



Western University
DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY

PHYSICS & ASTRONOMY COLLOQUIUM

Date: **MONDAY, 22nd August 2016**
Time: **1:30 p.m.**
Location: **Physics & Astronomy Seminar Room 100**

Dr. David G. Turner

Department of Astronomy & Physics
Saint Mary's University, Halifax

"The Mysterious Stars of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia"

ABSTRACT

An eclectic career in astronomy provides experience in a variety of different professions, ranging from teaching and research to public relations, script-writing, and theatrical production. But all of that, and more, was needed in 2004 when the speaker was drawn into the mystery surrounding the chancel ceiling stars at St. John's Church, Lunenburg, long regarded as the "Mariner's Sky" prior to its destruction by fire during an arson incident on Halloween evening 2001. Replicating the previously-existing Mariner's Sky required more than the scant, available, photographic record of the starry ceiling, and drew upon historical and meager written evidence and shared insights to establish the who, why, when, and how of the Sky's origin circa 1870-72. The solution provided an instant hit and national award for the Discovery Channel, recounted in Jay Ingram's *Daily Planet: The Ultimate Book of Everyday Science*, and continues to be a boon for tourism in Lunenburg. Yet many questions remain, some of which may never be answered. The origins of the sky date to the tumultuous years surrounding Canadian Confederation, and provide insights into the state of astronomy education in Nova Scotia in that era.

Coffee will be available in the Atrium, 2nd floor, at 1:15 p.m.

We look forward to seeing you at the Colloquium! As a courtesy to the speaker and audience, please set your cellphones to "silent" mode. Thanks!