

# Contents

<b>A Brief Introduction</b> . . . . .	<b>xv</b>
<b>1 Stellar Evolution – The Basics</b> . . . . .	<b>1</b>
1.1 Distance to the Stars . . . . .	1
1.2 The Nearest Stars . . . . .	4
1.3 The Brightness and Luminosity of Stars . . . . .	12
1.4 The Magnitudes of Stars . . . . .	13
1.5 The Brightest Stars . . . . .	18
1.6 The Colour of Stars . . . . .	26
1.7 The Size and Mass of Stars . . . . .	33
1.8 The Biggest Stars . . . . .	36
1.9 The Constituents of Stars . . . . .	38
1.10 The Spectra of Stars . . . . .	39
1.11 Stellar Classification . . . . .	43
1.12 The Hertzsprung–Russell Diagram . . . . .	59
1.13 The H–R Diagram and a Star’s Radius . . . . .	60
1.14 The H–R Diagram and a Star’s Luminosity . . . . .	64
1.15 The H–R Diagram and a Star’s Mass . . . . .	65
<b>2 Beginnings – Star Birth</b> . . . . .	<b>69</b>
2.1 Introduction . . . . .	69
2.2 The Interstellar Medium . . . . .	69
2.3 Nebulae . . . . .	70
2.4 Molecular Clouds . . . . .	85
2.5 Protostars . . . . .	86
2.6 Pre-Main Sequence Evolution . . . . .	88
2.7 Mass Loss and Mass Gain . . . . .	97
2.8 Star Clusters . . . . .	99
2.9 Stellar Associations and Streams . . . . .	114
2.10 Star Formation Triggers . . . . .	117
<b>3 The Main Sequence and Beyond</b> . . . . .	<b>121</b>
3.1 Introduction . . . . .	121
3.2 Our Nearest Star – The Sun . . . . .	122
3.3 From the Surface to the Core . . . . .	122
3.4 The Proton–Proton Chain . . . . .	125
3.5 The Flow of Energy from the Core to the Surface . . . . .	128



## Observer's Guide To Stellar Evolution

3.6	Main Sequence Lifetimes . . . . .	130
3.7	Towards the Red Giant . . . . .	134
3.8	Helium Burning and the Helium Flash . .	141
3.9	Red Giants, Star Clusters and the H-R Diagram . . . . .	144
3.10	Post-Main Sequence Star Clusters: The Globular Clusters . . . . .	146
3.11	Stars That Pulsate . . . . .	154
3.12	Cepheid Variables and the Period-Luminosity Relationship . . . . .	158
3.13	Cepheid Variables: Temperature and Mass . . . . .	161
3.14	RR Lyrae and Long-Period Variable Stars . . . . .	162
<b>4</b>	<b>The End Point – Star Death . . . . .</b>	<b>169</b>
4.1	Introduction . . . . .	169
4.2	The Asymptotic Giant Branch . . . . .	170
4.3	Dredge-Ups . . . . .	172
4.4	Mass Loss and Stellar Winds . . . . .	173
4.5	Infrared Stars . . . . .	173
4.6	The End of an AGB Star's Life . . . . .	175
4.7	Planetary Nebulae . . . . .	183
4.8	White Dwarf Stars . . . . .	190
4.9	Electron Degeneracy and White Dwarfs . .	191
4.10	The Chandrasekhar Limit . . . . .	191
4.11	White Dwarf Evolution . . . . .	193
4.12	White Dwarf Origins . . . . .	194
4.13	High-Mass Stars: Nuclear Burning and an Onion . . . . .	197
4.14	Iron, Supernovae and the Formation of the Elements . . . . .	201
4.15	The Supernova Remnant . . . . .	205
4.16	A Final Note on Supernovae . . . . .	209
4.17	Neutron Stars, Pulsars and Black Holes . .	211
4.18	From Beginning to End . . . . .	214
	Appendix 1 Degeneracy . . . . .	215
	Appendix 2 Books, Magazines and Organizations . . . . .	217
	Appendix 3 The Greek Alphabet . . . . .	221
	Appendix 4 Colour Photographs . . . . .	223
	Object Index . . . . .	231
	Subject Index . . . . .	235