

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Minutes of Council Meeting held at the Royal Observatory, Observatory, Cape on Monday June 17th at 8.00 p.m.

Present: Dr. Evans (in the Chair) Dr. Cousins, Messrs. Orpen Hurly, Weinberg, Bentley and Russo.

Apologies for absence were noted from Messrs. Atkins, Lagerweij and Corben who are overseas. Dr. Wild, Mr. Bondiotti, Mr. Churms; also Dr. Stoy who appeared however at a later stage of the Meeting.

Minutes of the Council/^{meeting}held 13th May 1968 were read and confirmed.

Arising out of the Minutes it was stated that the Peterhouse Astronomical Society had withdrawn their application for one of the Society's telescopes. The schoolmaster of the Peterhouse School, who had initiated the proposal originally would be leaving the school at the end of the year. Secondly it was intimated that Mr. Bennett had agreed to accept the Directorship of the Comet and Meteor Section.

One new member was elected viz.

Mr. H. Sher, 39 MacIntyre Street, Jeppe, Johannesburg, Tvl.

The Hon. Treasurer, Mr. G. Orpen, presented the following Financial Statement:

Statement of Financial Position as on 17th June 1968

Expenditure	R	c	Receipts	R	c
Subscription to "Sky and Telescope" July 1967 to March 1968	583.	69	Credit Balance 1/7/67	161.	75
Cost of production of MNASSA, July 1967 to May 1968 and of Handbook	574.	00	Subscriptions		
			Arrears	5.	00
			Current	1286.	50
			Advance	62.	50
				1354.	00
Postage on "Sky and Telescope", MNASSA and Handbook, July 1967 to May 1968	136.	64	Entrance Fees	72.	50
Stationery	8.	80	MNASSA (Sale of)	267.	54
Postage, other than above	12.	95	Sale of Handbooks	6.	95
Essay Competition Prizes	41.	00	Sale of "A Universal Sundial"	0.	50
Addressograph Plates	5.	49	Sale of back and extra numbers of "Sky and Telescope"	13.	96
Materials required to affix object glass to Roberts Refractor	3.	74	Interest on Mortgage, McIntyre Bequest	73.	32
Transferred to McIntyre Award Account	178.	56	Interest on Building		
Transferred to Savings Bank	200.	00	Society Shares	14.	00
Bank Charges and Exchange Losses	20.	28	Donations	12.	25
Credit Balance, 17/6/68	214.	14	Commission on Cheques	2.	52
	R 1979.	29		R 1979.	29

In addition to the above there is an amount of R 1057. 92, including interest to 15th March 1968, in a Savings Bank Account at the Heerengracht Branch of the Standard Bank. The Balance in the McIntyre Award Account at 30th June 1968, including interest to that date, will be R 184. 62, and this will then be transferred to a new Savings Bank Account with the United Building Society.

Garrett Orpen,
Hon. Treasurer.

On behalf of the sub-committee dealing with the control of the production of MNASSA, Dr. Evans presented a Report, which is attached to these Minutes. Council accepted this report with expressions of thanks to the sub-committee for the time and effort devoted to this aspect of the Society's affairs.

The Hon. Secretary stated that 39 entries for the Forbes Essay Competition had been received.

Council accepted the applications of the following for the renewal of the loan of the telescopes held:

Dr. Stoy on behalf of the University of Cape Town.
Mr. Bentley on behalf of the Cape Centre.

The following nominations had been received for the new Council for the Session 1968/1969:

President	:	Mr. J. C. Bennett
Vice Presidents	:	Mr. J. Hers Mr. W. C. Bentley Mr. J. Churms
Members of Council	:	Dr. P. Wild Dr. A. D. Thackeray Dr. R. H. Stoy Mr. G. F. G. Knipe

As only sufficient nominations to fill the positions had been received, these would be declared duly elected, at the Annual General Meeting to be held in July next.

The Draft Report of Council for the year ending June 30 was considered and after some amendments accepted.

Correspondence with Mr. Hers was then read and considered. This concerned an application by the Pretoria Centre to the Department of Cultural Affairs for financial support for the construction of a building to house a 12-inch Reflector purchased by the Centre. The estimated cost to complete the project was R500. Permission had been received from the Science Research Council and the Radcliffe Trustees for the building to be erected on the Radcliffe Observatory grounds.

According to a reply received from the Department of Cultural Affairs,

- (a) a grant for the erection of a building will only be considered if the building is erected on Municipal or local Government owned property and in such a way that the building is under the control of a Committee representative of either both or, of the Department or the local Government.
- (b) it is against existing policy to subsidise local Associations where a National Association exists.

(translated from the Afrikaans).

Council was very sympathetic towards the project and gratified at the ambitious programme envisaged and felt that every encouragement should be given to the Pretoria Centre.

The Hon. Secretary was asked to write to the Department of Cultural Affairs an exploratory letter embodying the following points:

- (i) The location of a telescope in say the Pretoria University grounds might comply with the requirement of (a) above. However the bright lights of the City would be a hindrance to good night observations. The Radcliffe Observatory grounds appear to be a vastly better site, astronomically speaking, and it is a matter for consideration whether property owned by the Radcliffe Trust as opposed to a private holding could be regarded exceptionally as falling within the category laid down in (a). The advantage of being in close proximity to one of the largest telescopes in the Southern Hemisphere with possible access to all the facilities and "know-how" which go with a long established Observatory of repute cannot be overstressed.
- (ii) A Committee to control the Centre's telescope should consist of:

Society Members resident in Pretoria including a member of Council
a Professional Astronomer
a Representative of the CSIR and/or Republic Observatory

It was also suggested that a possible line of approach to the problem would be for the Pretoria Centre to make representation to the University of South Africa whose Headquarters are in Pretoria and who conduct a teaching course in Astronomy.

The meeting closed at 9.45 p. m.

T. W. Russo.

Hon. Secretary.

Chairman:

J. Hurms
1968 September 23