

Natal Midlands Centre (NMC) - Astronomical Society of Southern Africa

Minutes of Committee meeting held at NMC Observatory, Monday 17th November 2003 at 19H30

Present: John Watson (JW, Chair), Roger Clifford (RC), Frikkie de Bruyn (FB), Rogan Roth (RR),
Colin Kay (CK), Trevor Morley (TM)
Apologies: Willie van der Merwe (WM)

0. Corrections to previous minutes 13th October 2003

Typo's to be corrected..... TM

1. Matter Arising from previous minutes

- (1.4) ASSA banner – This matter and ASSA correspondence, including errant ASSA Council minutes, to be finalized with Mr Turk. The bank had not accepted the ASSA cheque that had been incorrectly made out regarding banner payment..... JW

New Matters Arising

2. Planning

- JW thanked CK for his 'Multiverses' November presentation.
- Planned talks are left as follows:
December 10th Radio Astronomy RR
January 2004 no meeting
February 11th 2004.. Quantum look at the early universe FB
March 08th 2004..... ?
April 12th 2004..... Interstellar medium FB
- FB's interstellar medium talk to comprise topics of 'life of stars', 'stellar evolution', 'death of stars' with a topic presented every alternate month.
- Sources for free use of data projectors are required. Hiring from UNP costs R50 per night. ALL

3. Membership

- Hilton College NMC membership is uncertain. The school is to be contacted as regards the future of its Astronomical Society. JW

4. Correspondence

- A letter had been received from Anne Turton noting that NMC's "Star Dust" does the rounds in the UK.
- JW contacted Rusty Jarman who supplied the quiz answers
- The SASOL Science Festival is 17-23 March 2004 . It contains nothing about astronomy except for a presentation on 'Science, Complexity & Nature of the Universe' by UCT's Prof. George Ellis.
- Mr van Blommenstein indicated that the new handbook would cost R35 per copy and comprise 99 pages. ASSA members get this free but we need to inform NMC members accordingly. He'd also supplied lunar occultation information for those interested.
- Duplicate copies of 'Basic Space Science Workshops' is been received. This to be sorted out..... TM
- Relevant updated documents had been sent to ASSA for the handbook. Some information still to be sent to Brian Fraser. JW
- Usual correspondence received from other ASSA branches (Taurus, Cape Observer).

5. Treasurer

- R5591.37 current total; R3941.54 expenditure already accounted for leaving about R2500.00 for upgrading and maintaining the NMC Observatory and equipment.
- Some discussion on payment formats of annual subscriptions took place comparing NMC to local Bowling Clubs. It was decided that the status quo would remain as there were no complaints about subs in the recent questionnaire.
- Original documentation of the NMC Lotto application to be located and followed up..... JW

6. Stardust

- Scrap book corner to be pursued. RC
- FB has submitted an article. FB
- Space article required..... TM

7. Library

1. There are technical articles available for binding if need be. CK,TM
2. Girl Guides to be sounded out about a NMC library cupboard being placed in the hall. JW

8. PRO

1. Errant Witness and Howick advertisements had been attended to.
2. The Witness to be sorted out regarding their 'events calendar' as there seems to be a lag phase between the time they're informed and the time the correct information is printed or withdrawn from printing..... WM

9. Observatory & Instruments

1. Mowing, creaky wheel and wooden strips for hanging posters to be attended to..... TM
2. JW to ask Harry Tumner to look at the 12" telescope.. JW
3. Dancer to be stored at RR's. JW,RR
4. Article to make a DIY Barlow lense from a 2x camera adapter to be located. RR.
5. Telerad sighter has been located for mounting on the 12" telescope. TM
6. RC presented an article on a binocular stabilizing mounting.
7. General work party to be held Nov 15/16th; also possible work on October 24th/25th and November 1st/2nd TM

10. Education

1. Nothing to report.

11. General

1. Weather depending, there would be a Firday or Saturday viewing evening the weekend before Christmas.

Meeting ended at 21H03

next meeting: Monday 19th January

venue: John Watson's residence, 16 Manor Close, Hilton, tel 033 – 343 3646