

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Minutes of Council Meeting held 1974 June 25 at 8 pm at the S A Astronomical Observatory, Cape Town.

**Present:** Mr Harding (in the chair) Dr Cousins, Dr Thackeray, Dr Fairall and Dr van Dugteren. Messrs Churms, Grimwood, Hurly, G Larmuth, C Larmuth, Molyneux, Orpen, Simenhoff, Turk and Russo.

**Apologies:** Dr P Wild, Mr Bentley, Mr Papadopolous.

**Minutes** of previous meeting held May 13 read and confirmed, after insertion of Dr van Dugteren's name among the apologies for absence.

Matters arising

Essay Competition. The Hon. Secretary reported that only 7 entries had been received all from the one school.

Non-European Membership

The reply sent to the Natal Centre was read. It was clear from the Constitution that there was no barrier to membership of the Society on a racial basis. Should any problems arise at Centre meetings, it was the responsibility of the Centre Committee to deal with them tactfully and equitably.

SAIP Conference

Mr Overbeek had agreed to attend the Conference as representative of the Society. Unfortunately attendance in hospital for surgery would prevent this, and he was asked to obtain a substitute, if possible.

Finance

The following statement was presented by the Treasurer and adopted on the motion of Mr Larmuth, seconded by Dr Fairall.

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR PRESENTATION TO COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1974 June 25**

	R.c.			R. c
Subscriptions to "Sky & Telescope" for period July 1973-April 1974	1563-37	Credit Balance at 1.7.73.		794-41
Cost of production of MNASSA, July 1973 - February 1974.	732-37	<u>Subscriptions</u>		
Cost of reprints of articles in MNASSA	16-00	Arrears	2-50	
Expenditure on MNASSA Back numbers	4-84	Current	3294-50	
Cost of production of Handbook 1974	334-93	Advance	295-00	3592-00
Postage on publications, July 1973-June 1974	365-48	Sale of MNASSA		381-96
Stationery & Equipment	85-57	<u>Entrance Fees</u>		207-50
Postage, other than above	32-94	Sale of reprints of articles in MNASSA		35-00
Essay competition prizes	21-50	Sale of MNASSA Back numbers		69-50
Transferred to Savings Bank A/c July & August 1973	1000-00	Payment for Article in MNASSA		16-00
Placed on Fixed Deposit, 1st August 1973	1000-00	Sale of Handbooks		323-10
Bank charges	65-41	Sale of back and extra nos. of "Sky & Telescope"		89-90
Credit Balance at 25.6.74	440-92	Sale of other books		0-54
		Donations		43-10
		Advertisements in MNASSA		38-00
		Interest on Building Society Shares		15-42
		Interest on Fixed Deposit		32-50
		Commission on cheques and Airmail postage received		28-40
	<u>R5667-33</u>			<u>R5667-33</u>

ADDENDUM TO MINUTES

NEW COUNCIL

The Hon. Secretary reported that only sufficient nominations for the new Council for the session 1974/75 had been received. A ballot was therefore unnecessary.

The new Council to be announced at the Annual General Meeting will be constituted as follows:-

President Mr C Papadopolous

Vice-Presidents Mr G A Harding  
Dr P Wild  
Mr S Booyen

Members Dr A Thackeray  
Mr R Hurly  
Mr M Overbeek  
Mr M Gray

Hon. Secretary Mr T W Russo

Hon. Treasurer Mr G Orpen

Business Manager Mr W Bentley

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT (contd.)

The amounts on Fixed Deposit and in the Savings Bank account remain at R1000-00 and R1050-00 respectively. Arrangements have, however, been made to withdraw from the Savings Bank A/c to cover the cost of "Sky & Telescope" for May and June 1974 and accounts for production of MNASSA which it is hoped will be received before the close of the Financial year.

The balance in the McIntyre Award Account is now R451-62, savings bank interest of R12-09 having been added and a further amount of R28-43, interest on the bond, having been received during June 1974.

To benefit from the high interest rates now prevailing, Mr Orpen was empowered to transfer funds to any special savings account of financial benefit to the Society.

