



Central Star Party 2018

The 3rd Central Star Party was enjoyed by its 65 participants from Thursday 18th Jan until Tuesday morning the 23rd, with presentations beginning on the Friday evening.

Opening at 7pm on Friday when the heat was still intense, we enjoyed the cool of the new hall as Bethany Jones talked about the limitations of the human body. We learnt about the poor human adaptation to the long rigours of microgravity for many months at a time. Fascinating and sadly sobering.

This was followed by the answer to the universe being 4, not 42, as Remco Mensert convinced us life had to be based up-on carbon, not silicon.

The sky was clear and scopes were set although there was enthusiasm for the latest "Star Trek" movie but technical



The bright, clear, warm Sunday had some clouds. This time after the buy, sell, swap successes, we had some challenging talks about the Universe being a hologram, the big bang being part of a toroidal cycle.

Interrupting these talks we switched over to the Rocket Lab launch live video when it was countdown minus 2 min. We watched the ignition and lift off on the screen then ran outside and could see the wee point at the head of a vapour trail which we followed until we could no longer see it (about 15 seconds).

Totally cool!

There was the usual visit to the lovely Zeiss planetarium where those who had been seeing the skies were able to get

glitches spoilt that. There were two 20" telescopes set up and some common targets were looked at first like 47 Tucanae, the Tarantula and eta Carina. Impressive views!

Talks resumed the next day at the civilised hour of 1pm, when once again the well insulated cool hall was much appreciated.

Some of the talks were interrupted by the possibility of the rocket launch but it was not to be.

A fish and chip dinner was much appreciated before another clear nights viewing and the watching of Star Trek was not interrupted by tech issues. The sky did fail us somewhat around midnight but apparently there was clarity again before 1am.





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a total view of the sky above us. An extremely valuable lesson for enthusiastic beginners.

After dinner there was a quizz which JD sorted into equally talented teams but, although there were close scores, there was still a winning group. A fun, challenging, selection of questions. Sadly the sky stayed overcast so there was no viewing, although some hardy souls arose at 3 and had some briefly clear skies.

Altogether another wonderful Star Party!

Thanks to the organisers and all those who attended for making it another special and enjoyable weekend.

www.censtar.party



A special thanks to ASTRONZ for the raffle prizes and to Gary Sparks for his plum jam.

