

Programme – Stars, Pyramids & Photographs: Charles Piazzi Smyth, 1819-1900

All events at Royal Society of Edinburgh, 22 George Street, Edinburgh, except where noted.

More information at <https://www.piazzismyth.org>

Monday 2 September

10:30-11:30 Informal archive viewing at Royal Observatory Edinburgh, by arrangement

12:30-14:00 Tour of Calton Hill Observatory and Nelson Monument, by arrangement

15:30-16:30 Informal archive viewing at Royal Observatory Edinburgh, by arrangement

19:30-21:30 Screening of Film "A Residence above the Clouds" followed by Panel Discussion

Tuesday 3 September

8.30-9.00 Registration

9:00-9:10 Welcome: Prof. Mandy MacLean, Vice President of RSE

Session 1 – Chair: Rebekah Higgitt

9:10-11:10 – Astronomy and Observatories

Andy Lawrence, "The past, present and future of the Peripatetic Astronomer"

Samuel di Risio, "The Geography of Astronomy: Photographs of Charles Piazzi Smyth's 1856 Expedition to Tenerife"

Matjaz Vidmar, "Has the Birth of Mountaintop Astronomy led to the Death of Time Service? The Changing Public Role of the Royal Observatory Edinburgh"

Peredur Williams, "Charles Piazzi Smyth's successor at the Royal Observatory: Ralph Copeland"

11:10-11:30 Break

Session 2 – Chair: John Henry

11:30-12:30 – Meteorology and space weather

Katharine Anderson, "Smyth's Hyperborean Storms: meteorology at home and abroad"

Hugh Hudson, "Charles Piazzi Smyth, the Sun as a star, and space weather"

12:30-13:00 – Belief and evidence in science

John C Brown, "Science, non-science and nonsense: The conflict between belief and scientific objectivity"

13:00-14:00 – Lunch

Session 3 – Chair: Daniel Belteki

14:00-15:00 – Metrology and Pyramidology

Michael Barany, "Charles Piazzi Smyth's metrology and the cultural epistemology of heritage and decay"

Boris Jardine and Josh Nall, "The battle of the pyramid standards"

15:00-15:20 – Break

15:20-16:20 – Metrology and Pyramidology (cont.)

Charles WJ Withers, “Modernity, Measurement and ‘the fate of the world’: Piazzi Smyth on Longitude”

Jenny Bulstrode, “Oriental Petrology and the Silicon Valley of the Smyths”

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**18:00-19:00** Public Lecture

**Introduction:** Professor Chris Hall, RSE Curator / Professor Andy Lawrence, Royal Observatory Edinburgh

**Denis Pellerin** “Charles Piazzi Smyth, Royal Astronomer and early Stereo Photographer”

**19:00** Drinks reception

**Wednesday 4 September**

Session 4 – Chair: Andy Lawrence

**09:30-10:30** – Keynote Lecture

**Simon Schaffer**, “Smyth's Elevation: Victorian Astronomy's Vertical Empire”

**10:30-10:40** – Presentation: Niki Vermeulen and Matjaz Vidmar introduce ‘Curious Edinburgh’

*10:40-11:00 Break*

Session 5 – Chair: Tacye Phillipson

**11:00-12:00** – Time Signals

**Edward Gillin**, “Sound and Vision: Charles Piazzi Smyth, the Edinburgh time-gun, and the politics of time for the ear”

**David Rooney**, “National observatories, status, and the public signalling of time”

**12:00-13:00** – Photography

**Sara Stevenson**, Opening the eyes: the Smyths and practice of photography

**Stéphanie Hornstein**, “‘Though both are equally called great’: Charles Piazzi Smyth, the Great Sphinx, and the Egyptian Other”

*13:00-14:00 – Lunch*

Session 6 – Chair: Nicky Reeves

**14:00-14:30** – The Smyth Family

**Osmond Smyth**, “Beyond sibling rivalry...a peek into the family archives”

**14:30-15:30** – Egyptology and Archaeology

**Margaret Serpico**, “Astronomers, antiquarians and ancient Egypt”

**Daniel Potter**, “Charles Piazzi Smyth: Pyramid scholar or Pyramidiot?”

*15:30-15:50 – Break*

**15:50-16:50** – Egyptology and Archaeology (cont.)

**Bill Jenkins**, “*Prisca astronomia*: Charles Piazzi Smyth and the wisdom of the ancients”

**Clive Davenhall**, “Charles Piazzi Smyth and the Great Pyramid: Reception, Influence and Afterlife”