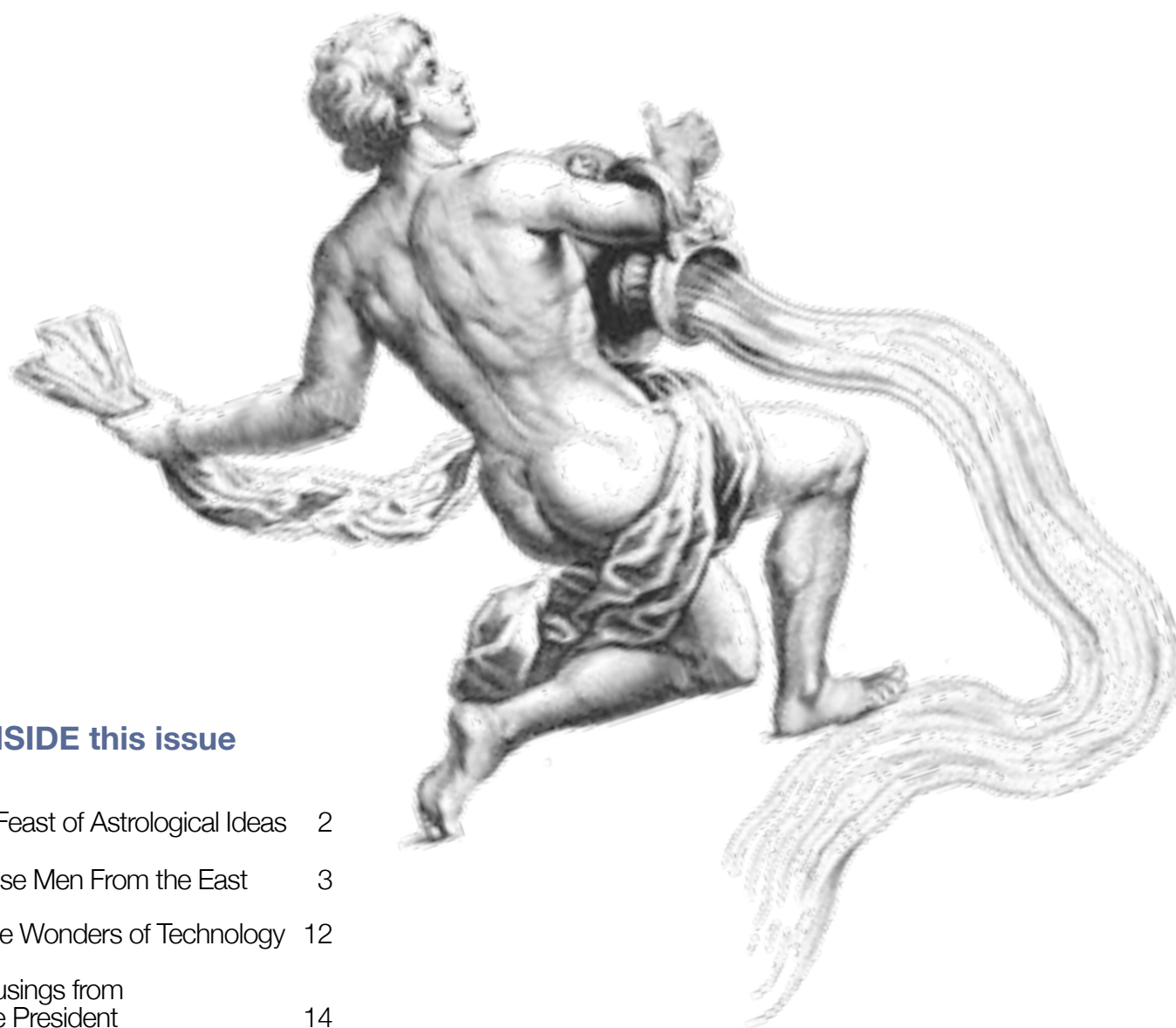


Southern Star

Member Newsletter

www.faasa.com.au

Aquarius Edition 2013



INSIDE this issue

A Feast of Astrological Ideas	2
Wise Men From the East	3
The Wonders of Technology	12
Musings from the President	14



Sunday, 3 February 2013

10:00am - 4:30pm

Theosophical Society

310 South Terrace
Adelaide SA

FAASA

mini-conference *a feast of astrological ideas*

Traditional Astrology: Planetary Hours

PETER BURNS (Victoria)

Financial Astrology: Market Analysis

ALISON FEINER (Victoria)

Uranus and its Bohemian Nature

JEANNI MONKS (Queensland)

The Semi-Square: Dividing the Circle by Eight

PATRICIA SHEPHERD (New South Wales)

Horary Astrology

JEANETTE LEWIS-HILL (Western Australia)

A Tale of Two Horoscopes

GLORIJA LAWRENCE (Victoria)

Hygeia and Chiron: The Healers in the Chart

TESS CULLEN (New South Wales)

FAASA Members \$30

Concession \$25

Non-Members \$40

Book your spot early!

Tickets may be purchased on the day
Prepayment options include:

EFT BSB 015 367 Account 499070824

Please email president@faasa.com.au to advise

Cheque or Money Order: FAASA Inc

PO Box 7443, Hutt Street, Adelaide SA 5000

Wise Men from the East

RALPH HOLDEN

My introduction to astrology was really quite curious.

In 1963 I was appointed priest-in-charge of the Anglican parish of Cummins in South Australia. This is a farming area situated about 400 miles west of Adelaide. Its remoteness from the city meant that visits to Adelaide were infrequent, and much had to be purchased by mail order. I therefore joined a Book Club whose members were able to order from a range of selected books at discounted prices, listed in a catalogue which was received on a regular basis.

One of the books which I ordered was *Astrology* by Louis MacNeice. No doubt the description in the catalogue paralleled that printed on its dust cover. 'This is the only comprehensive and authoritative survey of astrology that takes no sides but presents to the modern reader all the facts that he needs to form his own judgement.'

As a 'modern reader' without any real understanding of astrology, this appeared to be an excellent book to place on my list. I suppose in a sense it was, because the end result of its reading was that I became seriously involved in astrology. But I fear for all the wrong reasons.

The final section of the book gave instructions on the erection and interpretation of the horoscope. A little experimentation soon revealed that these were hopelessly inadequate or in error. The end result of which was to convince me that if astrology had occupied the pre-eminent place that it once did for so many thousands of years, it must have been something much more than that described by the author.

In one place however there was a mention of "The London Faculty of Astrological Studies." I decided to try to make contact with this organisation, and after much searching was able to find an address and do so. The upshot was that eventually I enrolled as a student and attained its Diploma.

Obviously – given my profession – the story in St Matthew's Gospel of

the visit of the Wise Men to the infant Jesus, now took on a new significance. In other reading I had come across the proposal made by Johannes Kepler that the 'star' was in fact a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn. In 1975 the original article "Wise Men from the East" was published in the *Journal of the Federation of Australian Astrologers*".

While the essay essentially deals with the Matthean subject matter, it was also (I suspect) my first 'apology' for astrology. What I tried to do was to show that the account is precise, consistent, and can be fit into an accurate historical frame work.

That is, astrology as astrology is inextricably woven into the fabric of the gospel of St. Matthew. It was (if I remember aright) John Henry Cardinal Newman who said that the Church cannot celebrate that which is not itself holy. When therefore the Church celebrates the Feast of the Epiphany on 6th January each year, it may not be inappropriate to remind it that it is also celebrating an astrological event of some consequence.

