

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the home of Mr & Mrs R.Dale

on 12 July 1989 at 7.30 pm

1. The meeting was attended by 16 members and 1 visitor, with 6 apologies.
2. The Chairman, Mr.R.Jarmain, opened the meeting by asking all present to observe a period of silence in memory of Mr.Jimmy Barker, and thereafter extended a warm welcome to everyone, and a vote of thanks to Mr & Mrs Dale for the use of their home at short notice.
3. Minutes of the 1988 Annual General Meeting held on 28 July 1988 had already been posted to members, and were accepted without being read (Proposed C.Lake Seconded S.Dale). There were no matters arising.

4. Chairman's Report

In presenting his report, Mr Jarmain made reference to:-

- a) the temporary recess of 'Project Palomar' due to the cracking of the partially ground 16" mirror, and the need for fund-raising ideas to continue with the project
- b) the various activities of the Centre, both at regular monthly meetings and other 'extra-mural' events
- c) the growth and improvement of the Centre's library, especially as a result of a donation of bound copies of Sky & Telescope from the late Mr Jimmy Barker.
- d) the need for new members.

5. Treasurer's Report

Mr Watson presented the statement of Income and Expenditure for the previous year which reflected a closing balance of R 384,82, this being a shortfall of some R 46,00 mainly due to unexpected printing costs totalling R 70,80.

6. Increased Subscriptions

The proposal was put to the meeting (Proposed C.Lake Seconded A.Norris) and accepted (with 1 against). The revised subscriptions will be:-

Couples R 30,00    Members R 20,00    Pensioners & Students R 10,00

7. Election of new Committee

The following members were nominated and elected

Mesdames S.Dale and V.Collingwood and Dr.G.Prosser

Messrs R.Jarmain, R.Dale, J.Watson, A.Scafturis, C.Lake

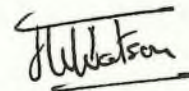
8. Other Business

- a) R.Jarmain - presented for inspection a specimen of the layout for a 'bumper sticker' and asked members to submit their ideas for a suitable slogan.

- b) Ds G.de Beer - brought to the notice of the meeting the Science Fun-Day at Wits University on 26/8/89 as advertised in Archimedes.
  - c) A meteor count to be held at Monteseel on 29/7/89 with members of the Natal Centre (Durban) at 7.00 pm
  - d) Mrs A.Turton - requested that the incoming committee plan a lot more practical work with regular viewing evenings and more information on the monthly skies.
  - e) Project Palomar - the Natal Centre have some 14" glass discs (porthole ?) for sale at a reasonable price.
  - f) Radio programs - the S.A.B.C. often have items of astronomical interest, especially in the program "Forum".
  - g) R.Joubert - reminded the meeting that the 20th anniversary of the first Moon Walk would be on 20/7/89.
9. The meeting closed at 8.35 pm, after which everyone present enjoyed desserts and coffee together, and did a little viewing from the front lawn.



CHAIRMAN



SECRETARY

# ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

## NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT, 1989

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Looking back over the past twelve months, it is regrettable that the single most memorable event had to be a negative one. I refer to the setback we suffered in our drive to establish our own observatory when, after many hours of patient grinding which had brought it to a stage of near-completion, our 16-inch mirror-to-be succumbed to some unidentified force of the physical universe and fell into two utterly useless pieces of roughly equal size. I am happy to be able to report, however, that this mishap was seen only as an unfortunate interruption. "Project Palomar" is in temporary recess and will, we hope, soon be resurrected. But if our ambitions are to be fulfilled, we urgently need shekels in our coffers and towards this end I urge members again to come forward with ideas for fund raising projects.

Amongst the highlights of the year's activities was a resoundingly successful Christmas function which took the form of a Chinese braai on the spacious verandah of Bianca and John Lawrence's delightful home. On the more serious side, we remember in particular a truly fascinating talk by Mr Dennis Spalding of the University of Natal's Department of Physics on "The History of Astronomical Navigation and the Development of Instruments," and a joint talk on and practical demonstration of astronomical computing by Geoff Prosser and Chris Collingwood. A most enjoyable viewing evening was held in May on the lawn of Veronica and Chris's home in Hilton and our thanks are due to Geoff for guiding us around the heavens and renewing our appreciation of a simple pair of binoculars as a valuable aid to observation.

Members of the Centre participated in two successful graze observations during the year. The first was in collaboration with our friends from the Natal Centre and under the expert guidance of Danie Overbeek, who had flown down from Johannesburg expressly for the occasion. The site chosen for this observation was the Polly Shortts hill on the outskirts of Pietermaritzburg, and it is refreshing to report that this stretch of road, so notorious amongst untold thousands of aspirant Comrades, was for once used in the interests of scientific endeavour. By coincidence, the second graze also had connotations of athleticism in that it was observed from a site very close to the headwaters of Camp's Drift, the scene of the start of the Duzi Canoe Marathon. Involving a star of sufficient magnitude to remain clearly visible throughout its encounter with the illuminated limb of a gibbous moon, this was an event of especial interest, and it is a pity that only five of our number participated in its recording.

Our library developed during the year into something worthy of our image as an educated and hopefully erudite group of amateur astronomers. Our thanks must go in full measure to Bianca and John for their donation of a handsome and spacious cupboard and to Sheila and Ron Dale and Veronica Collingwood for their efforts in

expanding the contents and improving the standard of its organisation.

Still on the subject of the library, we were deeply touched towards the year's end to learn that our late and very dear friend, Jimmy Barker, had shortly before his death expressed the wish that his bound collection of Sky and Telescope and a bookcase especially built for its accommodation should be donated to the Natal Midlands Centre. We have already paid tribute to Jimmy's memory, but his generous gift will serve as a perpetual reminder of his friendship and of his infectious enthusiasm for a science whose study must surely transcend the limitations imposed by mere mortality.

In closing, ladies and gentlemen, I wish to thank you all for your support during the year. But at the same time I want to ask you to make an effort to effect a substantial increase in our numbers. These seem to have dwindled of late and, if ours is to remain a viable Centre, a strong and active membership is a vital prerequisite. Let us therefore do all that we can to engender amongst our friends and day to day acquaintances an appreciation for the infinite richness that our hobby has to offer and by so doing undertake, each of us, to introduce at least one new member during the course of the coming year.

Thank you.

R M Jarmain  
Chairman  
Natal Midlands Centre

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AS AT 30 JUNE 1989

INCOME

Brought forward from 1988	Bank	390.12	
	Cash	40.56	<u>430.68</u>
Membership subscriptions		381.00	
Sale of ASSA Handbooks		52.00	
Donations		16.00	
Interest on Savings Account (First National)		6.21	<u>455.21</u>
		TOTAL	<u>885.89</u>

EXPENDITURE

A. Annual payments	- ASSA subscription	60.00	
	- Publicity Assoc	15.00	
	- Post Box rental	15.00	<u>90.00</u>
B. Notice Paper	- Printing (Mar - June)	70.80	
	- Postage and Stationery	139.33	<u>210.13</u>
C. Library	- Purchase of ASSA Handbooks	48.00	
	- New additions	73.82	<u>121.82</u>
D. Refreshments	- Xmas party	15.00	
	- Monthly meetings	40.52	<u>55.52</u>
E. Miscellaneous	- Travel expenses	20.00	
	- Insurance (Videotapes)	3.60	<u>23.60</u>
		TOTAL	<u>501.07</u>

Carried forward to 1990	Bank	355.33	
	Cash	29.49	<u>384.82</u>
		TOTAL	<u>885.89</u>

  
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SECR/TREASURER

12/07/89