



**Australian Institute of Physics
NSW Branch (August Public Talk)**

“Declassification of fusion research in 1958: the politics, the physics and the Australian connection”

Associate Professor Brian James

School of Physics, University of Sydney

Tuesday 17th August 2010 @ 6.00PM

At the

Slade Lecture Theatre, School of Physics, University of Sydney

Public talk arranged by: The Australian Institute of Physics (NSW Branch)

Entrance is FREE

Summary of talk:

In 1958 the USA and UK decided to declassify their fusion research following frank disclosures of fusion research achievements in the USSR by I.V. Kurchatov during a visit to the UK in 1956. The formal declassification was signalled by the simultaneous publication in *Nature* of papers covering the work in the UK and USA. Prior to the declassification there had been speculation in newspapers about the achievements of the *Zeta* device at Harwell, where fusion research was under the leadership of an Australian, Dr Peter Thonemann. Due to the Australian connection, these events received prominent coverage in Australian newspapers. The politics associated with declassification was very much influenced by cold war rivalry between the major powers, which overshadowed the caution of the physicists involved. The fallout was to tarnish the public perception of fusion research for a considerable period.





Brief Biography of the Speaker:

Associate Professor Brian James is a graduate of the University of Sydney where he obtained a PhD in plasma physics. His research interests remain in the field of plasma physics, particularly spectroscopic diagnostics. In recent years he established an experimental program on complex plasmas at the University of Sydney and has collaborated on diagnostics for the H-1NF heliac magnetic confinement device at the ANU. He has had visiting appointments at the Culham Laboratory (UK), UCLA, Kyushu University and Dublin City University. Professor James was head of the School of Physics at the University of Sydney (2003-

6), and prior to that Associate Dean (Postgraduate) in the Faculty of Science (1996-2002). At the present time he is president of the Australian Institute of Physics.



Detailed Schedule for Tuesday, 17th August 2010:

- 6:00-6.30 pm **REFRESHMENTS, Slade Lecture Theatre.**
- 6.35-7.30 pm **LECTURE by Professor Brian James.**
- 8.00 pm **DINNER with the Speaker at Buon Gusto (Italian), 368 Abercrombie Street, Chippendale.**
E-mail Dr Fred Osman (fred_osman@exemail.com.au) if you will be able to join us for dinner.

Travel Directions:

- Train to Redfern station and walk to the **School of Physics.**
- Buses 422, 423, 426, 428, 448, and 450 from Circular Quay to City Road / King, or 412, 435, 438, 470, 483 etc. along Parramatta Road from Circular Quay.
- Drive and park in various parking lots. You will need to pay for parking (**\$6 flat-rate after 4 pm**) and display the ticket in your car. You may also find parking places on public roads outside the Uni.

Event sponsored by:



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