Probably the most well known astrological event in history was the visit of the Wise Men (as they are called in the Authorised King James version of the Bible) to the infant Jesus, which is recorded in St. Matthew's Gospel. However it is a story which is undeservedly neglected, both in astrological as well as in orthodox Christian circles.

No doubt this is because both of these traditions have developed a degree of reserve towards each other. However as I have some roots in both worlds, it may not be inappropriate for me to look at this event a little more seriously than either the astrologer or the theologian appears to have done in recent years.

So let us begin by looking at the account in the second chapter of Matthew's Gospel as it is translated in the New English Bible. Here the equivocal "Wise Men" have at least become honest astrologers!



The Meeting of the Magi from the Très Riches Heures
© R.M.N. / R.-G. Ojéda

Jesus was born at Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of Herod. After his birth astrologers from the east arrived at Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who is born to be king of the Jews? We observed the rising of his star and we have come to pay him homage". King Herod was greatly perturbed when he heard this; and so was the whole of Jerusalem. He called a meeting of the chief priests and lawyers of the Jewish people and put before them the question, "Where is it that the Messiah is to be born?" "At Bethlehem in Judaea", they answered; and they referred him to the prophecy which reads; "Bethlehem in the land of Judah, you are far from least in the eyes of the rulers of Judah, for out of you shall come a leader to be the shepherd of my people Israel".

Herod next called the astrologers to meet him in private, and ascertained from them the time when the star had appeared. He then sent them on to Bethlehem, and said, "Go and make a careful inquiry for the child. When you have found him report to me, so that I may go myself and pay him homage".

They set out at the King's bidding; and the star which they had seen at its rising went ahead of them until it stopped above the place where the child lay.

Matthew then tells us that having reached Bethlehem, the astrologers offered gifts to the child whom they found there, and departed from Judaea without returning to inform King Herod of their discovery. Herod, when he eventually realised that he had been deceived, was furious and made a barbaric attempt to kill the infant.

When Herod saw that the astrologers had tricked him, he fell into a passion, and gave orders for the massacre of all children in Bethlehem and its neighbourhood, of the age of two years or less, corresponding with the time he had ascertained from the astrologers.

We are of course all accustomed to seeing various parts of this story

(apart from its pretty blood-thirsty conclusion) portrayed upon our Christmas Cards each year. While the artists responsible choose varying parts of the story as the basis for their works, all seem to agree upon one thing: the Birth Star shone with exceptional and unmistakable brightness in the heavens.

Yet we are immediately confronted by a significant problem. If this star shone so brightly and so beautifully, how was it that it had apparently passed unnoticed by Herod and his court? The ancient world had little lighting of its cities at night, and the heavens would have shone with undiminished brightness. How would it have been possible for such an event to have been observed by the astrologers, and yet apparently not seen by others? And why would these men then make an arduous journey of some 600 to 700 miles by camel, at the bidding of what seems to have been such an uncertain object?

Firstly (as we mentioned previously) the "astrologers" in our account are the "Wise Men" of the older Authorised Version. The word in the Greek text is "Magoi" (Magoi) who were originally a priestly caste from Media, distinguished in appearance by the wearing of flowing white robes and a tall pointed hat. It is from them that not only does our word "magician" come, but also the traditional pointed hat of both the witch and of the dunce. The last has its own curious derivation, but that is not our concern at the moment. They were men of considerable learning and well-versed in the arts and sciences of their day.

The journey from Media to Jerusalem is some 700 miles. If we allow their progress by camel to have been about 20 miles a day, then this implies a travelling time of perhaps 35 days. With rest days – and some days of slower than average progress – we may not be far out in suggesting a total time for their journey of some six weeks. After this extensive travelling they were finally admitted to King Herod's court where they inquired, "Where is the

child who is born to be king of the Jews? We observed the rising of his star".

The translation with which we may be more familiar, and is generally used in the older versions, says "For we have seen his star in the East", Is there significance in this difference in the translations?

The usual Greek phrase in the New Testament for the words "in the east" is "en tai anatolai" (ἐν ταῖς ἀνατολαῖς), but in the Matthean account of the visit of the Magi the phrase is "en te anatole" (ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ). This is the singular form of the normally plural phrase. This particular form of the words occurs in four other instances in the New testament, and in each of these cases the usage describes the rising of the sun, rather than the direction east.

It appears therefore that what we have is actually a technical astrological term, the most satisfying rendering of which would be "we saw his star rising in the first rays of dawn". The term used today which would correspond with the ancient "en te anatole" is "heliacal rising" or "rising with the sun".

But we should remember that when the astrologers were interviewed by King Herod they did not say, "We have made an interesting observation of a heliacal rising". Rather they said, "Where is the child born to be king of the Jews?" What led them to put such a question? What particular series of events would have been of such consequence as to lead them to undertake a journey of close to six weeks under difficult circumstances, in order to make such an inquiry?

According to the traditions of Chaldean astrology the Zodiacal sign of Pisces had special associations with Israel, and particularly with the Jewish concept of the Messiah. As well it is generally agreed by astronomers that the precession of the equinox caused the First Point of Aries to enter the constellation of Pisces some time in the ten years

preceding the commencement of the Christian era.

We may therefore assume that astrologers in the ancient world would have been alert to any celestial event of significance occurring in the sign of Pisces at this particular time. Moreover, for many such an event would have had a natural association with the nation of Israel and presumably with its expectations of a Messiah. What kinds of occurrences therefore would fit this scenario?

The two possibilities that immediately come to mind are either a comet or a super-nova. These unfortunately seem to be far too obvious for our story. We must remember that the “star” which the wise men saw was not sufficiently spectacular to have been observed by others. Certainly by any at King Herod’s court.

There is however one series of events which we know to have happened within these ten years which could well provide a solution to our problem. This was a number of conjunctions of the Great Planets Jupiter and Saturn within the sign of Pisces. Not only would these be of exceptional importance – bearing in mind that these would be the first Great Conjunctions in the sign of Pisces for the Piscean Age – but also that both planets carried some special implications. Jupiter is by nature associated with rulership and royalty, while Saturn was held by Chaldean tradition to be the protector of Israel. The Latin writer Tacitus in fact equated Saturn with the God of Israel.

This solution was first proposed by Johannes Kepler in 1603, when he had observed a similar conjunction in December of that year. The possibility that such an event could have been the ‘star’ of the Magi immediately leapt to his mind.

As well (as we shall see later) this event was not a simple conjunction, but actually the coming together of both planets three times within the space of a few months, due to both bodies becoming retrograde during

the period. This would add enormous significance to the events, as such multiple conjunctions occur in any particular sign only once in about 800 years.

The advantages of this hypothesis are three-fold.

Firstly it meets our criterion of an exceptionally important celestial event occurring in an appropriate location in the zodiac.

Secondly it is astrological and not astronomical in nature. That is, its significance lies not in its observational impact (its brightness, for example) but rather in its interpretation. Thus not being an event which was noticeable to the casual observer, it is quite reasonable to propose that King Herod and his court would have been unaware of it.

Thirdly, with the aid of modern computer generated tables we are able to reconstruct the events quite precisely.

Let us then assume that the event which had such significance for our wise men was indeed the first Great Conjunctions in the sign of Pisces at the commencement of the Piscean Age. We may then draw the timetable of St. Matthew's narrative along the following lines.

