

Astronomical Society of Southern Africa
Cape Centre
P O Box 13018
MOWBRAY
CAPE TOWN
7705

Telephone (Secretary): (021) 685-6214

16 August 1998

The Honorary Secretary
ASSA
P O Box 9
OBSERVATORY
7935

Dear Sir

CAPE CENTRE - NEW COMMITTEE 1998/1999

At the Annual General Meeting which took place on the 12th August 1998, a new Committee was elected as follows:

| | | |
|------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Chairman | : | Dr A E Mahomed |
| Vice Chairman | : | Mr M A Gray |
| Honorary Secretary | : | Ms G Quick |
| Honorary Treasurer | : | Ms M Kruger |
| Council Representative | : | Miss P Booth |
| Committee Members | : | Mr G Bosch |
| | | Mr M Christianson |
| | | Mr A McConnell |
| | | Mr B Skinner |
| | | Mr B Wagener |

Mr A B Jones has been re-appointed as **Editor** of the "Cape Observer" Newsletter.

Yours faithfully



G QUICK
HONORARY SECRETARY

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

CAPE CENTRE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 12th August 1998

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

GENERAL REMARKS

There has been growth and development of the Cape Centre over the past year. This has been largely due to team work by the Committee and some of the members. We have a talented team which not only showed enthusiasm but could also be relied on to do tasks given to them. Thanks also to those who regularly attend our meetings.

WEDNESDAY MEETINGS

This has been our main activity.

There were 9 FORMAL MEETINGS. Topics varied from aspects of our Home Planet to planets around other stars. We also had talks on the 40th Anniversary of Sputnik, Our Cosmic Connection, Robotic Telescopes, Fibre Optics at the SAAO, Clouds of Small Dust Grains, variable stars, UFO's and Life in the Universe. These meetings were usually well attended and on a few occasions we had full houses.

The INFORMAL MEETINGS were reasonably well attended with an average of about 30 people. Topics varied from The History of Astronomy to improving your own Astronomy, from Mythology to debunking of Myths. Interesting video and audio tapes dealing with astronomy were also presented.

OTHER LECTURES

Our members attended lectures by VISITING LECTURERS.-

Sir Martin Rees, Prof. Gibor Basri, and a person from the Dark Sky Association.

We also attended the memorable Inaugural Lecture of Prof. A.P. Fairall.

BEGINNER'S COURSE

Special mention must be made of this Course which started at the beginning of this year. Well designed and well presented by the trio of Andrew Gray Gordon Bosch and Gwynneth Quick. Unfortunately not enough beginners attended these talks. However, it is always worthwhile going Back to Basics.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

FIELD TRIPS

We had 5 successful Star Parties. Two additional ones were cancelled due to bad weather.

Most of these were held at the Conteman's Kloof Quarry. Unfortunately this venue is no longer suitable and our scouts are busy looking for another venue.

Our trips to the Cederberg Observatory at the end of Oct. '97 and April this year were very successful and indeed memorable. It gave members an insight into what some of our members have been doing to advance Astronomy.

We were also invited to our members' residences e.g. at Peter and Jutta Schonau's place in Paarl.

Other activities under this heading the following can be mentioned :-

The Total Lunar Eclipse on the 16th Sept. '97. at Silvermine was watched by about a dozen members and the general public

Planetary Occultation 14th Feb. '98 at Paarl,

Lunar " 30th May at Observatory.

In addition some members arranged outings to do Meteor Counts and to view Comet SOHO.

PUBLIC VIEWING

We consider this as an important interface with the Public. Since finding the Waterfront unsatisfactory we have been looking for other suitable venues but without success. Maybe we should re-visit the Waterfront. We welcome suggestions by our members to the new Committee.

The "CAPE OBSERVER"

As you know Tony Jones is not on the Committee but has regularly produced the excellent Newsletter. In addition has been a star at the Star Parties together with others and has on a number of occasions demonstrated the Night Sky to our members just outside this venue. Thank you. *Accoladed **

The LIBRARY

After we acquired a bookcase our Library was moved out of the kitchen to where everybody can see it. We have bought a number of books and members have also

made generous donations of books and monies. Thank you.

The library is not been used by members to the extent it should.

OPEN NIGHTS AT SAAO

These are held on the 2nd Sat. of each month. Our members help in exposure of the general public to astronomy. A total of 533 persons attended from Sept. 1997 till Aug. 1998

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

On behalf of the Society I wish to thank the outgoing Committee and specifically Chris Forder and Richard Sessions for their valuable contribution. The two will not be eligible for re-election , but I am quite sure they will continue to help as ordinary members . We urge ordinary members to take a greater part in the activities of the Centre .

