



October 2011

Rarely can one congratulate a colleague on becoming a Nobel Laureate! Congratulations to Brian Schmidt, CAASTRO Chief Investigator and Dark Theme leader, who has shared the Nobel Prize in Physics for 2011. Brian will be awarded his prize in Stockholm on 10 December 2011.



The full citation is:

"The 2011 Nobel Prize in Physics is awarded 'for the discovery of the accelerating expansion of the Universe through observations of distant supernovae' with one half to Saul Perlmutter and the other half jointly to Brian P. Schmidt and Adam G. Riess." [Click here for details.](#)

Also significantly, Professor Stuart Wyithe, the Evolving Theme Leader, was awarded an Australian Laureate Fellow in September. Along with Brian Schmidt and Bryan Gaensler, this means that CAASTRO now has three Laureate Fellows. Few other research teams in Australia can lay claim to such a strong team of researchers.

Since our last newsletter and the commencement of CAASTRO operations on 1 April 2011, CAASTRO has grown substantially. We now have 83 members, and have published 12 papers, including the widely reported paper "[Transformation of a Star into a Planet in a Millisecond Pulsar Binary](#)" by a team led by Matthew Bailes, the CAASTRO Dynamic Theme Leader. This paper has been the subject of over 1,000 print and electronic stories, drawn from all over the world.

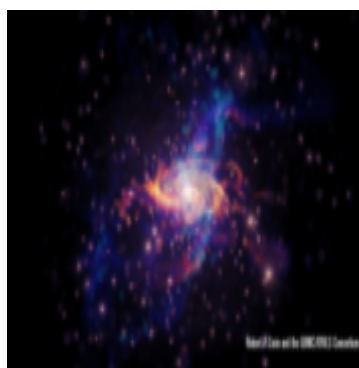
Thank you to everyone who attended the **CAASTRO Launch** on the evening of 12 September 2011 at Sydney Observatory. Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, Governor of New South Wales and Chancellor of The University of Sydney officially launched CAASTRO. A great night was had by all, and special thanks should go to Susan Parker who organised the event. [To see the photos, please click here.](#) All attendees and even passers-by were impressed by seeing the CAASTRO logo projected onto the walls and domes of Sydney Observatory. Hot on the heels of this successful launch, the CAASTRO administrative team is now organising the first ever **CAASTRO Annual Retreat over 22-23 November 2011** at Molonglo Observatory, near Bungendore, NSW. While Susan assures us it will be a more low-key event than our launch, it will be another event not to be missed.



New Member Update

CAASTRO now has 83 members! ([Click here for a list.](#)) Due to this large size, we're unable to welcome all our new recruits individually in this newsletter. We would however like to make special mention of our new students:

- Keith Bannister
- Bradley Greig
- Kitty Lo
- Ben McKinley
- Christina Magoulas



Research Update

In each newsletter, we will showcase some new CAASTRO research. [Click here](#) to read about the recent research activities of Sean Farrell (U. Sydney) and Se-Heon Oh (ICRAR-UWA).

In late August, the CAASTRO Chief Investigators met in Sydney to discuss the CAASTRO Research plan. This event will be held annually, so that we can assess the progress CAASTRO is making towards its

- Mehran Mossammaparast
- Sarah Reeves
- Jennifer Riding
- Jonghwan Rhee
- Morag Scrimgeour

In each CAASTRO Newsletter, we will feature profiles of some of the members of our growing team. In this edition, we profile:

[Research Profile: James Bolton \(U. Melbourne\)](#)

[Professional Profile: Wiebke Ebeling \(Curtin U.\)](#)

[Student Profile: Ben McKinley \(ANU\)](#)

research goals in its three key All-Sky areas - Dark, Dynamic and Evolving.

You will all also be able to have your say on CAASTRO's research plan at the CAASTRO Annual Retreat in November 2011 (see item above). We will hold meetings for all three CAASTRO research themes at this retreat, at which you will be able to contribute your thoughts and ideas.

The Australian universities involved in CAASTRO will soon be installing new CISCO video-conferencing systems, which we will be encouraging you to use to work on your CAASTRO research projects with your colleagues.



CAASTRO Public Outreach & School Engagement

In CAASTRO, we are committed to communicating our science to the public. We also aim to make astronomy accessible, comprehensible and attractive to students – the next generation of scientists. CAASTRO brings together a team of highly skilled researchers who are working on exciting projects, but we are also an interactive and approachable network of local, national, and international experts and resources in Astronomy and Technology.

Our Education & Outreach activities focus on programs that can find multiple uses and/or can be delivered through multiple media channels. We thus aim to increase the awareness of CAASTRO science projects both nationally and internationally.

Our Outreach programs will make extensive use of connectivity and technology, especially our videoconference facilities and our friendly and passionate researchers. For questions, suggestions and feedback, please contact the CAASTRO Education & Outreach Coordinator, Dr Wiebke Ebeling, at Curtin University: outreach@caastro.org or +61 8 9266 9174.



Things you need to know

CAASTRO has a new website. Please have a look at www.caastro.org and provide feedback to coo@caastro.org. Be sure to check out the CAASTRO Launch video! We congratulate and thank Swinburne Astronomy Productions who created this for us.

The CAASTRO internal wiki has now moved. We will soon be making the wiki directly accessible from the main website, but at the moment you will find it at <http://www.sifa.org.au/caastro>. Remember that you need to use your login and password to access this CAASTRO specific information. This includes access to Powerpoint and Keynote Templates, the logo & brochure, and other [marketing material](#). The site also contains information on CAASTRO policies. In particular, please make sure you are aware of the CAASTRO [publications policy](#). It is important that all papers reporting CAASTRO work are identified as such, and that you get approval from the appropriate theme leader(s) before submission.



CAASTRO Meetings and Workshops

CAASTRO has been involved in a number of workshops and conferences over the past six months. Our intention is to run one large international scientific conference plus up to two smaller workshops each year, spread evenly across our Dark, Dynamic and Evolving research themes. Some of CAASTRO's recent activities include:

Novel Radio Telescopes for 21cm Cosmology

Through the International Science Linkages program, CAASTRO received \$50,000 in funding from the Australian Department of Innovation to co-sponsor a meeting in June 2011, in Penticton, Canada, on the frontier topic of "Novel Radio Telescopes for 21cm Cosmology". This unique coming-together of international experts featured ten participants from Australia, plus 41 researchers from the USA, Canada, India and the Netherlands. More information on this conference is [available here](#).

Women in Astronomy

CAASTRO is proud to have been a co-sponsor of the first ever forum on Women in Australian Astronomy, which took place in Sydney in May 2011. The meeting was convened by the newly-established Women in Astronomy Chapter of the Astronomical Society of Australia. [For more information click here](#).

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