At the end of February 7 BC Jupiter moved out of Aquarius towards Saturn, which had already been in the sign of Pisces for some considerable time. Since the Sun was also in Pisces at this time the planet naturally was not visible. The laws of planetary motion were not precisely formulated until the 16th century (by Kepler himself of course). Thus the astrologers of this period were not able to calculate the date on which the planet would again become visible, but simply had to wait and conduct daily observations.

On 12th April 7 BC both planets rose heliacally (in the "first rays of dawn" or *en te anatole*), some eight degrees apart. From the relative positions of Jupiter and Saturn the astrologers knew from experience that they would soon form a close conjunction. That is, once they had observed these two bodies "rising in the east" they knew that it was inevitable that a major astrological event would occur. It was at this point – at this first observation – that they would realise that the "star" of the "child who is to be king of the Jews" had arisen.

Then on the 27th May 7 BC – visible in the morning sky for about two hours before dawn – the two planets lay in exact longitudinal conjunction in 21° Pisces, a little over one degree apart in latitude. A very close, but not precise, conjunction.

However not long after this both planets became retrograde, and a second conjunction occurred on 3rd October 7 BC in 18° Pisces. Then resuming direct motion, a third

conjunction was formed on the 4th December in the same year in 16° Pisces.

At the end of January in the year 6 BC Jupiter moved out of Pisces into Aries.

Now while these Great Conjunctions were obviously of considerable astrological importance, were they sufficiently so to lead to the long and difficult journey undertaken by the "Wise Men" of the gospel narrative?

One of the most significant events of Jewish history was that which is called "The Exile".

At the beginning of the 6th century BC the country had been overrun by the Babylonian armies, and after a dreadful siege the city of Jerusalem was taken. The victorious armies laid waste to the country side and completely demolished the Holy City. All leaders of commerce, learning, religion, and politics – indeed all notable citizens of any kind – were forcibly transported to Babylon. This exile lasted until the empire fell to the Persian armies in about 520 BC, at which time the Jews were given permission to return to their own country.

However it seems that a very large number (if not a majority) elected to remain in Babylon where they had prospered in numerous fields. No doubt a number would have studied at the great school of astrology at Sippar. This significant encounter between Jupiter (the planet of royalty) and Saturn (the planet of Israel and the Messiah) within Israel's own zodiacal sign of Pisces, must have been exciting to such Jewish astrologers.

This would be all the more so at the very dawn of the Piscean age, of which they would have been excitedly aware. If ever there were to be an astrologically appropriate moment for the birth of the Messiah, this would appear to be that time. The Age of the Messiah had dawned, and to see this with their own eyes may well have been the driving force behind their journey from the East.

That is, the "Wise Men from the East" were neither kings nor gentiles (as our Christian traditions have suggested), but rather expatriate Jewish astrologers from the college of Sippar near Babylon. It is also quite possible that their journey may not have been totally the result of religious zeal, but they may have rather been sent by the other Jewish members of their school – with their trip financed as a kind of research scholarship – in order to determine whether or not a suitable candidate for messiahship had in fact been born at this time.

Their probable Jewish status also casts light upon other aspects of the story. Their ready acceptance at Herod's court is in accord with a welcome extended to important countrymen visiting from a renowned centre of world learning. Their interest in and familiarity with Jewish customs and scripture, as well as their apparent knowledge of Palestinian geography, is also in accord with such a status. No doubt the term "magi" which was given to them, had by that time simply become a generic word for any person versed in their skills and sciences. In later Roman days astrologers were called "Chaldeans" regardless of race or origin.

It may be objected however, that if they were indeed Jews, why was it that they did not appear to know the scriptural prophecy concerning the birthplace of the Messiah? This may be explained by suggesting that they would perhaps quite naturally have expected to find a royal birth occurring in a royal situation. Finding no knowledge of such an event in King Herod's court they asked the question, "Well then, does any one know where the child who is born to be king of the Jews is likely to be?" A conference was held, and it was suggested that if the birth had not occurred in Jerusalem (and none had knowledge of a birth which seemed to present a likely candidate), then the scriptures pointed to Bethlehem as the logical alternative place.

Wise Men From The East

However, let us briefly return to Babylon in order to put their journey into perspective.

On 27th May 7 BC the first close conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in Pisces was observed from the roof of the observatory at the school of astrology at Sippar. As was mentioned previously, astrologers had been waiting anxiously for this since they first sighted the two planets at their heliacal rising and realised that a Great Conjunction was imminent. However it was mid summer in Mesopotamia. Only the most foolish or most desperate would make such a journey as they were contemplating during this season.

But as they also observed that the daily motion of the planets was decreasing, they knew that the bodies would therefore both shortly regress, and that the likelihood of a second and third conjunction was very high. So they waited until the second conjunction did in fact occur. This fell on the 3rd October 7 BC. By a remarkable coincidence this was the Jewish feast of Atonement. Perhaps they felt this to be some sort of divine omen, and so preparations were made at once for the "research team" to leave, and to commence its journey to the land of their fathers.

About six weeks would have seen them arriving at Jerusalem. That is, towards the end of November. They at once would have sought an audience with King Herod, or perhaps more likely would have been requested to appear before him as their arrival in Jerusalem would have aroused much notice and curiosity. Naturally they immediately inquired regarding the birth of a royal infant: "Where is the child who is born king of the Jews, for we have observed the heliacal rising of his star?" After discussion it is decided that they should investigate births at Bethlehem, and so they left for this village.

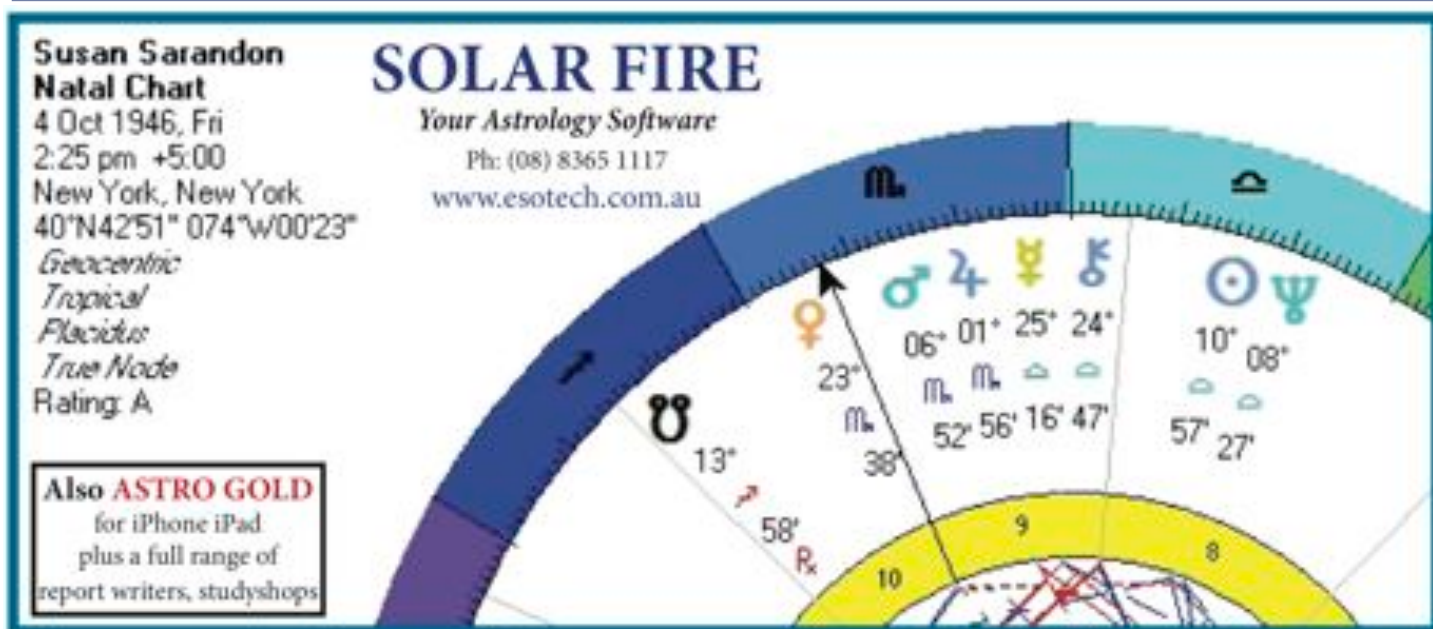
Now Bethlehem lies about five miles almost due south from Jerusalem. That is, towards the ecliptic in the northern hemisphere. They may well have set out towards the town during the twilight hours of the evening of the 4th December 7 BC. The journey would only have taken about an hour and they probably anticipated finding accommodation in the village that night, and so be able to commence their inquiries first thing in the morning.