File

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA (CAPE CENTRE)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 12TH AUGUST 1998

1. *Apologies*

The Chairman welcomed 26 members to the AGM at 20h05. Apologies were tendered by :
Thomas Turner,
Martin La Grange,
Rupert Hurley, and
Maciej Soltynski.

2. *Minutes of the AGM held on the 12th of August 1998*

The minutes were read out by the Secretary, and were proposed as accepted by Mr M.A. Gray and seconded by Mr A.B. Jones. There were no matters arising.

3. *Chairman's Report*

The Chairman commented on the growth and development of the Cape Centre over the previous year. He said that the Committee had worked together enthusiastically as a team. There were nine formal meetings which were well attended. The informal meetings had also been well attended by an average of 30 people. He mentioned that the Beginner's Course had been good and that it had been good to get back to basics. He also mentioned the five successful field trips which had been enjoyed by those present. Two such trips had been cancelled due to inclement weather. He said that the Cederberg weekends had been greatly appreciated, and thanked those people associated with the Observatory. He made mention of various other astronomical events attended by interested members of the Centre; planetary occultations, the total lunar eclipse, and comet observations. The Chairman thanked Mr Jones for his outstanding production of the "Cape Observer". He further thanked the Committee for their invaluable support during the year of his Chairmanship.

4. *Treasurer's Report*

Mr Forder reported that the profit for 1998 was R1,274 and this was reflected on the balance sheet as an increase in savings accounts balance. This was even after giving R1,000.00 back to the Trust. He said that the donation of R1,000.00 given during 1997 was given directly to the Trust. The suggestion was made that the subscription fees be maintained at their current rate. He made mention that the interest gained on monies banked had not been as high as would be expected due to a general decrease in interest rates. The expenditure on gifts for guest speakers was lower this financial year since the price for each coffee cup was lower – R7.50. Mr Forder emphasised that the forthcoming Astrophotography Competition would consume some extra funds. He further reported that the total assets for this financial year had come up from R8,421.07 at the end of the previous financial year to R9,811.25. The funds from the voluntary box had increased from R288.62 to R767.28, even though two books had been bought. Mr M.A. Gray congratulated Mr Forder for a very well-presented Statement. Mr C. Turk proposed that the report be accepted and Mr V. Everett seconded the motion.

5. *Trust Report*

Mr C, Turk reported that the *status quo* was essentially the same as the previous year. He said that monies had come in reasonably well. The Capital, which cannot be spent, had stayed the same. The distributable reserve had increased rather well – R10,525.46. He reported that there was a good reserve in the fund. He suggested that if any member of the Cape Centre required a part of the fund as a donation for a project they were involved in, they could submit an application for funds to the Trustees. Said application should be submitted from the Committee or from the Centre as a whole. The Trustees would then assess the request. Mr Turk gave a brief history of how the Trust was originated.

The report was proposed as accepted by Mr C. Forder and seconded by Mr M.A. Gray.

6. *Honorary Member's Awards*

The following members were made Honorary Members:

Charles Allen

Pat Booth

Rupert Hurley (*in absentia*)

Clifford Turk

7. *Any Other Business*

There was no other business.

8. *Election of Officers*

| | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| Chairman | Dr A.E. Mahomed |
| Vice-Chairman | Mr M.A. Gray |
| Secretary | Mz G. Quick |
| Treasurer | Miss M. Kruger |
| Committee | Mr. G. Bosch |
| | Miss P. Booth |
| | Mr M. Christianson |
| | Mr A. McConnell |
| | Mr B. Skinner |
| | Mr B. Wagener |

The above persons were unanimously accepted by the floor and were duly elected.

9. *Chairman's Address*

The Chairman spoke about the Golden Age of Cosmology using Peter Coles as his reference. He emphasised how technology has allowed us to reach depths and precision hitherto unimaginable. Astronomy has played an important role in the following:

- The Hubble Space Telescope launched in 1990 and repaired in 1993
- Discovery of new planets
- The missions and probes sent out to explore new territories
- The development of CCD cameras and robotics
- The idea that the neutrino has mass
- The development and building of SALT
- Globalisation and information technology.

He said that we are very fortunate to be living in this age.

After thanking the Centre for their confidence in him to elect him for another period of office as Chairman, he welcomed in the new Committee and declared the meeting over at 21h05.

A.E. Mahomed

Wjm