

In Memory of George Johannes King 5<sup>th</sup> March 1946 – 1<sup>st</sup> Dec 2023



## It is with a heavy heart that we begin 2024

# RIP George & Thank You

without George King. George was without doubt the driving force behind Blackburn Leisure Astronomy Society, without whom our society and observatory probably would not have existed. He was fascinated by space, spaceflight and photography and always keen to show anyone how to take remarkable pictures of clouds, sunsets, night skies and of course honing his photography skills on the moon. Always excited to show young and old alike our place in the universe, George's dedication to our astronomy group and passion for unravelling the mysteries of the cosmos have left an indelible mark on our collective journey. He was the man that made our observatory and what we have today a reality.



He transferred the skills acquired during his working life in aviation to the plans and reality of the observatory domes, without which we would be back to the days of meeting on dark hill sides. In his earlier life George was a firefighter who attended many very dangerous life threatening situations putting his own safety on the line to save others. George was always happy to chat into the early hours of the morning and listen to anyone. George was laid to rest at a poignant service at Haltemprice crematorium on 20<sup>th</sup> December. When the service ended the moon could be seen

between the clouds in the afternoon sky which reminded us all of the many hours George spent photographing our moon. I know George was looking forward to NASA's Artemis program which is set to make significant strides in 2024, with the planned return of humans to the lunar surface to lay the groundwork for future crewed missions to Mars. In short George was one of the most remarkable men anyone could wish to meet. The words "Thank you for everything" will never ever be enough. We are resolutely proud of everything you achieved and you can rest in peace in the knowledge that Astronomy at Brough will continue in your memory.

On the wall of our observatory is a picture of George shaking the hand of [Sir Patrick Moore](#) who prided himself in the belief that he was the only person to have met during his lifetime the first aviator, Orville Wright, the first man in space, Yuri Gagarin, and the first man on the moon, Neil Armstrong. I for one am proud to have shaken the hand of a man who shook the hand of all of the pioneering aviators. Rest In Peace George. Our deepest sympathies are with his beloved wife Hilary and his family.



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As we embark on this new year, let us carry forward George's passion for exploration and discovery. Together, we will continue to gaze into the vast expanse above, finding solace and inspiration in the beauty of the universe.

Our next meeting is Jan 22<sup>nd</sup>. The BLAS Committee had a productive meeting with Blackburn Leisure on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January. Details will be shared with the BLAS membership at this meeting which will also be our AGM. 2024 is stacking up to be another bumper year for visitors to the observatory with requests for scouts coming in and plans for hosting pre-cub Squirrels shortly. Watch this space.

## *The G.J. King Celebration Dinner*

A big thank you to HERAS for the December pre-Christmas dinner. As became tradition at BLAS however, we have had our Christmas meals in January at the Blackburn Leisure club in recent years. As a final toast to George and a celebration of his work, we have decided to continue the tradition and to that end Julian has arranged for a meal at the club on the 19<sup>th</sup> of this month. The meal is booked to start at 7:30. All or our members and of course HERAS members are welcome.

The menu is shown to the right. Please contact Julian by email at [julian@jmrobinson.karoo.co.uk](mailto:julian@jmrobinson.karoo.co.uk) with your meal order as soon as possible and remember to bring something along for the raffle on the evening.

### Astronomy Christmas dinner Friday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2024

#### Starter

Homemade leek and potato soup with bread roll  
Pate, french toast with salad garnish

#### Main

Homemade duck and ale pie, chips, peas and gravy  
Roast chicken, potatoes, Yorkshire pudding, stuffing, veg and gravy

#### Desert

Yucky toffee pudding with custard.  
Cheesecake with cream.

#### After meal

Tea/ coffee and mince

£33.00 per head

## 2024 Membership..

It's that time of year again and 2024 membership is now due. The committee has agreed the fee with Blackburn Leisure to be held at £30 as last year. To try and get ahead with fees this year, we would be grateful if you would bring your fees to next Mondays club night Jan 22<sup>nd</sup> where forms will be available or contact Brian Davies.

As reported in the last newsletter, the hosts of our BLAS website have folded. As you may be aware this affects some of the links from previous newsletters. The committee is keen to hear from any budding webmasters who can help us rebuild and future proof a new site. In the meantime, the domain name of Broughastronomy.co.uk has been bought and paid for and a basic site is still available whilst we grapple with the re-build of our new site at the link. Please bear with us.

## Website News