On this night however Jupiter and Saturn were again together in the last of the series of Great Conjunctions. This would have been visible in the evening sky due south of Jerusalem, in the direction which they would have to take in order to

reach Bethlehem. St. Matthew's account says, and the star which they had seen at its rising went ahead of them until it stopped above the place where the child lay. One may allow a little poetic imagination to the evangelist. As the travellers moved down the road the "star" would have appeared to move ahead of them, and then stop as they themselves stopped at Jerusalem.

We do not of course know from all this the actual date of Jesus' birth. The impression that we gain from King Herod's later actions in slaughtering the infants of Bethlehem suggests that the first observation of the star was possibly up to two years prior to the visit of the Wise Men. All children of the age of two years or less were to be killed corresponding to the time he ascertained from the astrologers. However this is not necessarily the case, and it is very likely that Herod chose the age of two years simply because he wanted to be quite sure that the child who posed a potential threat to his throne was caught in the net of infanticide.

If we assume that Jesus was born at or about the time of the first of the Great Conjunctions, then we have a late May date in the year 7 BC. By the time that King Herod had become sure that the Wise Men were no longer "searching carefully"



for the child – but had secretly left the country – the date may well have been about February 6 BC. Thus the infant may have been from 9 to 12 months old. The death of all children under two years would therefore resolve the issue without the need to inquire too closely into birth dates.

It is also interesting to speculate upon the method which the astrologers may have used to chose the infant Messiah. It is not realistic to assume (as St. Matthew appears to do) that the star in some way “stopped” above the place where the child was, and all that they needed to do was to walk through the appropriate door. They may (for example) have interviewed the parents of all children born close to the time of the first Great Conjunction, and perhaps chosen the candidate with the most appropriate genealogy for messiahship.

In this regard we may note that Matthew actually begins his Gospel with a Table of Descent for Jesus. This may not be totally unrelated to his later story and the astrologers’ recognition of the Messiah whom they sought. If this is the case, then the infant whom they chose was one directly descended from King David, and most probably would have been born on the 27th May 7 BC.

This may appear at first sight to be a rather early dating for the birth of Jesus, whom we normally assume to have been born close to the first year of the Christian era. However St. Matthew also tells us that the child Jesus was taken to Egypt almost immediately after his birth (so escaping King Herod’s attempt to assassinate him) until his parents heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judaea in the place of his father Herod. Since we know that King Herod died in 4 BC, it is obviously necessary that Jesus should have been born some time prior to this. Thus the date 7 BC appears to be quite reasonable from this point of view.

St. Luke’s gospel too has some evidence supporting a May date for the birth. In one place his account reads, Now in this same district there were shepherds out in the fields keeping watch through the night over their flocks. In Hebron grass temperatures fall well below freezing from December to February, and no shepherds would be watching sheep over night in the fields during these months. This therefore points to the birth occurring during the warmer months of the year.

It is also interesting to note that Clement of Alexandria, writing in the third century, suggested May 20th as a possible date for the birth of Jesus.

Unfortunately other evidence which St. Luke gives concerning the birth of Jesus – which one might assume to be helpful – only serves to confuse the issue. He writes that Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem (where Jesus was born) on account of a requirement related to a census that was held when Quirinius was governor of Syria. Sulpicius Quirinius was certainly a governor of Syria and we know that he did in fact hold a census. However this was in 6 AD when Judaea was reduced to the status of a Roman Province, an impossibly late date for Jesus’ birth.

Quirinius held the census in order to determine the amount of tribute that the new province would be liable to pay. The records of the governorships of Syria are quite clear. Sentius Sturnius was governor from 9 BC to 6 BC; Quintilius Varus from 6 BC to 4 AD; and Sulpicus Quirinius from 4 AD onward.

This is not to say that there was no census held at the time of Jesus’ birth, but if one were held then it is not one of which we have historical records (apart from St. Luke’s reference) and certainly not the one conducted by Quirinius. This account therefore offers us no further information regarding the birth date of Jesus, which must have occurred prior to 4 BC.

It may be mentioned that there are other difficulties in reconciling the

birth accounts of St. Matthew and St. Luke.

St. Matthew tells us that the Holy Family were living at Bethlehem at the time of Jesus’ birth and did not leave there until they fled in order to escape King Herod’s troops. Then some time after 4 BC (when the king died) they returned to Palestine, but settled in Nazareth. On the other hand St. Luke appears to make their stay at Bethlehem a very brief one, having travelled down there from their permanent home at Nazareth simply for the purpose of the census. He also makes no mention of a sojourn in Egypt.

This is a chronology into which it is not possible to fit realistically the account of the visit of the Wise Men, as it really demands that they should have left for Jerusalem at least six weeks before the first Great Conjunction in order to be at Bethlehem just after the birth. This of course would have been before they could have been certain of the first conjunction even occurring, let alone of observing it. There are therefore reasons for being cautious in the use of the information presented to us by St. Luke.

So let us draw this part of our exploration to a conclusion.

Towards the end of May in the year 7 BC – and in all probability on the 27th day of that month according to our present reckoning – Joshua ben-Joseph was born at Bethlehem. In the twilight hours close to the 4th of December of that same year expatriate Jewish scholars from Sippar near Babylon, impelled by astrological curiosity, came to see the one whom they hoped would fulfill the long expected dreams of the Jewish people.

Now – like the Wise Men themselves – we too have made a considerable journey, and having come thus far it is difficult to resist the temptation to see whether or not it is possible to erect a horoscope for Jesus. Since the astrologers must have assumed that the child was born close to the time of the first Great Conjunction of the

Wise Men From The East

Piscean age in the sign of Pisces – and that this assumption was accurate enough for them to be able to locate the infant at Bethlehem – it will be instructive in the first instance to inspect the chart of the visible planets for this date.

Using the Tuckerman tables, the conjunction formed at 8:45 am GMT, on the 27th May 7 BC. The chart of the planetary positions is shown in Figure One.

