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Asymptotic Giant Branch Stars in the Local Group



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Patricia Whitelock was educated in London at University College and the Imperial College of Science and Technology. She is currently an astronomer with the South African Astronomical Observatory (of which she is a former Director) and a Professor with the University of Cape Town. She is a member of the Academy of Science of South Africa, an Associate of the Royal Astronomical Society of the UK and an honorary member, as well as former President, of the South African Institute of Physics. Her scientific interests cover the late stages of stellar evolution, Galactic structure and Local Group Galaxies.

Abstract

I will discuss near-infrared observations of Asymptotic Giant Branch (AGB) variables in the Milky Way and in various Local Group Galaxies. Some emphasis will be put on the period-luminosity relation for large amplitude AGB variables, because Gaia will establish a calibration for this which will allow such stars to rival Cepheid variables as extragalactic distance indicators. I will also describe some work on interacting binaries involving AGB stars, including modelling of their mass-loss characteristics. These symbiotic stars are possible progenitors of type Ia supernovae and therefore of interest to a broad community.



All are welcome! Tea, coffee, biscuits will be served at 2:15 P.M.

You are welcome to nominate speakers to Weimin Yuan (wmy@nao.cas.cn), Mei Zhang (zhangmei@bao.ac.cn), Licai Deng (licai@bao.ac.cn), Xuelei Chen (xuelei@cosmology.bao.ac.cn), Shude Mao (smao@nao.cas.cn)