



Press Release

ASX HOLDS ITS 5TH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM: LUNAR EXPLORATION, AT THE BLOOR CINEMA

Featured Speakers include Dr. Robert Richards (Odyssey Moon Limited), John Connolly (NASA), and Prof. Ariel Anbar (Arizona State University)

January 16, 2008 – University of Toronto's Astronomy and Space Exploration Society (ASX) is pleased to announce that its **5th annual "Expanding Canada's Frontiers" Symposium** is featuring distinguished speakers in the Space industry who are scheduled to talk about various aspects of **Lunar Exploration**. This event is taking place on **Friday, January 25, 2008 at the Bloor Cinema** (506 Bloor Street West) in Toronto, Canada. **Doors open at 6:00 PM; event starts at 7:00 PM; reception is at 10:00 PM.**

With lunar missions becoming a revived topic of discussion and interest in the Space industry, ASX is dedicating its 2008 Symposium to the past, present, and future of lunar exploration. Featured speakers include Dr. Robert Richards, Founder and CEO, Odyssey Moon; John Connolly, Lunar Lander Vehicle Engineering Manager, NASA; and Ariel Anbar, Associate Professor, Arizona State University. The Symposium includes a pre-show presentation provided by Spacetime Star Theatre, and a reception open to the entire audience that follows the talks and concludes the program.

Canada's own Dr. Robert (Bob) D. Richards is Founder and CEO of Odyssey Moon, a private commercial enterprise that in recent news was announced as the first team to register for the \$30M Google Lunar X PRIZE. Bob Richards, a Founder of the International Space University, is also Director of the Space Division at Optech Inc., a company developing laser radar (lidar) systems. In his talk, titled "Google Lunar X PRIZE: The New Race to the Moon", Bob Richards outlines, at the ASX Symposium, how a carefully planned private Moon mission could set in motion the criteria that will allow humanity to peacefully develop the Moon as the world's eighth continent. "Odyssey Moon is a commercial lunar enterprise whose driving metric for going to the Moon is sustainable business and commerce," said Robert Richards. "We believe that science, exploration and commerce can co-exist in the exploration and development of the Moon, resulting in benefits for everyone on Earth," added Richards.

John F. Connolly currently leads vehicle design and engineering for NASA's Lunar Lander Project Office at the Johnson Space Center. Since joining NASA in 1987, Connolly has devoted

his efforts to defining the future systems that will return crews to the Moon and transport them to Mars and beyond. In his talk titled "Building the Next Lunar Spaceships", Connolly illustrates details of NASA's next generation lunar mission design at the ASX Symposium. John Connolly commented: "The (Apollo) engineers and scientists who got us to the Moon in the late 1960's were smart - even though they had to invent whole new areas of engineering and science, they got it right. Now we're going back, with more ambitious plans for the Moon and beyond, and I hope someone in the future writes about how our generation got it all right, too."

Ariel D. Anbar is an Associate Professor in the School of Earth & Space Exploration and the Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry at Arizona State University. Anbar is a biogeochemist interested in the past and future evolution of the Earth as a habitable planet. In his talk titled "Life in the Universe: Lessons from a Dead World ", Anbar explains how this knowledge of the Earth is used and applied to the search for inhabited worlds beyond Earth. "The surface of the Moon is an incredibly hostile environment for life," said Professor Ariel Anbar. "However, our ideas about the history of life on Earth, and the possibility of life beyond, are profoundly shaped by lessons learned from the geologic history of this dead world," he continued.

The 5th annual "Expanding Canada's Frontiers" Symposium provides a remarkable opportunity for students, professionals, and the general public to learn about and be inspired by the history and future of Lunar exploration. "ASX is pleased to feature such prominent speakers, and has received a lot of interest not only locally but also beyond the Greater Toronto Area! We are expecting a group of astronomy and space enthusiasts from University at Buffalo chapter of SEDS making a trip to Toronto for this event," said Farnaz Ghadaki, Vice-President of ASX. "Having the event at the Bloor Cinema this year makes the event much more accessible to the general public and enables us to work with local businesses and organizations such as Paupers Pub for the reception and SpaceTime Star Theatre for a pre-show presentation," added Guy de Carufel, ASX's Project Director.

ASX's 2008 Symposium is sponsored and supported by: TD Meloche Monnex, University of Toronto's Department of Astronomy and Astrophysics, Optech Inc., UTIAS, U of T's SKULE™ Engineering Society, and Spacetime Star Theatre. Admission is free for students (with ID), and \$15 for the public (\$20 at the door). To obtain tickets and reserve seats, refer to ASX's website: <http://asx.sa.utoronto.ca/>. To receive automatic news about this and other ASX events, send an email to space.society@utoronto.ca with the subject line "Newsletter Sign-Up".

About ASX

University of Toronto's Astronomy and Space Exploration Society (ASX) was established in 2003 to educate, inspire and intrigue the student body of the University of Toronto and the society at large about astronomy and space exploration. Since its inception, ASX has rapidly grown to over 1200 members, and has organized and hosted more than a dozen major multi-disciplinary events, including symposiums, panel discussions, and the 'Faces of Spaces' lecture series. ASX has collaborative relationships with many groups such as the Canadian Space Society (CSS), U of T Institute for Aerospace Studies (UTIAS), and the International Space School Alumni Association (ISSA), as well as help of many sponsors including TD Meloche Monnex, U of T's Department of Astronomy & Astrophysics, and U of T's Engineering Faculty. With the support of these partners and sponsors, ASX has been able to attract more than 1500 event attendees and reach out to several thousand students every year.

Important information for the media:

Speaker interviews may be granted for January 25, 2008, from 2:30 PM to 5:30 PM.
For inquiries and to set up an appointment, please contact:

ASX

Farnaz Ghadaki, 416.840.4807

or Matt Roher, 416.499.8861

space.society@utoronto.ca (with subject line "Symposium-Media")

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