

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the home of Mr & Mrs J. Lawrence
on 8 July 1992 at 7.30 pm

1. The meeting was attended by 14 members and 2 visitors, with 5 apologies.
2. The Chairperson, Mrs B. Lawrence, extended a warm welcome to everyone present, and requested that a period of silence be observed in memory of Mr Ron Dale.
3. Minutes of the 1991 Annual General Meeting held on 17 July 1991 were read and accepted as being a true record (Prop: R. Roth, Sec: T. Chance)
4. Matters Arising
 - i. Mr T. Chance reported that a lot of preparatory work has been done in planning an adult education course in Astronomy, which will be run in 1993.
 - ii. Due to the relocation of the Pietermaritzburg Music School it had been necessary to find an alternative venue for the Centre to meet, and it had been fortuitous that negotiations with St. Charles College had been finalised for 1992.
 - iii. Mr J. Watson had been able to attend the National Symposium in Capetown in April 1992, and reported that it had been a first class experience.
 - iv. The Lipschitz telescope had been recovered from Durban, and work is well under way in restoring/modifying it to suit our 12" mirror.
 - v. The Centre's library has been moved to St. Charles, and several new books have been purchased.
5. Chairman's Report (Prop: R. Jarmain, Sec: T. Chance)

Mrs B. Lawrence gave a comprehensive review of the various activities of the Centre, and thanked all the members for their contributions towards a busy and successful year.
6. Treasurer's Report (Prop: R. Roth, Sec: T. Chance)

Mrs H. Chance presented the statement of Income & Expenditure for the previous year, which reflected a closing balance of R1017-75, a gain of some R275 over the opening balance. Despite this profit, it was pointed out that:-

 - i. Capital expenses would be incurred during the coming year due to the purchase of materials etc to finish off the Centre's 12" telescope
 - ii. Increased costs of printing and postage, plus annual subscriptions, are not being adequately covered by the present membership fees.

A proposal was put to the meeting (Prop: T. Chance, Sec: C. Lake) that annual membership subscriptions be increased by R5-00 in each category. After some discussion, the proposal was accepted (with 1 against). The revised annual subscriptions will therefore be:-

Members R 25-00 Couples R 35-00 Pensioners & Students R 15-00

7. Election of New Committee

The following members were nominated and elected:-

Dr G. Prosser, Mesdames S. Dale and H. Chance, Messrs T. Chance, R. Jarmain, R. Roth, R. Forder and J. Watson.

8. Instruments

Dr G.Prosser gave an up-to-date report on the status of the Centre's telescopes.

- i. the 6" reflector is in a bad state of repair and effectively out of action until such time as it can be rebuilt/refurbished.
- ii. the 10" Lipschitz mirror has been cleaned up and re-silvered by a local business (aluminised) who have done a good job. It will be used to make a simple Dobsonian for use at viewing evenings.
- iii. the 12" mirror is polished and ready for silvering - the next stage is to acquire a suitable tube (some 14½" x 5'6"). This instrument will not really be portable and therefore consideration must be given to finding a suitable permanent site to set it up.
- iv. a small sub-committee must be set up to complete this project

9. Other business

- a) Many members had observed the solar eclipse on 30/6/92, and some had been able to take photographs. R.Forder had had some difficulty in understanding the measurements used in determining the percentage of the eclipse, and had written to Natal Witness about this.
- b) G.Prosser and S.Dale had been doing as much occultation observing/timing as possible, but not as much as in previous years.
- c) T.Chance reported some shuttle sightings
- d) P.Moore has a 6" telescope for sale - mounting is missing, but there are quite a lot of extras to go with it as well.
- e) Upcoming events
 - i) J.Watson to address land service camp at Cedara
 - ii) TM group want some guidance as to constellation shapes and locations
 - iii) Public viewing evening in Ladysmith to inaugurate the establishment of an Astronomical Society
- f) Sincere vote of thanks to the Lawrence's for the use of their home

10. The meeting closed at 8.45 pm, after which everyone present enjoyed a cheese and wine supper together.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY



ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF
SOUTHERN AFRICA

Natal Midlands Centre

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

8TH JULY 1992.

MEMBERS

Rusty Jarman

Tim + Hilary Chance.

Sheila Dale

Rogan Roth.

