



Astronomical Society of Southern Africa  
Natal Midlands Centre

P.O. Box 2106  
Pietermaritzburg 3200  
KwaZulu-Natal  
Rep. of South Africa

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 9/6/04

### MEMBERS

*Jed Bates*

ROY JOUBERT  
*Frikkie de Bruyn*

PAUL INMAN

*Johan Hfer*

*Tom Schroeder*

~~W~~ *Wimmer*

*Roger Duffin*

*Robert Duffin*

*Roger Duffin*

TREVOR MOUET

JAKE ALLETSOON

*Ran Banaganath*

*John Watson*

### VISITORS

### APOLOGIES

PHILIP HAWKINS

COLIN KAY.

**ASSA - NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE**  
**CHAIRMANS REPORT 2003 / 2004**

Fellow members of the Natal Midlands Centre, Ladies & Gentlemen

I count it a privilege to have been Chairman of your Centre during this 30th year of the Centre's existence, and am grateful to have been associated with it for all of this period. Forgive me if I have been a little harsh in some of my remarks printed monthly in our newsletter STARDUST, but I am increasingly dismayed by the general lethargy that one hears of amongst the members of similar societies, and have done it only with the intention of keeping up your enthusiasm.

Despite the non-participation of Hilton College during the last 6 months, the attendance at our monthly meetings has been most gratifying, and our current membership remains steady, as follows :-

60 Individuals / Familys      4 Honorary      16 Other

The questionnaire sent out last year indicated that your committee was on the right track regarding the programme of activities, so we have kept on doing the 'same thing' this year. I must thank all the members and guest speakers who have so willingly given of their time and expertise to present interesting and stimulating talks month by month, and would encourage others to offer their services in this regard. I am very grateful to Frikkie de Bruyn for co-ordinating the programme so well.

As you will see later, our financial situation is sound, and despite the rising costs of running the Centre, we have managed to maintain annual subscriptions at the same rate as last year. Our application to LOTTO for funding of our next building phase has not produced any result as yet, but we live in hope! Many thanks to treasurer Roger Clifford for keeping things tightly under control.

Although not subscribing to 'Sky & Telescope' any more, our library has continued to be fairly well used, and we have received some generous donations of books. The logistics are somewhat clumsy, but sincere thanks to librarian Colin Kay for making it happen. Unfortunately he is not able to carry on the good work, so I hope this position will be willingly filled.

I am aware that for all members, especially those living far away, the monthly arrival of STARDUST is eagerly awaited. I'm sure you would wish me to formally pay tribute to editor Rogan Roth for producing such a first-class newsletter, and to thank him for the effort he puts in to make it so original and interesting. Thanks must also go to those who have contributed during the year, and I encourage any others to do the same.

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Girl Guide Hall, Worlds View, Pietermaritzburg on 9 June 2004

1. The Chairman, Mr John Watson, declared the meeting open at 19h30, and welcomed the 14 members present. Apologies had been received from 2 members, and there were no visitors.
2. Minutes of the AGM held in June 2003

The minutes of last year's AGM had been sent out with the monthly newsletter, and were accepted as read after Mr Clifford had pointed out that the words "next year" in 5 vii) meant for the year commencing July 2004  
Proposed Mr F de Bruyn Seconded Mr Rogan Roth
3. Matters Arising

No matters arising regarding the 2002/2003 minutes
4. Chairman's Report

Mr Watson's report made reference to :-

  - a) Encouraging attendances at monthly meetings, but still a bit lethargic for other activities.
  - b) Membership statistics ( 60 Individuals/Families, 20 others)
  - c) Sound financial situation - thanks to R.Clifford
  - d) Programme of monthly meetings - thanks to guests & members for their input, and to F.de Bruyn for co-ordinating it all
  - e) Good growth of library - thanks to C.Kay for his endeavours
  - f) Outstanding quality of "STARDUST" - thanks to R.Roth and contributors
  - g) Good PRO and relations with local newspapers - thanks to W. van der Merwe for a job well done.
  - h) Continued work in the schools etc by J.Watson and R.Roth, and upcoming Basic Astronomy Course
  - i) Observatory maintenance and future plans - thanks to T.Morley for his hard work
  - j) Meritorious Award for 2003/2004 presented to Mr H.Tunmer for his loyalty and enthusiasm  
Proposed Mr R. Roth Seconded Mr F. Botes
5. Treasurers Report
  - a) Mr Clifford handed out copies of the Statement of Income & Expenditure for the 2003/2004 year which reflected :-  
Bank Balance of R 3449,91 plus Cash on Hand of R 15,40 giving a total of R 3465,31.  
After queries regarding "GOODWILL" and high postage costs, the report was accepted .  
Proposed Mr P.Inman Seconded Mr J.Hefer
  - b) In reply to a query by Mr C.Lake, Mr Watson reported that the committee had investigated the possibility of using e-mail to send out STARDUST each month, and had rejected the idea as it would place a big responsibility on a private individual.
  - c) Mr Clifford proposed that annual subscriptions be increased by R 10,00 in July 2005 if necessary.  
This was accepted unanimously. Proposed Mr F. de Bruyn Seconded Mr N.Wakefield
6. Election of Office Bearers 2004/2005
  - a) The following members were nominated and elected  
**Re-election:** Messrs R.Roth, J.Watson, R.Clifford, F.de Bruyn, T.Morley, W.van der Merwe  
Proposed Mr J.Watson Seconded Mr J.Hefer  
**New election:** Mr J. Hefer Proposed Mr F.de Bruyn Seconded Mr R.Clifford
  - b) First meeting of new committee to be held on 14 June 2004 at the home of Mr F.de Bruyn
7. Other Business
  - a) Basic Astronomy training course due to begin on 24/6/2004 - almost fully booked
  - b) ASSA Symposium to be held towards the end of the year
  - c) ASSA are planning to change their logo. (NMC has only just put the existing logo on its banner !)
  - d) F de Bruyn has submitted a motivation to ASSA for a new Cosmology/Astrophysics Section to be formed
8. Meeting closed at 20h15, after which several members showed off their new or recently acquired telescopes while tea/coffee etc were served.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY

**ASSA - NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE**  
**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2003 / 2004**

Despite having relinquished our membership of Pmb Tourism, our public exposure through various newspapers has been satisfactory. Willem van der Merwe has had the unenviable task of keeping in touch with the press, and I thank and admire him for getting involved with organisations that have an uncanny knack of getting their wires crossed !

