

Western Science

Western University
DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY

ELIZABETH LAIRD MEMORIAL LECTURE

Tuesday, 23rd October 2018

5:00 p.m.

Arts & Humanities Bldg. Room 1R40

Reception to follow

Prof. Jocelyn Bell Burnell, DBE FRS FRSE FRAS

*Bursts, bangs and things that go
bump in the night:
Transient astronomy*

Abstract:

With developments in computing and in CCD technology, astronomers can now take short exposure observations. These are revealing an amazing wealth of short-duration, transient phenomena which will be described in this talk.

Please Register at laird2018.eventbrite.ca

Biography:

DAME PROFESSOR JOCELYN BELL BURNELL inadvertently discovered pulsars as a graduate student in radio astronomy in Cambridge, opening up a new branch of astrophysics—work recognized by the award of a Nobel Prize to her supervisor.

She has subsequently worked in many roles in many branches of astronomy, working part-time while raising a family. She is now a Visiting Professor in Oxford, and Chancellor of the University of Dundee, and was (the first female) President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh—Scotland's National Academy.

Much in demand as a speaker and broadcaster, in her spare time she gardens, listens to choral music and is active in the Quakers. She has co-edited an anthology of poetry with an astronomical theme—"Dark Matter; Poems of Space."



The Elizabeth Laird Memorial Lectures:

This lecture series was initiated in 1970 to honour Professor Elizabeth Rebecca Laird—long-time associate, colleague and friend of the Physics Department at The University of Western Ontario. It was the first lecture series in the Faculty of Science at Western to carry the name of an individual, which is particularly fitting since she accomplished so many "firsts" in her long and distinguished career.



These lectures are designed to bring to the general public some of the excitement that leading physicists from all over the world have as they understand fundamentals and apply their special talents to solving many of today's scientific and technological problems.

DR. ELIZABETH REBECCA LAIRD was born in Owen Sound, Ontario on December 6th, 1874. Laird wanted to start her graduate work immediately after receiving her B.A. in 1896 from the University of Toronto. Her scholarship applications were rejected on the basis of gender, despite the fact that she had been first in her class for three years.

From 1901 to 1940, as Professor and Head of the Mount Holyoke physics department, Laird trained many women who became active physicists and set an example for the participation of women in research.

In World War II, Laird came out of retirement to work at The University of Western Ontario on the development of radar. She made substantial contributions and was invited to remain at the University. She was a remarkable person.