A. Norris

~~Robert Liles.~~

B. Meinham.

Jon + Bianca

Ray Fordes.

S. Tongue

V. Collingwood.

John Watson.

VISITORS

M. Lake.

C. Collingwood.

APOLOGIES

Ray Lambert

Dean de Costa

M. Schreuder.

A. TURTON.

A. SCHAFFERS.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 1991/1992

It is with pleasure that I present my report on the activities of the Natal Midlands Astronomy Society for the years 1991/1992. I have certainly enjoyed the high standard of talks and demonstrations given by our members and I, for one certainly learned a lot from them. Our membership has fluctuated during the course of the year and although we have gained a good number of new members, we have also had to say goodbye to a few members including our good friend Ron Dale who succumbed to a long illness in June. Ron was a founder member of the society and we shall all miss him.

This year saw the end of our long standing relationship with the music school. Unfortunately we were no longer able to use their premises and set about looking for a new venue for our meetings. Some successful negotiating by the committee found ourselves a meeting place in the recreation room at St Charles school. The venue has video and TV equipment which will be very useful to us. We hope that our new venue will prove mutually beneficial to the school and the society.

Some of the talks this year were:

A talk by Tim Chance on the Mars Viking landers.

An excellent demonstration by Geoff Frosser and Rogan Roth on astrophotography.

A forum on the sun, chaired by John Watson and contributed to by some members of the society.

A discussion on celestial nomenclature, given by some of the committee.

An excellent and very professional slide show on new discoveries on Venus, also by Tim.

A very illuminating talk on galaxies by John Ade full of interesting snippets and mind-blowing comparasone of the size and capabilities of various galaxies.

A demonstration by our computer boffins Geoff, Rogan and Rusty on the use of computers in astronomy.

A demonstration of telescope building by Geoff.

We also had a very successful viewing evening at the home of Ray Forder in Ashburton.

Our Christmas dinner took the form of a dinner at Els Amics where the food and entertainment was enjoyed by all.

Our education department, in the very capable hands of Tim Chance has been very productive this year by producing a series of adult education lectures on astronomy. A course of ten lectures prepared by Tim will hopefully be run in the near future. Tim and John Watson also gave a number of talks to a variety of institutions this year. These public talks are a very important part of ensuring the society's relevance towards society.

The society procured a telescope this year. The 10" mirror and various accessories were the property of the late Mark Lipschitz and the project has been ably handled by Geoff who has been steadily grinding the mirror for the society's new telescope.

Our newsletter this year has maintained its highly informative and entertaining standard under the able editorship of Rusty Jarmain.

Our library has been very mobile this year having been shuttled between various venues. This has had its advantages because it has enabled Hilary to do a revamp of the library cupboard stocks.

John Watson represented us, in his personal capacity, at the ASSA syposium in Cape Town in April. He was also able to bring us news of what was being done astronomically around the country as well as tell us about a visit to Sutherland.

The solar eclipse on the 30 June proved interesting to those of us who had the courage to look at it. It will be quite a while before we will see one again.

In concluding I would like to thank the rest of the committee for their hard work during the year. Also a big thanks to those members who participated in the meetings and those of you, especially the Ladysmith people who had to come so far to be with us. I wish the next committee all the best for a wonderful year.

B.LAWRENCE

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT AS AT 30 JUNE 1992

INCOME

Brought forward from 1991	Bank	663.23	
	Cash	69.32	<u>732.55</u>
Membership subscriptions		840.00	
Bumper Stickers		160.00	
Handbooks		50.00	
Donations (Teas etc.)		1.30	
Interest on Savings Account		26.66	<u>1077.96</u>
	TOTAL		1810.51
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EXPENDITURE

Annual Payments	ASSA Subscriptions	75.00	
	Publicity Association	30.00	
	Post Office Box Rental	16.00	<u>121.00</u>
Newsletter		371.66	<u>371.66</u>
Library	Handbooks	100.00	
	Book (S E T I)	14.95	<u>114.95</u>
Refreshments	Monthly Meetings	116.72	
	AGM 1991	18.67	<u>135.39</u>
Miscellaneous	Photo Album - Scrap Book	25.97	
	Extension cord	23.79	<u>49.76</u>
Carried Forward to 1992	Bank	907.33	
	Cash	110.42	<u>1017.75</u>
	TOTAL		1810.51
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H. CHANCE .