



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

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MEDIA RELEASE

date: 6th February 2008

“Under the Stars” Astronomy Lecture

Former Young Australian of the Year, Professor Bryan Gaensler, will present an “Under the Stars” astronomy lecture at Perth Observatory, Australia’s oldest continuously operating observatory, on the evening of Friday 15 February.

“I’ll be talking about *magnetars* - tiny, super-magnetic, bizarre stars that reveal themselves about once per decade by an unbelievably powerful pulse of gamma-rays”, says Professor Gaensler.

Recently, while working at Harvard University, he was in the box seat for the most recent of these magnetar outbursts.

“In this public lecture I’ll explain in layman’s terms where magnetars come from and what we know about them and will show some of the measurements that my colleagues and I have recorded from latest event”, he added.

“We are most honoured to have Bryan Gaensler, Professor of Physics at The University of Sydney, and Federation Fellow of the Australian Research Council, to present this talk”, says Dr James Biggs, Director of Perth Observatory.

“This lecture should prove to be fascinating - with the appropriate ambience, under the stars, on the Perth Observatory lawn”, added Dr Biggs.

More details are available from the Perth Observatory or on the following web page
http://www.perthobservatory.wa.gov.au//whats_on/summer_lec_2008.html

EVENT SUMMARY

DATE: Friday 15th February, 2008

TIME: 8:00pm, gates open 6:00pm.

LOCATION: Perth Observatory lawn, 337 Walnut Rd, Bickley

BOOKING ESSENTIAL: call the Observatory on 9293 8255.

COST: \$5/person

Note: this is an outdoor event, bring a chair and picnic dinner.

For more information contact:

Dr James Biggs, Director of Perth Observatory 0407 977 747 (or 9293 8255)