



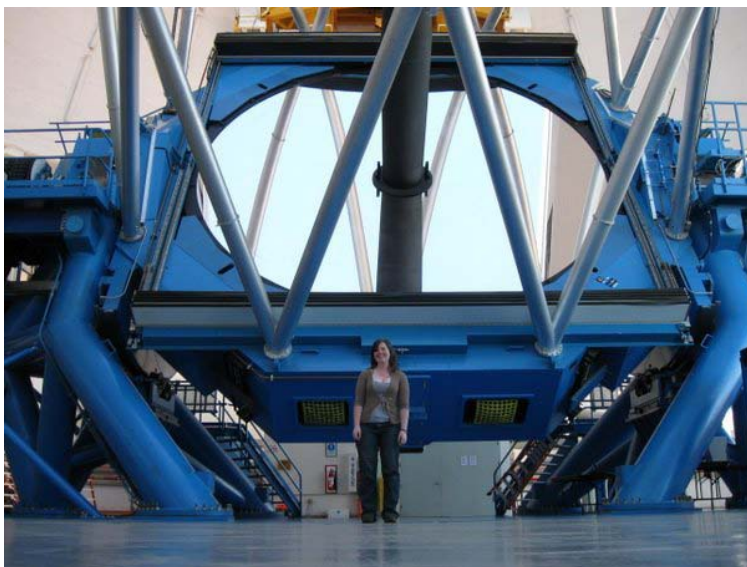
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Courtney Jones, UTAS School of Mathematics and Physics *The structure of the Milky Way (no, not the chocolate one!)*

Astronomy is the only science that can answer the 'big questions': Why are we here? Are we alone? How was the universe created? And despite the stereotype you don't have to be a tweed-wearing-elbow-patched-nocturnal male to join in!

I am currently studying the structure of the Milky Way Galaxy and especially the position and sizes of the spiral arms. This is much easier to do in other galaxies as we can see them in their entirety, but to do the same research in the Milky Way is much harder as we are in the middle of it!



As part of my studies I work at the University of Tasmania's Mt Pleasant Observatory (the big dish near the airport) and I also spent the summer of 09/10 in Chile at the Gemini South Optical Observatory on work experience. The Gemini Observatory is co-located in two of the world's best astronomical observing sites (Chile and Hawaii) and consists of twin 8-metre optical/infrared telescopes that collectively can access the entire sky! One of the many highlights of the trip was spending three nights on the summit of Cerro Pachon. I was able to tour the observatory's facilities, and those of neighbouring SOAR Observatory, and participate in the observations themselves. Being on the summit also provided the best view of the Geminid meteor shower!



Find out more about astronomy in Tasmania at www.utas.edu.au/physics or visit the website for the Grote Reber Museum, www.groterebermuseum.com.au/

The Grote Reber Museum is located next to the UTAS Mt Pleasant Radio Observatory.

www.youngtassiescientists.com