



NLO STEM & History Group

2026 Monthly Talk Programme

“Quantum Science & Technology Part 2.

“The physics revolution triggered by Planck’s 1900 paper”

Speaker: Robin Devonshire

Tuesday, June 2nd, 2026. 2.30pm – 4.00pm

Norman Lockyer Observatory

Salcombe Hill Road, Sidmouth EX10 0NY

Planck’s innovative methodology to describe blackbody radiation published in 1900 was contrary to the well-established laws of Newtonian physics and Maxwell’s theories of electromagnetism. In 1905 Einstein reinterpreted Planck’s result as an example of wider behaviours of energy quantisation and used this concept to explain the photoelectric effect. Within several decades of these Nobel Prize winning, pioneering, works the new field of quantum mechanics (QM) was established.

The predictions of the new QM models, together with a succession of important new experimental results, necessitated adopting radical new concepts of how the world works at small, atomic, scales and how we interact with it. Uncertainty rules!

QM provided the foundations for the exciting quantum technologies in development presently. For example: cameras that can see round corners; atomic clocks with incredible accuracy; mobile terrestrial GPS systems; computers that use qubits and not bits; and unbreakable encryption. These technologies will be described in Part 3.

N.B. STEM & History talks at the NLO are open, and free, for both NLO Members and non-members. Light refreshments are available (*small donations accepted!*). For travel advice, possible travel assistance, etc., please contact the talks’ convenors, Robin Devonshire and Bob Miles, at: STEM.at.the.NLO@gmail.com