

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Minutes of Council Meeting held at the Royal Observatory on Wednesday 3rd June 1964 at 8.00 p.m.

Apologies for absence had been received from Dr. Cousins (in hospital) Mr. Russo (bereavement), and Dr. Evans (previous engagement).

Present: Mr. Lagerweij (in the Chair) Drs. Stoy and Fuhr, Messrs. Atkins, Bentley, Bondietti, Churms, Krumm, Meadows, Orpen, Smits and the Hon. Secretary.

The Minutes of Council Meeting held on the 6th May 1964 were read and after amendment, confirmed.

Amendments: (1) to 5th last paragraph: instead of "improvements of", read: "improvements to Cape".

(2) to 3rd last paragraph: "No Gill Medal Award is to be made during this year" instead of "No Gill Medal Award had been made during the year".

Arising out of the Minutes, Mr. Atkins reported that the Library Committee had met once since the 6th May, when a large number of volumes had been set aside for disposal or sale.

The Financial Statement, read and presented by Mr. Orpen, was as follows:

Financial Statement as on 3rd June, 1964

Expenditure	R.	c.	Receipts	R.	c.
Subscriptions to "Sky and Telescope" for period April 1963 to March 1964	761	11	Credit Balance 1/7/1963	427	03
Cost of production of MNASSA for period June 1963 to May 1964 and of Handbook	431	05	<u>Subscriptions</u>		
			Arrears	5	80
			Current	1232	50
			Advance	57	50
Postage on "Sky and Telescope" and MNASSA for period June 1963 to May 1964 and on Handbook	130	00		1295	80
Postage, other than above	15	78	Entrance Fees	65	00
Addressograph Plates	8	15	Sale of MNASSA	140	15
Essay Competition Prizes	19	00	Sale of Handbooks	6	30
Payment to S.A. Mint for six Gill Medals	25	80	Sale of back and extra numbers of "Sky and Telescope"	2	10
Library Catalogue	8	00	Donations	3	10
Purchase of Second Hand Typewriter	15	00	Interest on Building Society Shares, April 1963 to March 1964	11	00
Bank Charges	12	46	Sale of publications	6	55
Credit Balance at 3/6/1964	533	53	Commission on Cheques	2	85
	<u>R 1959</u>	<u>88</u>		<u>R 1959</u>	<u>88</u>

Garrett Orpen  
Hon. Treasurer

The Statement was adopted.

It was decided that "Sky and Telescope" be paid for to the end of June, and to order 10 more copies from July, making a total of 285 copies.

Four entries were received in the Essay Competition, and were handed to Mr. Meadows for adjudication.

The result of the Ballot on the election of a representative to the National Committee on Astronomy, was: 11 votes for, 1 against.

A letter received from Dr. Evans was read to the meeting, and was as follows:

"It is my understanding that the sub-committee deputed to draft the text of the circular accompanying ballot papers to be sent to members of Council on the question of representation of the Society on the S.A. National Committee for Astronomy were instructed to present both sides of the case debated in Council. I do not feel that this has been fairly done. The sole ground of objection stated is in paragraph 3 of the circular and is represented to be to the manner in which the invitation was extended. This is a travesty of the true grounds of objection.

These are that a national committee has existed on paper for nearly two decades and has been totally ineffective. Second, that the Society was at one time represented on such a committee which proved deaf to the requests of the representatives that effective action should be undertaken. Further, that the constitution of the committee was arbitrarily changed without the slightest hint being given to your representatives, who then felt compelled to resign.

Since that time several years have passed and the sole outcome has been an exceedingly lethargic process, unconnected with any effort to promote astronomical cooperation -- indeed positively antagonistic to this -- concerned only with the writing of technical qualifications for membership. The present proposal is contrary to the spirit in which the I.A.U. recruits its members if not indeed to the formal rules of the I.A.U. It further creates a situation in which persons compelled by one organ of S.A. Government to travel to the General Assemblies using S.A. passports are denied membership of the S.A. Delegation -- a misnomer since members of the I.A.U. represent divisions of astronomy and have usually no delegated powers. The proposal can only be regarded as harmful to astronomy in South Africa. The S.A. National Committee which has never to my knowledge held a meeting has such a consistently poor record that I do not consider that any useful purpose will be served by the Society's being represented on it, and that representation may actually damage the considerable prestige which the society enjoys. I have to request that this letter be read at the Council meeting on June 3, which I am unable to attend, and that it be incorporated in full in the minutes so as to set the record straight."

A motion by Dr. Stoy, seconded by Mr. Bentley, that the President of the Society, if eligible, or one of the vice-Presidents be nominated as the Society's representative on the National Committee, the representative to be briefed by Council in respect of Policy matters, was agreed to.

In view of the imminent dissolution of the present Council it was decided to leave the nomination of the representative for July 1964-June 1965, to the next Council meeting to be held on the 24th June.

The Hon. Secretary was requested to convey the above resolution to the vice-President of the C.S.I.R.

The following whose names have appeared in MNASSA were elected Members:

Mr. F. Levy, 31 Arthur's Seat Mansions, Sea Point, Cape.

Mr. H. O. Oliver, Wits. University, Milner Park, Johannesburg.

Mrs. M. M. FitzGerald, 204 Cedarwood, O'Reilly Road, Berea, Johannesburg.

Council agreed to the preparation for a Handbook for 1965 being proceeded with.

Messrs Raphaely and Bentley were elected Auditors for 1963-64.

The next Council meeting was to be held on the 24th June, 1964, to consider the Annual Report of Council and to elect officers and Council for 1964-65.

The meeting ended at 9.40 p.m.

A. Menzies

Hon. Secretary

*J. H. Lagoway 24/6/64*