

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at City Computers
on 10 June 1998 at 19:45 pm

1. The Chairman, Mr J Watson, declared the meeting open at 19:45 & welcomed the 19 members present. A special welcome was extended to 2 visitors from the Natal Centre & to Mr & Mrs Christianson from Cape Town.
2. Apologies were received from 8 members.
3. Minutes of the AGM for 1997/1998

The minutes of last year's AGM were read and accepted unanimously.

Proposed - Mr P Hawkins Seconded - Mr R Clifford

4. Matters Arising

No matters arising with regard to the 1997/1998 minutes.

Mr J Watson brought the meeting's attention to a mosaic of our centre's logo, which was done by Mr R Clifford, which will be displayed on the observatory door.

5. Chairman's Report

Mr Watson discussed the activities of the past year & although it was a year of mixed fortune, the centre continues to strive. He thanked the small outgoing committee for their work this past year.

The following topics were reviewed:

- i) *Venue* - The problems which were experienced with St Charles in February this year have still not been properly resolved & some of our property is still missing. A number of options are available though for a new permanent venue, but for the meantime thanks go to City Computers for providing us with a temporary location.
- ii) *Observatory* - Excellent progress has been made this past year & thanks go to Mr R Clifford & his sub-committee of Messrs L Hedder, I Schroeder, J Loughlin & C Lake.
 - Mr J Loughlin was awarded the centre's Meritorious Service award in recognition of his hard work at the observatory.
 - The official opening is likely to be in August.
- iii) *Monthly Meetings* - Thanks were expressed to those people who presented talks, & to Prof. Warren for his lecture at the university.
- iv) *Treasurey* - Thanks to Mr P Hawkins, our current treasurer, for all his efforts.

The centre is in need of some fundraising now after all the expenses of the observatory. However, some generous donations have been received this last year, taking special note of those received from the Ladysmith & Bulawayo societies.

 - A big thank you was given to Mr K Schutz & wife for their donation of a porcelain doll, to be used as a prize in a competition, with all proceeds coming to our centre.
 - A grant in aid has been applied for which, if granted, will also provide the centre with funds.
- v) *Education* - It has been a busy year for education, with various talks & viewing evenings taking place. The annual training course has been arranged at Umgeni Valley for July & August this year.
- vi) *Membership* - 8 New members & 2 resignations.
- vii) *Library* - Although the library does not have a permanent home at present, because of our problems with St Charles, there have been a number of additions to it over the past year in the form of new books & videos.
 - Some Sky & Telescope magazines have also been bound.

viii) *Stardust* - Thanks were given to our editor Mr R Roth for keeping *Stardust* interesting & lively, as well as to Mrs B Lawrence for her contributions.

ix) *General* - Although the centre has experienced little contact with other centres this past year, the Izinkanyezi Symposium was very successful & enjoyed by all.

- Mr A Gray, our council representative, has kept us up to date with council matters.

- Earlier last year some members travelled to Pennington to assist Mrs P Mitchell in disposing of some telescopic equipment belonging to her late husband. The day was enjoyed by all & later proved to be successful.

- Mr J Watson urged members to become involved & assist in future events planned for the society, including the Star Party in August. Lists were provided for people to write their names down who could help at these events.

- In conclusion Mr J Watson wished the 1998/1999 committee every success.

Proposed - Mr M Christianson

Seconded - Mr K Schutz

6. Treasurer's Report

A statement of Income & Expenditure was given out to each present. It reflected a balance as per bank book 6 June 1998 of R684,20.

- Due to the problems encountered with Perm Bank over the last year it was the committee's decision to change to NBS. Only 1 account is operated now with lower bank charges.

- Concern was shown towards the large Sundries amount, this was explained as being observatory costs, ASSA subscriptions, handbooks ect.

Proposed - Mr M Christianson

Seconded - Ms K Hampson

7. Election of Office Bearers 1998/1999

6 members were elected to serve on the 1998/1999 committee. They are:

Messrs. J Watson, R Roth, P Hawkins, I Schroeder, R Clifford &
Ms B Lawrence

- Mr J Watson thanked 2 outgoing committee members; Ms K Hampson for her work on the committee over the past 4 years, & to Ms L Hearmon, the centre's secretary for the past year.

- Mr C Lake made special mention of our Chairman, & thanked him for his hard work & dedication to the centre.

8. Other Business

Mr M Christianson brought greetings from Mr A Gray, & salutations were received from the Durban centre via Mr R Field.

- The question of subs was brought up & after much deliberation it was decided to leave them as is for the time being & be reviewed later on in the year.

- Our guest speaker for the evening was Mr R Field with a slide show entitled 'Grand Tour of the Universe'.

His presentation was enjoyed by all & Mr J Watson thanked him very much for taking time out to come & speak to us.

Mr J Watson declared the meeting closed at 21:45.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY



ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Natal Midlands Centre

AGM

10/06/1998

members

A. Oswald.

John Watson

Leslie Hammon

Danny Tunmer

Jennifer McKenzie

A. Norris

Roger Clifford.

H. Buchler.

W. Foster

P. Hawkins

K. Schutz.

R. K. Gull.

Chris Lisk.

Patrick Reynolds

Kenny Hampson

Gwan Schraepfer

John Leyland

M. J. Christensen

Louise Christensen

Visitors

Rebekahs. Jacobs. 19K.

