



## Obituary: J. C. D. Marsh, 1927 January 2–2004 May 11

### By himself

Hampshire born and bred, 'Lou' Marsh (it doesn't matter where the nickname originated) was nudged into clerking in a bank after leaving school but was rescued by joining the Navy in 1944. After swanning around the Far East for a couple of years mending naval radar sets he was invited after demobilisation to return as a civilian lecturer at the naval radar school HMS Collingwood. This life as a civil servant lasted three years and then, after becoming a chartered radio and electronic engineer, he joined Kelvin Hughes (Marine) Ltd as a radar development engineer. This lasted some six years. There followed short spells as chief technical publications officer with Murphy Radio, lecturing at the EMI College of Electronics and then to what was then the Hatfield College of Technology as a lecturer in the Department of Electrical Engineering.

Having been an amateur astronomer for many years Lou was able to persuade the Academic Board of what had become the Hatfield Polytechnic to include Astronomy in its portfolio of academic courses, obtain funding to build an observatory and allow him to take sabbatical leave at Leicester University to research for a higher degree. The Observatory was opened in 1970 and Lou was appointed Head of Astronomy and Director of the Observatory, posts that he held until he retired mainly for health reasons in 1987. During the 17 years at the Observatory he served on committees of the SRC, CNAA (Council for National Academic Awards), RAS and BAA.

Since retirement Lou continued to lecture occasionally at what is now the Uni-

► However, it may have been observed in 1966 and so may be a recurrent object; moreover, the IRAS satellite noted an object at this position when it surveyed the sky in 1983–'04. The object, informally named 'McNeil's Nebula', could be important in our understanding of stellar evolution and amateur CCD monitoring of it could be of much scientific interest. Paul Whitmarsh showed a CCD image of the nebula he had taken with a 300mm telephoto lens.

The meeting concluded with a few words of thanks to the speakers from Stewart Moore and the presentation of a second bottle of wine to Nick Hewitt. Thanks were also given to Cyril Sampson of the Northamptonshire Natural History Society for his sterling work in preparing the refreshments.

Lee Macdonald

versity of Hertfordshire, was awarded an honorary MSc, and appointed a Visiting Fellow in the Faculty of Natural Sciences. He trained to become a volunteer adviser at the Citizens Advice Bureau where he has worked for the last six years, and in his spare time managed to publish a few papers, mainly on lunar photography and radio emission from the solar corona.

### A personal recollection

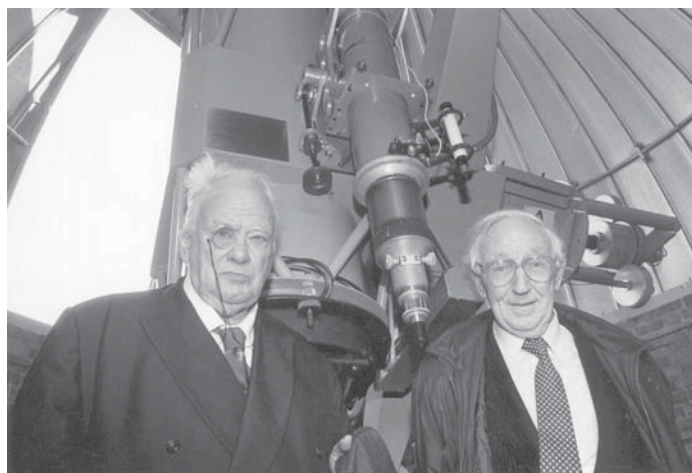
I have known Lou since 1964, when I joined a local group of amateur astronomers. We used to meet once a month at one another's houses and if the sky was clear, out would come the telescopes for an evening's observing. Later, when the Bayfordbury Observatory opened, we frequently met there to use the telescopes. The main instrument is named the J. C. D. Marsh Telescope.

Lou joined the BAA in January 1962 and served both as a committee member of the Lunar Section, and on the BAA Council. When I took my MSc in astronomy (1991–1994), Lou acted as supervisor for my thesis and also taught me the basic principles of radio astronomy.

After retiring from the Directorship of the Observatory, he built his own radio telescope to monitor radio emissions from the Sun at a frequency of 150MHz. He made regular daily recordings of solar radio activity and contributed three papers to the *Journal* on the results, the last of which appeared in the 2003 June issue.

Lou had a very friendly and outgoing personality and was widely respected by both professional and amateur astronomers. He was diagnosed as having cancer of the throat in December 2002 and had frequent laser treatments on the tumour. He fought the disease bravely, but in the end it overcame him. He will be sadly missed by his family and many friends. He leaves his wife Sue, two sons and three grandchildren.

Edward Ellis



Lou Marsh (right) with Sir Patrick Moore at the opening of the J. C. D. Marsh telescope at Bayfordbury Observatory in 1995. Courtesy C. R. Kitchen/University of Hertfordshire.

## New members

The British Astronomical Association cordially welcomes the following new members:

*Elected 2003 November 29*

- Bennett** Anthony, Westgate on Sea, Kent
- Bianciardi** Giorgio, Siena, Italy
- Brewster** Keith, Tottenham, London N1
- Brugman** Ad, Lower Maescoed, Herefords.
- Calia** Charles Laird, Ridgefield, CT, USA
- Christmas** Emma Jane, Upminster, Essex
- Crawley** Derek, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex
- Davies** Morgan Ioan, Cheltenham, Glos.
- Davis** Rick, Davie, Florida, USA
- Docherty** Edward, Formby, Liverpool
- Eadie** Robert, Hardington, Northampton
- Everett** Stephanie, Southend-on-Sea, Essex
- Filho** Jose Roberto de Siqueira, Sao Paulo, Brazil
- Furness** Peter, West Gorton, Manchester
- Galea** Adrian, Eastbourne, East Sussex
- Goldberg** Jane Margaret, London, NW4
- Green** Peter, Co. Dublin, Ireland
- Hanna** Phillip, Orpington, Kent
- Harry**, Pontllanfraith, Gwent
- Hurst**, Crawley, West Sussex
- Kelly** Steven, Thatcham, Berkshire
- Macalpine** Andrew, London, N
- Maggs** David Nigel, Chippenham, Wilts.
- Manditsch** Maxine, Rome, Italy
- Martin** Bruce, Bournemouth, Dorset
- Martin** Nathan Paul, Deal, Kent
- Murray** Norman, Down, Belfast