

A warm and sunny June evening heralded the welcome return of Bob Mizon to Norton-sub-Hamdon to talk on the Cape York meteorite. After an introduction to meteorites in general, and UK sightings in particular, Bob described “the largest meteorite in captivity”. The Cape York meteorite is one of the largest iron meteorites known and fell in Greenland sometime in the last few thousand years. It is in several pieces totalling about 60 tonnes and with the two main pieces in Copenhagen (a legacy of Denmark’s control over Greenland) and in New York (having been removed by deception by the villain of the piece – American naval officer Robert Peary).

The indigenous Inuit people had relied on the meteorite to provide iron for hunting tools and its removal caused considerable hardship. Furthermore, Peary convinced 6 Inuit to accompany him back to America where 4 of them soon died and one subsequently went back to Greenland. This left one young boy, Minik – the son of one of the Inuit who had died. He was adopted by William Wallace, the museum superintendent. Minik only found out years later that his father had not been buried but dissected and exhibited in the museum by his adoptive father. A sad and sorry tale of colonial exploitation.

After the break, Jan Wrightson had a “hot off the sensor” image of the sun which is now starting to wake up after a long Solar Minimum. Terry also had some images of the close conjunction of Jupiter and Mars and an update on his “work in progress” image of the Rho Ophiuchii area.

It was good to know that Graham’s Reflector (as noted last month) has gone to a good home and is already providing sterling service.

Cricket St Thomas hotel near Chard is looking for some people to help with stargazing events that they wish to run between November and the end of February. Anyone who is interested should let Terry know via the e-mail address on the Home page, as usual.

Next month’s speaker will be Tim Wetherell from Exmoor Stargazers who will talk about The End of the Universe. Tim was the last speaker we had before the Covid hiatus of 2020 so it will be apposite to have him speak exactly one year since we tentatively re-started our meeting.

Thanks, as ever, to those who helped with the half-time refreshments and especially to Sue for making sure it all happened (again :-).