### The following new members were elected:

Mr K Wynn  
404 Derby House  
Cr 6th Ave & Main St  
BULAWAYO  
Rhodesia (Rejoined)

Mrs D H van der Wel  
P O Box 391  
PAARDEN EILAND  
Cape Town (7420)

Mr P J Kriel  
91 Magazyn Str  
PIETERSBURG (0700)

Mr E Erasmus  
103 Level Street  
KRUGERSDORP (1740)

Mr L M Daffue  
No 1 Somerset Way  
VANDERBIJLPARK (1900)

Agreed that members, whose subscriptions for the year 72/73 had not yet been paid should be expelled from membership.

The Annual Report of Council for presentation at the Annual General Meeting, as drafted by the Hon Secretary and Editorial Board was considered and after some amendments adopted.

### Nova Search Section

The question of a Director was discussed and the Hon Secretary was directed to discuss the matter with Mr Bennett in the first instance.

### Variable Star Section

It was mentioned that there was a strong possibility that Mr de Kock would be relinquishing his position as Director in the near future. The question of a successor is to be considered.

### MNASSA

A report on the future of MNASSA, prepared by Dr Wild was read, and referred for consideration by a sub-committee consisting of Drs Wild and Thackeray, Messrs Turk, Grimwood and G Larmuth. A copy is attached hereto.

### Distribution of Publication

A sub-committee of Messrs C Larmuth, Molyneux and Roberts, under the chairmanship of Dr Fairall was appointed with a view to spreading the work over a team of members instead of having it done by one member of the Editorial Board.

### Locks on cupboards in Lecture room

Agreed that locks could be purchased and fitted.

### La Caille's Observatory in Strand Street Cape Town

Mr Hurly reported that during building demolitions on the site, search had been made for evidence of the observatory used by La Caille, but no trace had been found.

The meeting closed at 10 p.m.

*A. A. H. 3/9/74*

REPORT ON THE FUTURE OF MNASSA

The following persons were approached with a request for their opinion on MNASSA, on whether it should be continued as is, expanded, or perhaps dropped entirely:

Mr. M. D. Overbeek  
Dr. R. H. Stoy  
Mr. K. J. Sterling  
Prof. E. E. Baart  
Dr. A. D. Thackeray  
Mr. G. A. Harding

There is a fair measure of agreement in the detailed comments received, on the basis of which I make the following proposals for the immediate future of MNASSA.

1. No attempt should be made to compete with the major astronomical publications, because it is in those journals that the work of our professional astronomers will be most widely read.
2. Research notes should continue to be accepted as and when they are submitted to MNASSA. These should be properly refereed so that the authors receive due credit for these publications.
3. Efforts should be made to publish high-quality review articles written, by acknowledged experts, at a level suitable for a wide cross-section of MNASSA's readers.
4. Efforts should be made to print brief digests of important papers which appear in the research literature but which will not generally be read by most of MNASSA's readers.
5. CENTREPIECE should be expanded both in scope and quantity so that amateur and student members are fully catered for.

NOTE: To this end, the constitution should be amended so that MNASSA is sent to every member of the Society (including associate and student members, who should be required to pay a small subscription to offset costs). No person should be allowed to join a Centre unless he is also some kind of member of the Society.

6. Expansion of MNASSA as outlined above will result in
  - (a) higher production costs (R600 per annum?)
  - (b) increased burden on Editorial staff

These may be covered by

- (i) improving advertising revenue - target: R200 per annum
- (ii) increased associate and student member subscriptions: R100 per annum
- (iii) increased circulation at home and overseas: R100 per annum
- (iv) Grant from Government Agency: perhaps R500 per annum

(b) expanding the Editorial Board. I suggest the following be invited:

Editor:	Dr. A. D. Thackeray
Managing Editor:	Dr. P. A. T. Wild
U.S. Correspondent:	Dr. D. S. Evans
European Correspondent:	Dr. R. H. Stoy
Journal Digester:	Prof. Brian Warner
Editors of Centrepiece:	Mr. J. Churms
	Mr. R. Hurly
	Mr. K. Rochford
Advertising manager:	Mr. J. F. Penfold
Reporters:	each Centre to appoint one reporter.

7. No account has been taken here of problems of despatch of publications: this is already under discussion. However, if MNASSA is to replace Centre circulars and newsletters, it must be despatched by a particular date each month. This means that posting of MNASSA would have to be separated from posting of Sky and Telescope. This would involve increased expenditure of about R200 per annum, and an increased work load! Amateur members would have to assist here.

P. A. T. WILD

18th June, 1974.

Acc. PATW

{ Tucker  
ADT  
Lammitt  
Gimwood.