Two – or possible three – things stand out in this configuration.

1. The first is the opposition between Mars and the conjunct planets.
2. The second is the “bowl” shaping of the pattern, which according to Marc Jones is indicative of those who wish to share their abilities and gifts with others.
3. The third is the almost total lack of any other important aspect or feature.

Thus the whole significance of the chart lies in Pisces and its planets. Apart from this it is a very ordinary map indeed. Naturally no significant alterations to this pattern will occur within the space of those days that we may allow as our “orb of probability” of the birth date.

Is it possible to go further and suggest a probable horoscope?

Three possibilities seem to suggest themselves.

The first – and probably that which the astrologers themselves assumed – is that the birth occurred at the time of exactitude of the conjunction. That is, at 8:45 am GMT, or with the necessary allowances for the accuracy of our tables, between 11:00 am and 11:30 am local time at Bethlehem on the 27th May 7 BC.

The second is that the birth occurred with the conjunct planets rising at the horizon, as this also would seem to have an appropriateness in the circumstances. This time would have been between 1:00 am and

Chart 1
Chart for Exactitude of Conjunction on 27 May 7BC at 8:45am, Bethlehem.

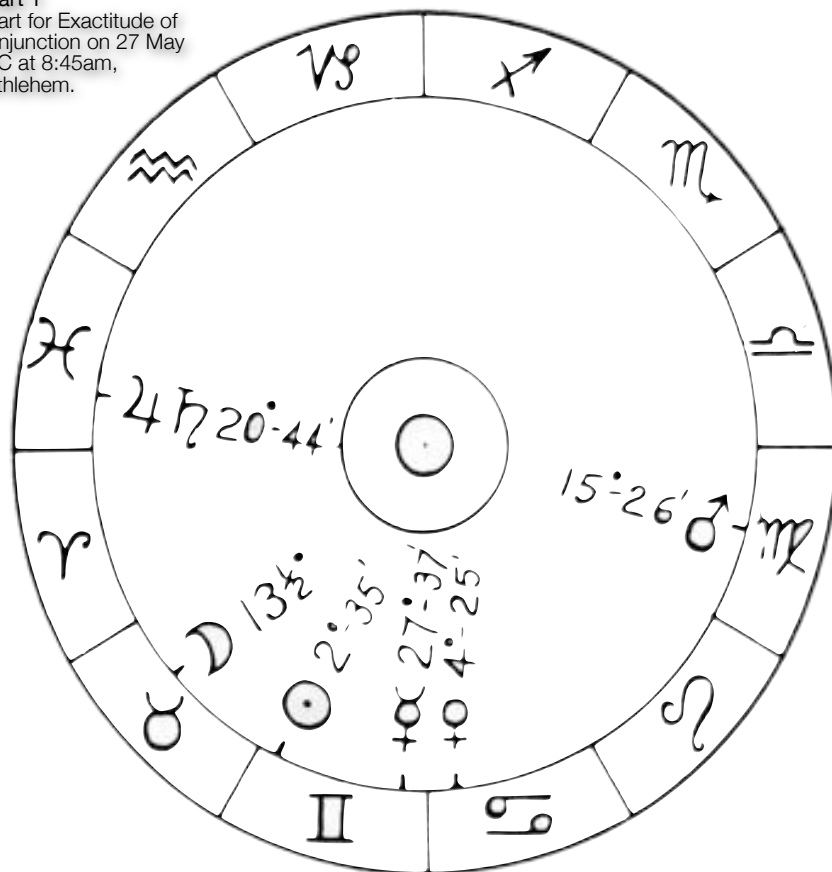


Chart 2
Chart for Exactitude of Conjunction on 27 May 7BC at 11:30am, Bethlehem.

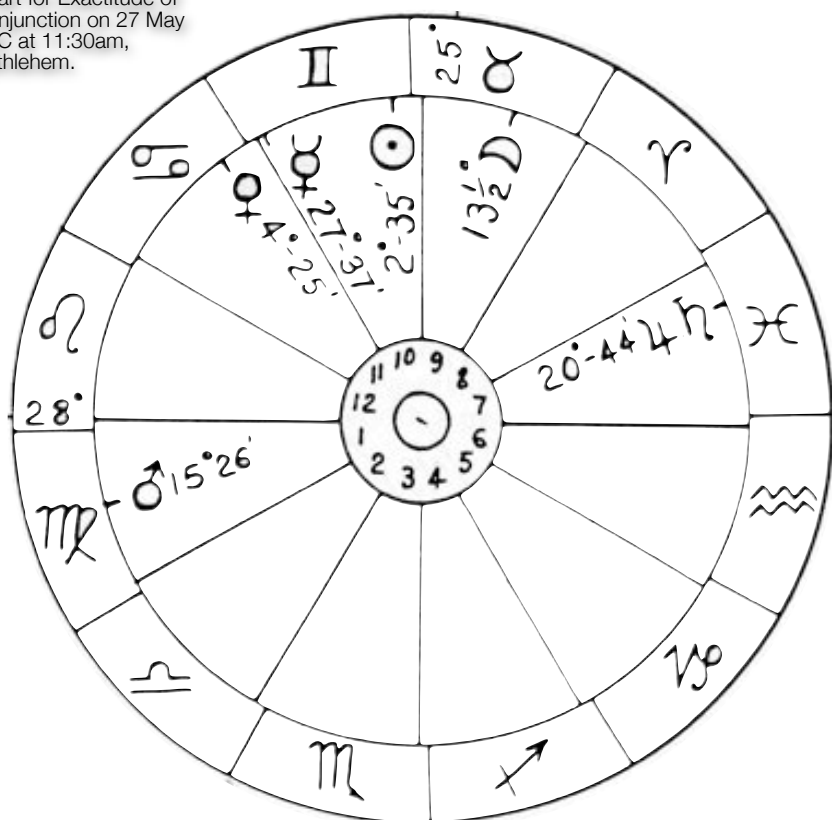
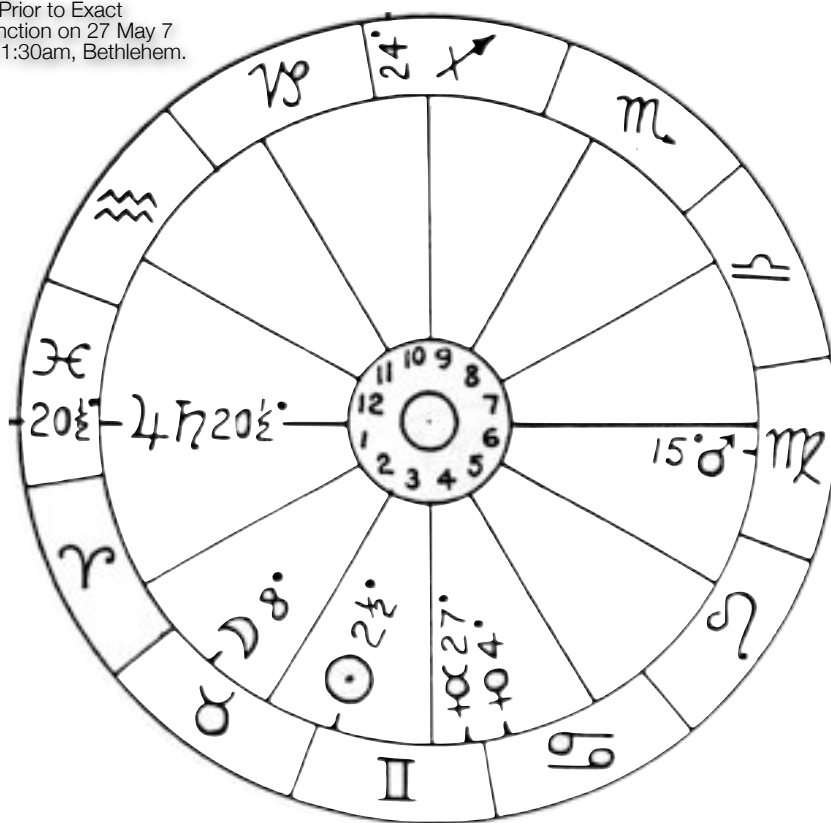


Chart 3
Chart Prior to Exact
Conjunction on 27 May 7
BC at 1:30am, Bethlehem.



