

# The Quest for Extrasolar Planets

Professor Keith Horne

Thursday 6 April 2006 at 6.30 pm

Surface Science Research Centre  
University of Liverpool



For 10 years now, astronomers have been discovering planets that orbit other stars beyond our solar system. With roughly 150 extrasolar planets now known, we are beginning to understand how planetary systems, both similar to ours and radically different, have come into being.

Today's planet-detection methods are sensitive only to large gas giant planets like Jupiter and Saturn, but new techniques and upcoming space missions are expected to reveal the smaller, rocky Earth-like planets, if they are there, and to show which of these, if any, have oceans of liquid water and oxygen-rich atmospheres indicating the presence of life. Thus we are close to knowing if life is commonplace beyond the solar system or very rare.

We welcome members of the Liverpool Medical Institution to this talk

Light refreshments will be available from 5.30 pm

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