Apologies

Dr A. Scheuer

Roy. Joubert

Prof M. Przestyl

J. Stewart

J & B. Lawrence

Nicholas

Pat McKenzie

CHAIRMANS REPORT 1997/98

The past year has certainly been one of mixed fortunes for our Centre, but I am happy to report that we continue to thrive as a society, and thereby fulfil the requirements of our constitution.

It has also been a very busy year in various ways, and I must at the outset pay tribute to the small committee who have had a tough time keeping the wheels turning. Thank you for your hard work and support.

1. Venue

As most of you are aware, we were quite unexpectedly denied the use of the audio-visual room at St Charles College in February 1998, and have not yet been able to find a suitable 'home' for regular meetings. Thanks are due to City Computers for allowing us the use of their meeting-room as a temporary measure over the past 4 months. I am sad to report that after submitting a full inventory of missing property to the Headmaster of St. Charles in February, we have not yet received any form of apology or compensation.

2. Observatory

Undoubtedly the highlight of the year has been the remarkable progress that has been made in completing the building at Worlds View. Originally planned as a 4-5 year project, Roger Clifford and his sub-committee have effectively finished the job in just over 2 years. As well as thanking Roger for his enthusiasm and untiring efforts, I must single out John Loughlin for special thanks, as he has virtually laid every brick single-handedly in his own time. We hope to arrange the official opening of the observatory during August at a public 'star party' which will double as a fund-raising effort.

3. Monthly Meetings

A variety of programmes have been arranged during the year, and thanks are due to those members who prepared & presented talks. We were also grateful to Prof Warren (University of Natal) for his well prepared and stimulating lecture.

4. Funds

Philip Hawkins has kept a tight grip on the purse strings despite some fairly heavy expenditure on the observatory, and we thank him for his efforts in keeping us in the black. There is however a need for some serious fund-raising to repay the money that has been so generously loaned for the completion of the building. I must also

make mention of all the generous donations that have been received from members, and in particular, donations received from the Ladysmith and Bulawayo astronomical societies. In the meantime, we await the outcome of an application for a grant-in-aid to the Pietermaritzburg-Msunduzi TLC.

5. Education

Once again, regular talks/slide shows/star parties have been arranged for various organisations, and our annual training course in Basic Astronomy will be held in July at Umgeni Valley.

6. Membership

8 new members joined the Centre during the year, with only 2 resignations being recorded. It was however necessary to remove some 15 names from the mailing list due to non-payment of subs. We also sadly said goodbye to Rusty and Ann Jarman (to Jeffreys Bay) after his many years of loyal service and editorship of 'Stardust'.

7. Library

Although currently in limbo, there have been some new books and videos added to our collection, and some volumes of Sky & Telescope have been bound for convenience.

8. Stardust

Thanks to the efforts of Rogan Roth, this monthly newsletter continues to be an interesting and easy-to-read publication. Thanks also to Bianca Lawrence for her regular contributions.

9. General

- a) There has unfortunately been little direct contact with other ASSA Centres, but a few of us were able to spend a day with the Natal Centre at Izinkhanyezi early in May
- b) Andrew Gray (our alternate Council Rep) has been diligent in keeping us up to date with ASSA affairs, and always offers us lots of encouragement
- c) It was good to be able to help Pat Mitchell dispose of the late Harry Mitchell's collection of astronomical equipment

I wish the 1998/99 committee all success, and exhort all members of the Centre to get involved as much as possible.

John Watson
Chairman



ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Natal Midlands Centre

Income and Expenditure Statements as at 6 June 1998

INCOME

Balance at Bank as at 3 July 1997	568.65
Subscriptions	2,360.90
Sales	492.00
Donations	1,913.39
Interest	<u>50.28</u>
	5,385.22

EXPENDITURE

Transfer to Observatory Fund	1,504.22
Stationery	123.87
Refreshments	153.02
Building Expenses	923.97
Postage	862.14
Photocopies	269.32
Sundries	<u>1,780.56</u>
	5,617.10
	(231.88)

OBSERVATORY FUND

Balance as at 3 July 1997

INCOME

	929.54
Transfer from General Fund	1,504.22
Donations	401.00
Interest	<u>9.68</u>
	2,844.44

EXPENDITURE

Building Materials	<u>1,928.36</u>
	1,928.36

TRANSFERED TO GENERAL FUND (New NBS Account)

916.08

Balance as per Bank Book 6 June 1998

R684.20

PETTY CASH

Cash on Hand as at 3 July 1997

50.90

EXPENDITURE

Stationery	7.60
Phone Calls	<u>10.00</u>
	17.60

R33.30

A.S.S.A. - NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE

1998/1999 COMMITTEE

Chairman	Mr R.Roth
Secretary	Mr J.Watson
Treasurer	Mr P.Hawkins
Newsletter	Mrs B.Lawrence
Observatory & Instruments	Mr R.Clifford
Library	Mr I.Schroeder
Education	Mr J.Watson
P.R.O.	Mrs B.Lawrence
Council Rep	Mr J.Watson

Addresses & Telephone numbers

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Mr J.Watson	P O Box 330,Hilton,3245	0331-433646 (h)
		0331-452510 (w)
Mr P.Hawkins	1 Ashbourne,Harwin Rd,Pmburg,3201	0331-460303 (h)
Mrs B.Lawrence	P O Box 553,Hilton,3245	0331-3559478 (h)
		0331-3559283 (w)
Mr R.Clifford	145 Howick Rd,Wembley,Pmburg,3201	0331-423625 (h)
Mr I.Schroeder	6 Goodwood Place,Lester Park,Pmburg,3201	0331-443084 (h)

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