

Astronomical Society of South Africa

Minutes of Council meeting held at the Royal Observatory on Monday 18 April 1955 at 8 P. M.

Present: Dr Evans (in the Chair) Dr. Stoy, Messrs Duncan, Turner, Russo, Johnston, Christ, Orben and the Hon. Secretary.

Apologies for absence had been received from Messrs Krumm and Hint.

The Minutes of Council Meeting held on the 25th February 1955 were read and confirmed.

Mr. S. E. Duncan was welcomed to the meeting as Mr Lagerweij's alternate by Dr. Evans, seconded by Dr. Stoy.

It was decided to send details of the Essay Competition to schools which had entered candidates for the last Competition.

The Financial Statement read by Mr. Orben showed a debit balance of £6.18/-. Mr. Orben said that when all outstanding subscriptions were received the year should end with a credit balance of £50.

In a letter received by Mr. Duncan, Mr. Lagerweij said that the Transvaal Centre had accepted the draft proposals of the awarding of the Gill Medal.

Mr. Venters expressed himself in favour of the proposed conditions, in a letter to the Hon Secretary who was, in the absence at Pretoria of Dr. Cousins, empowered to act on his behalf.

Dr. Evans showed members a sketch of the reverse of the medal, received from Dr. Kirchhoff.

Members of Council expressed their appreciation of the work done by Dr. Kirchhoff in designing and executing the ~~reverse of the medal~~ of the Gill Medal.

It was decided that no requests for subscriptions be sent to Mr. H. C. Davies, Mr. D. G. McIntyre, or to Dr. Kirchhoff.

The conditions of award of the Gill Medal, formulated by the Gill Medal Committee, were adopted by the meeting.

The conditions are as follows:

I. The Astronomical Society of South Africa establishes

a medal, to be known as the Gill Medal, to be awarded in recognition of services to astronomy.

II. The Medal shall be awarded not more frequently than once in any year, and no award shall be made, if, in the opinion of Council, there is no suitable candidate in any year.

III. The award shall be made by the Council of the Society according to the procedure set out below. There shall be no restriction on the eligibility of any person as a candidate, and candidates need not be members of the Astronomical Society of South Africa.

IV. In making the award, Council shall observe the following conditions:

(1) Council shall be required to state the particular service rendered by the Medallist which has been deemed worthy of the award.

(2) Council shall, so far as may be seemly, give preference to services to astronomy in Southern Africa.

(3) Council may, at its discretion, give special credit to services carried out under conditions of difficulty, or with limited facilities.

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V. In each year before the end of the first week in April, members of Council shall send to the Secretary of the Society a note of a name or names of suitable persons to receive the Medal, together with a description of the services to astronomy which it is proposed to recognise, and a note of any further particular reasons in favour of any particular candidate. Before the fifteenth day of April the Secretary shall prepare and distribute to each member of Council a confidential memorandum embodying all the proposals and reasons.

Members of Council shall then, where necessary, give suitable instructions to their alternates. At a meeting of Council to be held in May, one name, or in the case of joint work, two or more names, shall be selected, or Council may decide that no suitable name has been proposed.

Council may not add names to those originally proposed, but it may re-draft the citation of the services for which it is proposed to award the medal.

If a name or joint names has been selected, this name, together with the citation, and any further particular reasons, shall be incorporated in a ballot paper, a copy of which shall be sent to each member of Council. Members of Council shall then vote for or against the award of the Medal to the person or persons named in the paper, for the service cited. Ballot papers must reach the Hon^{orary} Secretary by the end of the first week in June. Two thirds of all the votes cast shall be necessary to confirm the award.

If a member of Council or an alternate be proposed as a candidate he shall withdraw from the discussion and voting; if an alternate be proposed his principal shall send his instructions to the Chairman of the Council Meeting, who shall be given an extraordinary additional vote for each such case, at the meeting which selects the name of the final candidate.

All the proceedings leading up to the award of the Medal shall be kept confidential by members of Council and their alternates. Candidacy may be discussed among Members of Council, but it is not to be a matter of public debate, and members of Council representing Centres of the Society are not bound to accept instructions from those Centres in this matter.

The details of discussion in Council shall not be minuted, nor the names of candidates specified. The Minutes shall record the facts that candidates were discussed and a name selected, if this is done. A sealed copy of the confidential memorandum and ballot paper shall be deposited each year among the Society's papers, and shall only be opened in exceptional circumstances by a unanimous vote of Council.

X VI The result of the ballot shall be declared at a Council meeting to be held in June. The award shall be publicly announced at the Annual Meeting of the Society in July, and, if possible, the presentation of the Medal to the successful candidate shall be made at the Annual Meeting of one of the Centres of the Society.

The following were elected Members, their names having appeared in the "Monthly Notes": -

Mr. M. Hilson, P.O. Box 2750, Johannesburg
Dr. P.D.R. van Heerden, P.O. Box 344, Rustenburg
Mr C.C. Campbell, P.O. Box 997, Bloemfontein.
Mr S.G. Verceuil, P.O. Box 624, P' Maritzburg
Mr H.W. Cohen, 6 Surrey Court, Broad St, Germiston
Mr. A.B. Ebrahim, P.O. Box 66, Pietersburg
Mr C. P. Jennings, 423, A.G. O. Building, Visagie St,
Pretoria

Mr E S Kramer, 46 Chapman Rd., Germiston.
Miss J. Piel, P.O. Box 1391, J'burg.
Mr. J. C. G. van Vlierden, 73 Muldersdrift Rd,
Roosevelt Park, Johannesburg.

The following nominations were received:-

Mr. H. James, 54 White Street, Parkdene, Boksburg.
Mr. C. N. Williams, 308 Perrinmore St, Malvern, Johannesburg
Mr K. S. Mills, 9 Begonia Rd, Primrose Hill, Germiston.
Dr. D. P. Marais, Valdivia, Ribbelly Rd, Kenilworth

Mr. Chant agreed to act as Editor for the Monthly
Notes during the absence overseas of Drs. Lloyd and Evans.

The meeting ended at 9.10 P.M.

Attestes Hon Secretary
David S. Evans