improvements in astrophotography with early images by Draper, De la Rue, Roberts and Common who worked from the mid to late 19th Century.

Bob then showed us some of his first astro-images (digitized by Pete), taken on transparencies with a Praktica SLR. The first examples were from 1988. Bob started with star trails but graduated to guided images courtesy of a homemade barn -door (Haig) mount which he demonstrated.

Bringing us up to date, Pete described the development of 'cold cameras' and how in the early 1980s the capabilities of film were stretched by 'hypersensitizing', However, the birth of the ccd in around then and its rapid development by both amateurs and professionals for use in astrophotography transformed what we can now do at reasonable cost when teamed with video cameras and freely available software. We have witnessed a revolution.

Following a further selection of Bob's images, Pete wondered what the future would be for amateur astro-photographers and offered a number of options suggested by the online community. Remote imaging via commercially launched satellites anyone? How about 'higher order adaptive optics'? Or will it be something else? Whatever the case, this was a great presentation for which we thank Pete and Bob.

Following our break, Arthur Davis chose Perseus as his constellation of the month. He identified some of the principle objects like Algol, the double cluster and NGCs 1275 and 1491 within the constellation for us to observe.

Bob Mizon's object of the month was the Orion nebula and its surroundings. Some examples of interesting objects were h3945, NGC 1999, and GJ 3379 a Red Dwarf star which used to be the nearest star to the sun.

We ended the evening with a show of great images taken by members.

Jan Wrightson's M34,36,38 and 52 were excellent as was her NGC 1907 and the Crescent Nebula.

Bill Reed as usual shared high quality images of IC1396, NGC's 1499, 6888 and 2264. His Horsehead and Flaming star images were superb. Bill's use of Ha in the red channel really brought out details in the nebulosity in the image of the Flame and Horsehead nebula.

It is always a treat to see Terry Evans' images from 'down under' and this was no exception. Terry whetted our appetites with an image of Comet Wirtanen which is gradually heading our way. If this image is anything to go by we could be in for a treat -except that this is a comet, so anything can happen. Terry also shared images of the Horsehead in RGB and NGC 2736, the huge NGC2070 and the Small Magellanic Cloud.

Many thanks to Pete and Bob, to Zena and all who helped in the kitchen and to those who shared their images. What a great meeting.

Next month is our 'bring and share' Christmas meeting with members' short talks. We will also be electing a new Chairman.