



a super-fast NTB outbreak began. Detailed amateur coverage of this event has been reported not only in our bulletins and the *Journal* throughout the year, but also in *Nature* (2008 January 24), in an article which praised the quality and value of modern amateur imaging. Synthesis of amateur and professional imaging and modelling implies that the super-bright, super-fast plumes had billowed up from a sub-surface layer of water clouds where the winds were even stronger than at the surface.

Meanwhile the SEB began to fade as we predicted, leading to a violent outbreak initiating an SEB Revival. This started surprisingly early, on 2007 May 17. It generated dark spots in a rapid westward jet-stream, heading for a newly formed 'disturbance', and as predicted these spots performed a U-turn there, one after the other, in a spectacular and well-documented display of the 'Circulating Current' that had not been fully seen since the BAA Jupiter Section first described it in the 1920s and 1930s. Both European and Japanese observers compiled animated strip-maps showing this remarkable circulation.

In 2007 Sept., as the apparition drew to an end, the global upheaval was approaching completion. The SEB had revived at all longitudes (though it was still double), the EZ was becoming lighter again, and the revived NTB had become vividly orange. While most

latitudes were reverting to a more normal appearance, it remained to be seen whether they would again remain that way for many years, or would re-enter another cycle of fading and outbursts.

Following the applause for Dr Rogers' presentation, Mr Pickard introduced Bob Marriott, Curator of Instruments.

Opening of the Wrottesley Observatory

On 2007 October 19 Mr Marriott attended the opening of this new observatory at the Black Country Museum, Dudley. This is an open-air museum dedicated to the Victorian era, which incorporates, among many features, a small town, a tramway, a Newcomen beam engine and a coal mine. The observatory is the latest of several established by the Pendrell Hall Observatories project, Staffordshire, led by BAA member John Armitage.

After introductory speeches by Ian Walden (Director of the Museum), Mr Armitage, Roger Pickard (then the Association's President Elect) and Bob Marriott, the observatory was officially opened by Professor John Dowell, FRS. The building is a classic Romsey observatory, designed by the Rev E. L. Berthon in the early 1870s, with a telescope room housing a 7-inch f/11 reflector by George Calver (BAA instrument no.150), and a side room housing a transit instrument. The telescopes at Pendrell Hall include a 12¼-inch Calver reflector (see R. A. Marriott, 'BAA instrument no.93', *Journal*, **116**(2006), 299; and J. Armitage, 'Astronomical weddings for astronomers', *Journal*, **118**(2008), 230). Several additional instruments – including other BAA instruments – are designated for various Pendrell Hall sites in the West Midlands, and all are intended for both public and private use.

Finally Mr Pickard asked Nick James to speak about some recent Near Earth Objects.

Mr James noted that a number of NEOs had been in the news recently. Information about these objects was frequently mis-reported in the media since a good panic was always worth more than simple scientific facts. This applied even if the target was not the Earth and, in late 2007 December, one media outlet reported 'Mars asteroid 2007 WD5 will blow up planet'. In fact 2007 WD5 missed Mars by a large margin and, even if it had hit it would have done little damage.



Martin Mobberley captured 2007 TU24 passing the galaxy NGC 245 on the night of 2008 January 27 at 18:45 UT. A one minute exposure with a C14 and ST9XE CCD. M. P. Mobberley.

The next object, 2007 TU24, was more interesting. This large object had made a close pass of the Earth last night (2008 January 29/30) at a distance of around 538,000km. Richard Miles of the ARPS issued a BAA e-bulletin to alert observers on January 23 and radar data from Goldstone obtained on the same date indicated that the asteroid was asymmetrical with a diameter of roughly 250m. The NEO reached a maximum magnitude of 10.3 at its closest and so was well within the range of amateur telescopes although it was now fading rapidly. Analysis of the many amateur observations of this object was continuing.

Following the applause for Mr James' contribution, Mr Pickard thanked all the speakers for stepping in at the last moment and rescuing what had turned out to be a very interesting evening. He then adjourned the meeting until Wednesday March 26 at the same venue.

Hazel McGee (prepared from notes of their talks by the speakers themselves).



Bob Marriott with the 7" Calver at the Wrottesley Observatory.



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