Our observatory remains our most precious asset, but also continues to be somewhat of a headache in terms of maintaining the grounds and the building.

My sincere thanks to Trevor Morley for again putting in many hours of work this year to keep the natural growth down to a dull roar, but it is a massive job for one person, and I am disappointed that the turnout at work parties has been pitiful. A further factor is the 'friendly' warning received by the forestry contractors that we could become a fire hazard and be liable for damages to surrounding plantation. Therefore, I appeal again urgently for help in this regard.

The building and instruments are in pretty good shape, but need attention from time to time. Signage has been refurbished, roof tracks have been repaired and are currently being de-rusted, while our two telescopes are ready for use during the annual viewing season from June to August.

The annual Basic Astronomy course was cancelled last year due to bad advertising and consequent small enrolment. I am happy to announce that the course due to start in two weeks time is already fully booked, with several on the waiting list. At the same time, Rogan Roth and myself have been involved with schools and other organisations on a regular basis, and it would be good to have others involved in the educational aspect of our society.

The Meritorious Service award this year goes to a man who over many years has always been willing to get involved in a variety of activities from plot clearing through education to public viewing sessions.  
Thank you Harry Tunmer !

In conclusion, my general thanks to you all for keeping the Centre alive and for turning out so faithfully to monthly meetings.

My best wishes to the new committee for the year ahead.

J.W.Watson

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# A.S.S.A. NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE

INCOME & EXPENDITURE 11<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2003 - 6<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2004  
& TREASURERS REPORT.

## 1. BROUGHT FORWARD AT 11<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2003

BANK R 2041 : 42c  
CASH R 537 : 30c

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R 3478 : 72c

2. INCOME R 6654 : 93c } SEE DETAILS  
3. EXPENDITURE R 6668 : 34c } OVER.  

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R - 13. 41c.

∴ TOTAL ASSET R 3465 : 31c

MADE UP OF BANK R 3449 : 91c  
CASH R 15 : 40c  

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R 3465 : 31c

BUDGETTED	INCOME R 6680	ACTUAL	6654 : 93c
2003-2004	EXPEND. R 5790	ACTUAL	6668 : 34c
	SURPLUS 890	LOSS	R 13. 41c

THE 'LOSS' THIS YEAR IS LARGELY ATTRIBUTED TO A DROP IN SUBSCRIPTIONS AND THE FACT THAT 'THE COURSE' COULD NOT BE HELD. IT CAN ALSO BE NOTED THAT THE LOAN REPAYMENT WAS NOT INCLUDED IN THE BUDGET FOR SOME REASON. THERE IS THEREFORE NO NEED FOR ALARM.

SAVINGS HAVE BEEN MADE BY NOT SUBSCRIBING TO A.S.S.A. / SKY & TELESCOPE & BY REDUCING THE NUMBER OF STARDUST MAGAZINES CIRCULATED.

SUBS. HAVE NOT BEEN INCREASED THIS YEAR ALTHOUGH COSTS ARE LIKELY TO RISE NEXT YEAR.

IT IS PROPOSED THAT THE COMMITTEE BE AUTHORIZED TO INCREASE THEM BY R 10:00c IN 2005.

R. Clifton

TREASURER  
A.S.S.A.  
NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE

INCOME	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	JAN.	FEB.	MCH.	APR.	MAY	JUNE	TOTAL
SALES / HBKS.								140.10	280.00	245.00		35.00		700.10
SUBS	1350	860	1020.	130.00	370.00	50.00			80.00				50.00	3910.00
DONATIONS	366	30	105		1320.00	30.00		150.00						2001.00
OBSERVATORY														
INTEREST	5.71		3.41	3.95	2.88	3.32	2.31	2.16	2.23		1.00	0.86		27.83
VIDEOS	8.00			4.00			4.00							16.00
TOTAL	1729.71	890.00	1128.41	1370.5	1692.88	83.32	6.31	292.26	362.23	245.00	1.00	35.86	50.00	6654.93
EXPENDITURE														
A.S.S.A. / HBKS.								480.00						480.00
POST BOX / BK. DBT.	0.20	0.40			0.20	0.20	215.00	11.90	00.40		3.42	24.32		256.04
GOODWILL / LOAN	500.00	400.00	500.00		600.00						10.40			2010.40
POSTAGE		130.65	124.20	137.25	129.00	132.30	130.80		129.15	134.60	141.20	130.40	143.00	1471.55
COPIES	14.40	170.00	76.60	41.80	109.25	39.60	0.40	20.75	113.20	84.80	125.80	42.40	84.80	923.80
STATIONERY					70.48						231.20			301.68
CATERING			42.85		39.02			21.12			40.15			163.14
P.R.O.														
EQUIPMENT. (HIRE)							50.00	31.73		50.00		50.00		181.73
SITE / OBS.														
HALL / LEASE			290.00		90.00			140.00			60.00			580.00
OBSERVATORY												300.00		300.00
TOTAL	514.60	701.05	1033.65	205	1037.95	172.10	306.20	725.6	242.75	269.40	612.17	556.12	227.80	6668.39