2:00 am local time on the 27th May.

The third is the traditional midnight birth.

These three possible charts are shown in Figures 2, 3, and 4. Have we any compelling reasons for preferring one about the other two?

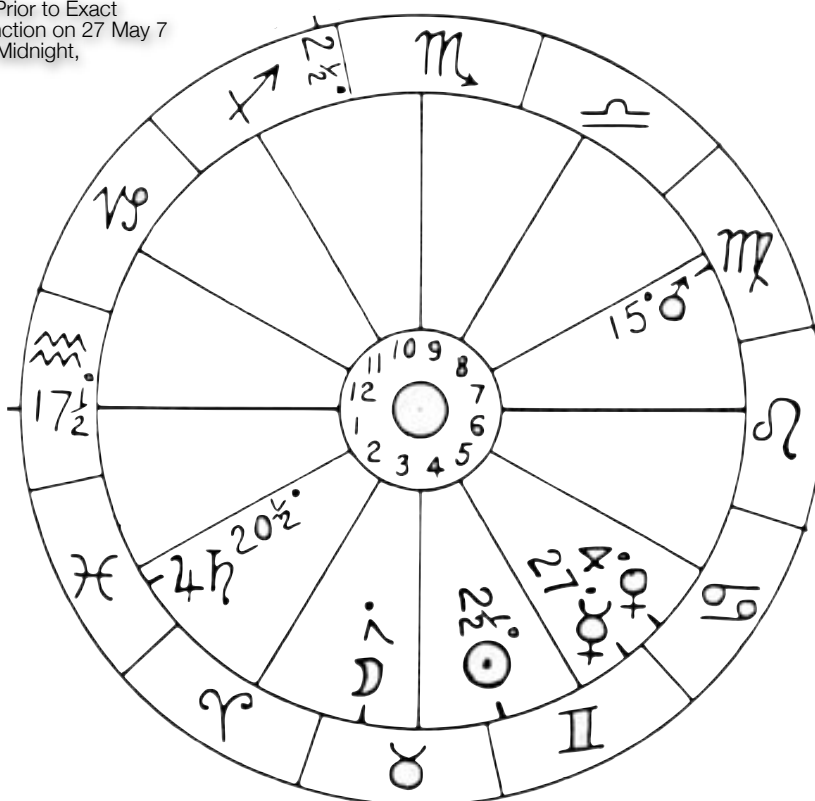
Of the three the second – while there is some symbolic appropriateness in the conjunct planets associated with the Ascendant – it is in fact the least satisfactory. It seems to be quite inappropriate that the Moon should fall in the Second House, even though a Piscean Ascendant is superficially attractive. A case too may be made for the Sun in the Third House. However one is at a loss to explain the significance of Mercury and Venus in the Fourth House from what is known of Jesus' life.

In a similar way the traditional midnight birth is not greatly encouraging. Certainly the two conjunct planets in the First House are helpful, but the presumed importance of the Fourth and Fifth Houses in this map is hard to justify.

We are forced then to examine more carefully the chart erected for the exact time of the conjunction (as near as we can ascertain this). Since it is not possible to obtain an accuracy of greater than, plus or minus ten minutes, from the tables of planetary position, the Ascendant for this chart may vary from between 25° Leo to 29° Leo. A figure of 28° Leo was finally chosen, as it seemed rather more fitting that Mercury should lie in the Tenth rather than the Eleventh House.

There are a number of interesting features in this chart. Mars rising in the First House seems appropriate from what we know of Jesus' nature. Certainly he was not the 'meek and mild' person sometimes portrayed. Long and heated arguments were held with religious leaders, and on one occasion he resorted to physical violence to expel traders from the temple courts.

Chart 4
Chart Prior to Exact
Conjunction on 27 May 7
BC at Midnight,



The Moon in the Ninth House is naturally very appropriate also. The Sun and Mercury in the Tenth House reflect the life of a person whose personality and teaching have achieved a recognition perhaps greater than any other historical figure. In the same way Venus in the Eleventh House is not unsuited to a person with a burning love for humanity and social equality.

A Gemini Sun is unavoidable for any birth close to this date, but the more one considers Leo rising – the true kingly sign – the more proper it seems to become. It is the chart of a person “born king”.

The Piscean influence is however completely due to the position of the conjunction in this sign, which in its mundane relationship is perhaps not quite as would have been expected. Certainly one would normally assume at least a very strong Twelfth House, yet in each of the three possible charts this house is vacant of any planet.

It is then rather startling to find the conjunction in the Seventh House, since certainly neither marriage nor commerce were traditionally a part of Jesus’ life. However this is also the house of the deepest possible ties with others, whether in friendship or in enmity. Perhaps therefore when one remembers the enmity, argument, and hostility which surrounded his public ministry, as well as the Christian belief which holds that he was a person who shared mankind’s lot and estate in a way that no other could, there is a certain significance in the configuration. Indeed, St. Paul talks of the Church as being “the bride of Christ”.

There was also in Jesus’ life a sense of unity with others that should be reflected in the chart at some point. It is interesting to remember that in horary astrology the Seventh House is considered as the one which represents “all extraordinary achievement”. This is then a chart which does deserve to be considered seriously.

Of course the most striking thing that is apparent in the chart is that the birth occurs with the Sun in orb of conjunction to the midheaven. Again this is singularly appropriate, certainly far more so than the traditional view that it was in opposition to the mid heaven (that is, the midnight birth is one with the Sun conjunct to the I.C.). Never the less one must still admit that a birth time approaching midday is one that has never traditionally been considered. Nor is the reason for this hard to find.

St. Luke provides us with this account. Now in this same district there were shepherds out in the fields, keeping watch through the night over their flock, when suddenly there stood before them an angel of the Lord, and the brightness of the Lord shone around them. They were terror struck, but the angel said, “Do not be afraid; I have good news for you. There is great joy coming to the whole people. Today in the city of David, a deliverer has been born to you – the Messiah, the Lord.

Naturally generations of Christians have assumed that the angelic message came virtually simultaneously with the birth of the child. However this is not necessarily the case.

According to St. Luke the angel said, Today... a deliverer has been born. One is not in the least compelled to believe that this event had occurred during the last few minutes, or even during the hours of darkness. The angel is referring to an event that has already been accomplished. If the message was delivered in the late evening (rather than in the small hours of the morning as we tend to assume) it could quite naturally be interpreted that the birth had occurred during the previous daylight hours. There would therefore seem to be nothing in this particular narrative that precludes a midday birth.

