

# Teaching astronomy in historic settings.

Teaching in settings that encourage an historical perspective, linking the origins of observational astronomy to the present and looking forwards to future developments has added to the pleasure of sharing our exciting fields of research with students.



Upper left: The famous former Naval College, at Greenwich, England, sits overlooking the River Thames. These buildings are presently occupied by the University of Greenwich and the Trinity College of Music. The University provided a venue for a joint presentation about habitable planets by Doyle and Heath in 2004, which was staged by Greenwich Community College. The site has seen a Norman abbey, and it has hosted the royal palace occupied by the Plantagenets, Tudors and Stuarts. Christopher Wren designed a palace there for Charles II, but work halted in 1665. It was opened as a Naval Hospital in 1705 (becoming the Naval College in 1873) and the University since 1998. Greenwich Community College itself sits at the foot of the hill on which stands Charles II's famous observatory (also designed by Wren), which opened in 1676 with John Flamsteed as first Astronomer Royal.



Lower left: It was the desire to immortalise his memory by finding life on the Moon that led San Francisco millionaire James Lick (1796-1876) to construct his famous observatory on Mount Hamilton, up in the California Coast Ranges.

This view, taken from the stairs of the fire look-out tower on Copernicus Peak, in 2000, shows the scattered domes of the Lick Observatory sitting on the wooded summits of Mount Hamilton. The dome of the Crossely telescope appears in the distance, to the left of the dome for the Shane 3 m, which is the largest dome visible in this picture. To the right is seen the complex of buildings housing the visitor centre and the 36" refractor, used famously by E. E. Barnard in 1892, when he discovered Jupiter's small satellite Amalthea. This was the first satellite of Jupiter to be discovered since the time of Galileo. Doyle, who has conducted research with the Crossely Telescope, has taken groups of his students from the University of California at Santa Cruz to observation sessions with the 36" telescope.

Images: M. J. Heath.