

Astronomical Society of Southern Africa - Natal Midlands Centre

Minutes of Committee meeting held at John Watson's residence, Monday 17 May 2004 at 19H30

Present: John Watson (Chair), Rogan Roth, Willem van der Merwe

Apologies: Trevor Morley, Roger Clifford, Colin Kay, Frikkie de Bruyn

1. Matters arising

- 1 Difficult to run a Society with less than 50 % turn out at 2 consecutive comm. meetings !
Should we change day, time, frequency ?

2. Planning

- 1 Thanks to RC and RR for excellent presentations at monthly meeting
- 2 Planned talks are:-
 - 9 June AGM - guest speaker Dr V.Couling with new telescope ? JW
 - JW, RR and WM happy to stay on committee
 - CK not available - JW to sound out RC, TM and FB & others JW
 - 17 July Mid-winter star party (Saturday)
 - 11 August 2nd presentation on stars "The life of Stars" FB
 - 8 September 'The interaction of light and matter' - Nigel Wakefield
 - 13 October 3rd presentation on stars "The death of Stars & stellar remnants" FB
- 3 Public viewing programme commences on 4 / 5 June
- 4 Basic Astronomy course starts on 24 June
5. Dave Sykes (friend of WM) prepared to give 15 min talk on 'Genesis & the Universe'
Invite him to the August meeting WM

3. Membership

- 1 New Member Johan Hefer Prop J. Watson Sec W. vd Merwe
- 2 Prospect Dave McElwee

4. Correspondence

- 1 JW still researching the Roberts refractor info JW
- 2 Arlene Mann (S&T magazines) not at home - RR to e-mail & WM to follow up RR/WM
- 3 We must respond to e-mail re Matroosberg observatory and refer them to ASSA RR
- 4 Newletters form Johannesburg and Garden Route

5. Treasurer

- 1 Balance at end of April R 4163,57 (last handbook sold at May meeting)
- 2 Subs invoices to go out in June
- 3 Barlow lens for 12" telescope purchased from N/Wakefield for R300,00
- 4 Rust sealer / inhibitor paint required at observatory - cost approx R100,00 - approved RC
- 5 Must follow up on Lotto funding JW
- 6 Rogan trying to find a 'slinky' to buy RR/JW

6. STARDUST

- 1 RR has lead articke for June from F de Bruyn

7. Library

- 1 CK unable to carry on due to damaged ribs
- 2 S&T magazines from M.Prozesky (JW to check) and Arlene Mann (see 4.2 above) JW
Spares to be offered to our own members and then to Gauteng Centre (Gill Stewart)
- 3 Are there any S&T volumes still being bound ?
- 4 Generous donation of books from R.Clifford to be processed
- 5 J.Houston has some 'missing' videos - RR to collect and advertise in Stardust for others
to be returned RR

8. P.R.O

- 1 Basic Astronomy course and Viewing programme to be advertised in newspapers
and at shopping centres WM
FB/JW
- 2 RR has written to N.Witness about lack of lights on W.View radio tower

9. Observatory & Instruments

- 1 More mowing done - what are pros and cons of burning off the rest of the plot ? TM
- 2 Creaky wheel repaired and 12" telescope aligned (Telerad sight to be fitted)
- 3 Barlow lens purchased, and signs have been replaced
- 4 Tracks need de-rusting etc with some urgency - paint etc to be purchased RC/JW
- 5 Work party OK - the same old crowd except for J.Hefer
- 6 Still in need of wooden strips to put on walls for hanging up charts etc TM

10. Education

- 1 Kings School, Nottingham Rd (Clarens Botha) - revised date is 15 June (Tues) RR/JW
- 2 Request for another trip to Underberg on 22 June (Tues) - not this time ! RR
- 3 Rotary talk on 18 May cancelled again ! - RR not available any more !
- 4 JW spoke to Hilton Womens Institute on 12 May
- 5 16 people have now registered for the Basic Astronomy course
(RR away 8/7 to 18/7, JW in hospital 5/7 to 9/7)

11. General

- 1 RR to approach L.Christianson for a photo of Mike - picture & commentary rather than
a plaque

Next meeting on 14 June 2004 at 19h30 - new committee

- venue to be confirmed