Perhaps there is also one other minor indication to enforce this. When the shepherds arrive to see the child everything seems to be quiet and in order. The baby has been washed

and wrapped, and is sleeping in the manger. Mary and Joseph too seem able to receive visitors without too much ado. It appears reasonable to assume that a certain amount of time has passed since the birth took place.

Thus, there appears to be good reasons for proposing that Jesus was born at the time of the first Great Conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in Pisces. In one sense this may be itself considered as the “birth day” of the Piscean age. And at this time, close to 11:30 am in the morning local time on the 27th May in the year 7 BC, Jesus of Nazareth was born in Bethlehem.

In itself the horoscope for this birth is one that promises leadership and distinction. However it is only in retrospect that its full implications can be judged, and the appropriateness of its significance for this unique life assessed.

© RALPH HOLDEN 2013. All rights reserved.

A Note on the Charts

It will be observed that only the visible planets have been shown on the charts, and that the method of domification is that of the Equal House system. That is, the horoscopes are cast in the terms of those techniques that astrologers of the last decade before the Christian era had at their disposal. Ptolemy’s Tetrabiblos - which is the earliest extant description of a house system - employs the Equal House method, but calls it the usage “of the ancient”. In this he seems to be referring to the work of Petosiris who is presumed to have introduced the system about 140 BC. It is interesting, therefore, to seek to interpret the chart from these factors alone, thus to some degree placing ourselves in the shoes of “the Wise Men from the East”.

The Wonders of Technology

JOY USHER

In mid October last year an email was sent around to all state FAA organizations, via their presidents, offering a scholarship for their members to attend an Internet Astrology Conference to be held from 30th November 2012 to 2nd December 2012. The conference, called Breaking Down the Borders 2, was to be conducted in the home states and countries of the respective speakers, and the attendees were 'plugged in' ready to attend the lectures via cyber space. Whoever thought a decade ago that such a thing would be possible!

FAA members were notified and those who showed an interest had their names put into a hat and one winner would be drawn from the lottery. I could not let pass this wonderful opportunity to win free admittance to 12 lectures, plus a recording of these same lectures for me to revisit again at my leisure. I'm not normally successful at these things so when I put my name in I was not expecting much luck in winning the scholarship. I had been to the website and viewed the speakers' list and their topics and thought 'How nice would this be, to win the prize', but I was completely taken aback when I was informed by the FAASA President, Cate Whelan, that I had indeed won the scholarship for the conference.

The Coordinator for both the inaugural Breaking Down the Borders (BDTB) in 2010, and the second BDTB2 last year was Chris

Turner, and it was she who contacted me and was most helpful in answering any questions I may have about the conference. Chris directed me towards the website and suggested I browse through so that I could inform her of my choices in lectures and she could book them in for me. The website was easy to follow with good direction to speakers, lecture information and the time each lecture was due to commence. These commencement times listed American, English and Australian time zones.

I'm sure many of you, like myself, on booking in for astrology conferences, start the rounds of looking up flight times, bus timetables and accommodation possibilities, and then adding up the costs to see what you need to budget for in the next six months. Compare with this, the ease of staying home and having the lecture come to you. But this change in format brings a mixed blessing, with some thoughts of whether this model is going to be to your liking, or whether you feel a little let down that the social side of conferences is sadly missing. After all, half the fun of getting together with other astrologers is the ability to 'chew the fat' over a few drinks and to see once again those lovely faces that you have come to know and love over the years. No matter where the conference is held, on Day One there are always squeals of joy and hugs aplenty as you reconnect with your beloved astro-buddies. By the last day when those

same hugs are ones of separation, you are tired, talked out, and mentally drained, but totally satisfied that astrology really is where you want to be, and you wouldn't swap the past few days 'for all the tea in China'.

So it was with both excitement and great interest that I looked forward to (for me) this totally new experience in conferencing. I suspect the times of the conference were set in sympathy with American audiences as I noted that the Eastern Daylight Saving Times showed a majority of lectures beginning in the early hours of the morning and most finishing for the day by our early afternoon.

Chris sent me confirmation of my lectures (on my birthday, no less, which was a lovely present!) and I waited for the time to arrive. I must have been very excited as I set my alarm for the first lecture at 2:00am on the 30th November so that I wouldn't miss Nick Campion's lecture on Kepler's Mundane Astrology. The appointed time of 2:30am came and went and I became concerned that I had not followed the process correctly as the webpage didn't seem to be activated. After pushing buttons and checking equipment I finally gave up at 3:30am and despondently went back to bed, wondering where I had gone wrong. After sleeping for a few hours I woke, grabbed a morning cup of tea and went back to the website to figure it out afresh. And then it hit me – I was 24 hours too early and

The Wonders of Technology

had logged on on 30th November (in Australia) instead of waiting until 1st December! It only goes to show, technology is only as clever as its operator! So feeling like a complete dummy, I set my alarm for the following morning, so as not to miss Nick's lecture on the correct appointed day.

Over the next three days through IAA's Virtual Campus I attended lectures from England, Turkey, various parts of America, and Australia. Audiences were deliberately kept small so there was always a feeling of intimacy with the speaker and a sense of being one of a privileged few. Attendees were all friendly and keen to engage and share locations before the lectures commenced, and whilst we were muted during the lecture itself, we were given ample opportunity for comment or questions at appropriate times both during and after the lecture. I found all lecturers I listened to relaxed and comfortable in this medium as the stress and nerves of presenting in a foreign space with new equipment was not a problem they had to deal with in this format. Without exception I found them to be ready and willing to engage with their audience as with sight removed, we all had to rely on auditory rather than visual senses, and I believe this allowed for a feeling of closeness and camaraderie between speaker and attendees.

The funny thing is that over the period of the three days I found there to be a parallel between online conferencing and an attendance-based conference. Similar interests in astrology meant that you saw the same names attending the same lectures and a type of 'cyber-friendship' was struck up. What began as polite introductions quickly turned into interesting conversations and even though we may not connect again, there was still that sense of being linked somehow eavesdrop on their conversation. The beauty of

such a medium as online conferencing is that the norms of social behavior are somewhat suspended, and amazingly you are permitted to not only listen, but are generously invited to offer your own opinion on the topic being discussed.

The onslaught of the crazy season of Christmas and New Year has meant that I have not yet had the opportunity to revisit the lectures I attended or to listen to the ones I was unable to attend, such as Rob Hand's lecture on Saturn, but I am very much looking forward to doing so once our teaching year has commenced and things start to settle down. Do I think this venue should replace attending conferences? Definitely not! Sometimes we need to get away from our mundane lives to re-energize and re-focus on why we took up astrology in the first place, and nothing replaces those late night coffees and early morning sneak-ins to the dorm rooms that make you feel like you're 20 years old again!

But I believe there is definitely a need, and a niche, for this type of conference as well. For many astrologers whose day job does not give them the chance to pour over charts or discuss the merits of different approaches to astrology, these online conferences are affordable and can be easily incorporated into their busy schedules, allowing for a much needed jolt to their astrology, as well as providing a good weekend's entertainment. Would I attend another Internet Astrology Conference? Definitely! The financial benefits to the attendees is tremendous, as is the convenience of not having to leave your home environment (if not your bed!) to enjoy such astrological treats. The only way we can ensure the healthy growth of either of these modes of astrological conferencing is to support them both by showing up – whether it's in the flesh or via cyberspace.

