

Our speaker for the March meeting was Jo Richardson who led us through Life on the ISS. She has worked closely with astronaut Tim Peake and she used a number of his adventures on the ISS as illustrations of life “up there”. Following astronaut training through launch and then to spacewalking we got a near first hand impression of going onto the Space Station.

I suspect that many of us would have loved to go into space some day but it was obvious from Jo’s talk that being a “proper” astronaut is not for the unfit or faint hearted. Excellent talk (as ever from Jo!).

After the break (many thanks to Sue who took over from Zena at short notice to provide cakes etc) we had a short discussion on the Society’s governorship. We have not had a formal AGM since the Covid pandemic started and the meeting was asked if they were happy to approve the current arrangements where Terry and Bud essentially act as a very small committee. This was approved unanimously.

The society had a successful “outreach” visit to Manor Court school in Chard which, despite painly cloudy conditions, the children managed to get good views of the moon and other objects through the various telescopes there. Thanks to Paul, Paul, Stuart and Ken.

Bud reassured us that the previous month’s scare story of a the end of the moon as we know it turned out to be the usual of fact churned out by The Sun “newspaper” and that the moon was still there albeit with a small hole on the far side.

Stuart gave his (now usual) talk on what would be in the sky for the next month which was followed by a number of images. With the current conflict in Ukraine in mind, Terry reminded us that the Rosetta comet – 67/P Churyumov-Gerasimenko – is named for its two Ukrainian discoverers. They, despite one being Russian and the other Ukrainian speaking, worked together on a comet that has revolutionised our understanding of how the Earth’s water got here to sustain all life.