



Back in 1970 when Flare Stars were the hot numbers on the observational scene a group of Auckland visual observers claimed to have seen a ‘flare’ on eta Carinae. This seemed unlikely, given the nature of the object, but Stan Walker and Brian Marino were persuaded to measure the object. This carried on until about 2000, in the later years with Harry Williams in Mt Eden and Bill Allen in Blenheim. These three light curves show the changes in eta. There is a gradual brightening, with variations due to the events around periastron every few years. The B-V colour shows a slight reddening of eta over the period. The U-B curve is more difficult to interpret as it is heavily dependent upon the size of the focal plane aperture, but it shows a slight increase in intensity.