Finally, I would like to thank both the FAA and the IAA for their generosity in offering this scholarship, and to let them know that I absolutely enjoyed it to the max and I sincerely hope that we don't have to wait too long for the next Breaking Down the Borders conference (although I do appreciate the time gap is necessary for such a large-scale project, and that all those involved behind the scenes need a well-earned rest!).

© JOY USHER 2013. All rights reserved.



Joy Usher is a practising astrologer who has been teaching astrology since attaining her qualifications in 1995. She is co-principal of AstroMundi, co-author of *Scala Coeli*, and a member of the FAA, PFA and AGE Faculty. She writes and lectures nationally, passionately loves her astrology, her garden and her family, though not necessarily in that order.



Musings from the President



On the weekend of 2nd/3rd February South Australia will be hosting the National Council meeting for the FAA. Each year representatives from all the Australian states get together to sort out issues that affect us all. We tend to call ourselves the 'SA Branch' but this isn't strictly true – back in the 90s the National body and the states all incorporated separately, so FAASA Inc is an affiliated organisation, not a branch. Without incorporation we could not obtain public liability insurance, absolutely essential in this day and age.

It is ten years since SA last hosted a meeting, so we are long overdue. Your committee will have a busy weekend, collecting councillors from the airport, setting up rooms, organising food etc. SA has two representatives on the National Council, myself and Judy Best. With the committee we want to show how good South Australian hospitality is!

The National Council meeting is on Saturday 2nd February, and seven of our visitors have volunteered to do a 40-minute talk for us on Sunday 3rd, enabling us to offer South Australians a mini-conference. This promises to be a fantastic feast of astrological ideas, so I would like to introduce the speakers to you.

Peter Burns, currently from Victoria but originally from WA, will be remembered for his very

popular talk on palmistry at our last mini-conference, ten years ago – this blossomed into a workshop later in the year. Peter is editor of the FAA Journal, and teaches correspondence courses in horary astrology and astro-palmistry. He is well-known as a lecturer and a regular guest speaker on radio. His focus is on introducing classical techniques into modern practice, and he will open the day with a talk on Planetary Hours. Planetary hours go to the heart of astrology in our understanding of the unique quality of time.

Alison Feiner, also from Victoria, has a special interest in Financial Astrology and the Stock Market. She has done courses on options and CFD trading and attended international conferences on financial astrology. Alison writes articles for Peter Burns' website and has spoken on financial astrology, a new emerging field of astrological endeavour that explores the relationship between market prices and the astrological cycles. Alison's topic is Upcoming Transits for Market Analysis. She will be Looking at the transits for the next few months in the light of how the markets have correlated with these transits in the past. If you are interesting in how the financial markets respond to planetary events Alison's lecture will provide some thought provoking material.

Musings from the President

Tess Cullen is the current Chair of the FAA Exam Board, and is a highly respected astrologer and teacher from Byron Bay. When I saw her last January at the Melbourne conference she was delighting in being a new grandmother, and currently she has been facilitating a major art exhibition in Byron Bay. Tess' topic is Hygeia and Chiron – The Healers in the Chart.

Patricia Shepherd hails from Wollongong where she has run an astrology school for many years. I first met Patricia at a national meeting for astrology teachers, I think in 2002 in Melbourne, where she impressed as a person totally committed to excellence in astrology. She went on to become Chair of the Exam Board and is still a current member of the Board. Patricia will be speaking on The Semi-Square – Dividing the Circle by Eight.

Jeanette Lewis-Hill was born in New York and emigrated to Australia in 1975, first living in the Pilbara region, and then in Perth. Her career path has progressed from mechanical draughting, through visual arts practice and curating, eventually to an astrology practice. The astrology itself has progressed from modern theosophical beginnings in 1981, to horary and an increasing focus on traditional modes of the art. Jeanette runs an astrology school, The Orion Academy, and is a frequent

contributor on Perth radio. She is the immediate past-president of FAWA. Her talk will be on Horary Astrology.

Jeanni Monks is President of QFA and a member of the FAA Exam Board. Born in Africa, she has a BA in Psychology, a post-graduate diploma in Education/ Counselling; Masters in Esoteric Psychology & holds the FAA Practitioners Diploma, and merges her astrological and psychological knowledge into her work as a teacher and psychotherapist. Jeanni is a vibrant and unconventional person who was born with Uranus conjunct her Ascendant – no-one could be more expert on her topic: Uranus and its Bohemian Nature!

Our final speaker will be Glorija Lawrence, President of the VAA. Glorija was not raised on astrological jargon like Sun signs and Moon signs. Quite the opposite – she did not even know what a Sun sign was when she started studying astrology with Doris Greaves, back in the autumn of 1983. Glorija is now a successful writer, lecturer and speaker having travelled the world talking on her favourite subject. Her talk is The Tale of Two Horoscopes. It is about two people born on opposite sides of the world, six days apart. It is about how their lives were different, but oh, so similar.

With a speaking line-up like this, and such a variety of fascinating

topics, it will truly be a delight and a privilege to be a part of this astrological feast.

I hope to see you there!

May love and laughter light your days.

Cate



Cate Whelan
PRESIDENT

Federation of Australian Astrologers SA Inc.

PO Box 7443
Hutt Street
Adelaide SA 5000

Southern Star

Aquarius Edition 2013

Editor: Cherrie Barron
Email: editor@faasa.com.au
Phone: 0447 310 571
Internet: www.faasa.com.au

Submissions: All articles and advertisements are to be submitted digitally to the editor via email by the 12th day of each month.

Disclaimer: The Editor reserves the right to edit or refuse submissions to the newsletter. The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Federation of Australian Astrologers or the Southern Star Editor.

© Southern Star, FAA SA Inc. 2013. All rights reserved.

Advertising Rates

Prepayment is required for all Southern Star advertising.

	Full Year	One Issue
1/8 page	\$60	\$10
1/4 page	\$100	\$15
1/2 page	\$185	\$30
Classified (4 lines)		\$10

Membership Fees

(per calendar year)

Full	\$60
Concession*	\$45
Joint Full	\$90
Joint Concession*	\$65
Newsletter Only	\$30

*Concession cards need to be sighted by Treasurer when paying membership subs. Only pension cards and health care cards issued by Centrelink are deemed concession.

Methods of Payment

Post cheque or money order to:

The Treasurer: PO Box 7443, Hutt Street, Adelaide SA 5000

Direct Deposit to FAA SA Inc.

BSB 015367 Account 499070824

COMMITTEE



President

Cate Whelan
08 8557 7417
president@faasa.com.au

Vice President

Anne Hamilton
08 8523 5235
vicepresident@faasa.com.au

Acting Treasurer

Cate Whelan
08 8557 7417
treasurer@faasa.com.au

Secretary

Cynthia Morris
secretary@faasa.com.au

Members

Judy Best
08 8277 2327
astrojudy@yahoo.com.au

Kris Svendsen

0424 682302
krisvendsen@hotmail.com

Peter Whitewood

0403 371 386
peterw@starburstpublishing.com.au

National Executive

Cate Whelan
08 8557 7417
president@faasa.com.au

National Exam Board Coordinator

Tess Cullen
(02) 6680 7151
astrotess@hotmail.com

Cover image: 17th century Firmamentum Sobiescianum sive Uranographia star atlas by Johannes Hevelius. Credit: The U.S. Naval Observatory and the Space Telescope Science Institute.

