



337 WALNUT RD
BICKLEY
WESTERN AUSTRALIA 6076

Phone: +61 8 9293 8255 (int.)
08 9293 8255 (Aust.)

Fax: +61 8 9293 8138 (int.)
08 9293 8138 (Aust.)

www.perthobservatory.wa.gov.au

P E R T H O B S E R V A T O R Y

MEDIA ALERT

release date: **Wednesday, 24 December 2008**

New Year's Day is Sun day at Kings Park

On Thursday 1 January 2009, from 12 noon until 4pm, visitors to Kings Park and Botanic Garden have the amazing and unique opportunity to directly view the Sun in a safe way.

Astronomers from the Perth Observatory will be showing people the Sun using solar telescopes located near the State War Memorial.

"2009 is going to be a big year for astronomy because it has been designated by the United Nations as the *INTERNATIONAL YEAR of ASTRONOMY*", said Government Astronomer for WA, Dr James Biggs.

"It's the 400th anniversary of Galileo's first use of a telescope to study the night sky", explains Dr Biggs, "and astronomers worldwide will be conducting events to celebrate and share their knowledge with general public – the people who fund astronomy via a small portion of the taxes they pay."

"Perth Observatory will commence its celebration of the International Year of Astronomy in WA with an afternoon of viewing the nearest star, our Sun, on New Year's Day" said Dr Biggs.

"And what better place to learn about the Sun and how it powers our planet, than in the solar-powered ecosystem of the beautiful Kings Park and Botanic Garden", he continued.

This activity is the first of many planned to celebrate International Year of Astronomy 2009 in WA.

Please be aware, all telescope activity is subject to suitable, clear skies and good weather.

REMEMBER: NEVER look at the Sun with the unaided eye or with an optical instrument. You may suffer permanent eye damage

**For further information:
Contact Dr James Biggs,
Ph 0407 977 747 or 9293 8255**

