



Book Corner

Exploring the History of New Zealand Astronomy: Trials, Tribulations, Telescopes and Transits (Astrophysics and Space Science Library), 2016, Wayne Orchiston, Springer (Switzerland)

A copy will be available in the Library shortly. US\$135+ from Amazon but discounts available if purchased through RASNZ.

Review:

This is a much needed collection of New Zealand's astronomic history by one of the leading international astronomic historians specialising in the Australasian and South Pacific Region - New Zealander Wayne Orchiston. The book is a collection of Orchiston's analysis of history spanning about 60 years of his interest in astronomy and 25+ years working as an astronomic historian.

It contains 23 topics starting with Orchiston's past work appropriately supplemented/expanded for this book. They cover the initial Polynesian settlement in New Zealand, Maori astronomy, New Zealand legs of the three voyages of Captain Cook, historic telescopes and observatories, transit of Venus of 1874 and 1882, solar eclipse of 1885, notable astronomers and their activities and the start of radio astronomy in New Zealand. The many illustrations and tables that accompany the text enhance the experience for the reader. It is a collection that one can dip into to suit one's interest. The ones that attracted my interest were the chapters on the astronomical aspects of Captain Cook's voyages, the discussion on Ronald McIntosh (an Auckland based astronomer) and the discussion on John Grigg's work on astrophotography.

The book provides an excellent foundation on the astronomic history of New Zealand. Orchiston has handled the topics in a masterful manner and we are fortunate to have these histories documented with meticulous analysis, great illustrations and comprehensive references. Orchiston has plans to complete a second volume which will hopefully complete New Zealand's national astronomical history. *Nalayini Davies, 30 May 2016*

"Gravitational Sensations" – Janna Levin, 15 May 2016



AAS Librarian, Jerina Grewar, getting Janna Levin to autograph her book *Black Hole Blues and other Songs From Outer Space* (reviewed in the May 2016 Journal) for the Library following her talk "Gravitational Sensations" at the Auckland Writers' Festival on 15 May 2016. This excellent talk suitably supplemented the book. Among other things, Levin demonstrated the likely sounds generated from the various celestial events that result in detectable gravitational waves. These were determined through modelling which had helped with the immediate identification of the now famous 14 September 2015 detection. *Nalayini Davies, 30 May 2016*