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Editor Nick Campion

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Editorial

Bath Spa University College

In addition to the initiatives announced in the university-level study of cultural astronomy and astrology in previous issues, Bath Spa University College, England, has now launched (as of October 2002) the first MA in 'Cultural Astronomy and Astrology'. The MA will be taught by the new Centre for the Study of Cultural Astronomy and Astrology, within the School of Historical and Cultural Studies. The Centre's 'fact sheet' defines Cultural Astronomy as 'the study of the application of beliefs about the stars to all aspects of human culture, from religion and science to the arts and literature. It includes the new discipline of archaeoastronomy - the study of astronomical alignments, orientation and symbolism in architecture, ancient and modern'. Astrology, meanwhile, is defined as 'the practice of relating the heavenly bodies to lives and events on earth, and the tradition that has thus been generated' (Patrick Curry, 'Astrology' in *The Encyclopaedia of Historians and Historical Writing*, 1999, p 55). Modules so far designed include an introduction to the entire subject area, an introduction to research methodologies, the history of astrology, psychological perspectives on astrology, stellar religion and science and scepticism.

It is hoped to develop a module in archaeoastronomy and also to extend teaching both to BA level and research degrees.

The Centre's staff are Michael York (Head of Centre and Principle Lecturer, m.york@bathspa.ac.uk), Patrick Curry (Senior Lecturer, p.curry@bathspa.ac.uk) and Nick Campion (Senior Lecturer, n.campion@bathspa.ac.uk). For further details e mail contact Alice Ekrek MA, Administrator, The Sophia Centre, Bath Spa University College, Newton Park, Newton St. Loe, Bath BA2 9BN, UK, e mail a.ekrek@bathspa.ac.uk. For details of the College go on line at www.bathspa.ac.uk.

The Adler Planetarium, Chicago

Marvin Bolt of Chicago's Adler Planetarium has announced the official opening of a permanent archaeoastronomy/cultural astronomy exhibit at the Adler Planetarium and Astronomy Museum in Chicago. The exhibit, entitled 'Bringing the Heavens to Earth: Cultural Astronomies around the World', uses artifacts, mechanical and computer interactives, and dozens of images to illustrate the many ways in which people have incorporated the sky into their culture as they try to meet their physical, social, and spiritual needs. This is the first exhibit anywhere to address the diversity and commonality of cultural astronomies, rather than focusing on one particular example.

German Commission for History of Geophysics, Cosmical Physics and Space Physics founded

A commission for the history of geophysics, cosmical physics and space physics has been founded under the leadership of the internationally well-known physicist Professor Dr. Hans-Jürgen Treder, formerly director of the Einstein-Laboratory for theoretical physics of the Academy of Sciences. Geomoppel@t-online.de and visit the website: <http://huhu.franken.de/history-geophysics/english.html>.

The Inspiration of Astronomical Phenomena

Preparations for the fourth conference on the The Inspiration of Astronomical Phenomena (INSAP IV), sponsored by the Vatican Observatory and the Steward Observatory, to be held at Magdalen College Oxford from 3-9 August 2003, are under way and include an early morning visit to Stonehenge led by Professor Clive Ruggles. Please see the notice on p. 44 and further details on p. 77 of this issue.

Full information is available via

<http://ethel.as.arizona.edu/~white/insap/insap4x.htm>

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