

THE HISTORY OF THE CRAB NEBULA

- 1054 AD Discovery by Chinese and Japanese. Visible for 650 days.
- 1731 Nebulosity discovered by John Bevis, English physicist and amateur astronomer.
- 1758 Charles Messier included it in his catalogue as M1.
- ~ 1850 Came to be known as 'Crab Nebula'.
- 1921 Lampland found expansion and noted variability in brightness of patches.
- 1942 Baade measured expansion rate – concluded it exploded 758 ± 36 years previously. The south-preceding star is a possible parent.
- 1948 Bolton and Stanley make the first identification of a galactic radio source with it.
- 1954 Discovery of optical polarization by Vashakidze and Dombrovsky, confirming the synchrotron mechanism of emission proposed by Shklovsky for the Crab Nebula.
- 1957 Radio polarization first measured by Mayer *et al.*
- 1963 Bowyer *et al.* find X-ray source near the Crab Nebula.
- 1964 Small diameter source found near centre of Crab Nebula by Hewish *et al.*
- 1968 Pulsar NP 0532 found in Crab Nebula by Staelin and Reifenstein.
- 1969 Optical pulsar NP 0532 found by Cocke *et al.* at position of south-preceding star in Crab Nebula. Infrared, X-ray and γ -ray emission subsequently detected from pulsar.