

The spectre of Covid struck again this month when our scheduled speaker, Steve Tonkin, was forced to postpone his talk when he tested positive over the prior weekend. He has re-arranged for February, so we hope to see him then all recovered.

Terry Evans stepped into the breach with a talk on Clouds. As we in Somerset spend quite a lot of time under them, it seemed an apposite subject! The talk was split into looking at the Terrestrial clouds that get in the way of observing, those that are worth observing in their own right, the clouds that exist on other planets in the Solar System and the much larger cosmic clouds that inhabit interstellar space.

The causes of the various terrestrial clouds were described and there were lots of images of the various clouds, nasty and nice, including halo forming and Noctilucent clouds. The planets of the solar system have lots of clouds as well – some earth-like and others (like on Venus and Jupiter), thankfully, very different to our clouds. The various cosmic clouds in our Milky Way were looked at including the galactic cirrus (aka Integrated Flux Nebula) which are at the limit of visibility and a challenge to most amateur astrophotographers.

After the break, Bud brought us up to date with his Ladderscope project and the refinements he's added over the last few months. Terry had some images of the partial solar eclipse we (just about) managed to see on 25th October and also of the lunar eclipse that was visible from Australia on 8th November.

Announcements included the sad news that long time member Adrian Zielonka will no longer be able to produce the Sky and Space News that has been a feature of this website for such a long time. We all thank him for all the effort that he's put into producing such a valuable resource over the many years.

As a pale version of Adrian's very comprehensive look ahead, here are a few of the sights upcoming in the next few weeks:

17th – 18th November Leonid Meteor shower

1st December Mars Closest to Earth

5th December Moon occults Uranus
D 16 50UT R 17:17UT
Low East

8th December Moon occults Mars
D 04:57UT R 05:57
Medium low W

8th December Mars at Opposition 05:41

13th – 14th December Geminid Meteor shower