

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at SAAO, Cape Town on Tuesday 1974 July 23 at 8 p.m.

- Present Mr G Harding (in the chair) and 28 members.
- Apologies for absence were received from Messrs. C. Papadopolous, T W Russo (the Hon. Secretary) and Dr. Fairall.
- Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on 1973 July 25 were read by the Acting Secretary and confirmed.
- Matters arising Nil
- Report of Council for year 1973/74 was read by the Acting Secretary and adopted by the meeting. A copy is attached to these minutes.
- Finance The financial statement for the year ending 30th June 1974 was presented by the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. G. Orpen and was adopted by the meeting. A copy is attached to these minutes. The reappointment of Mr. Raphaely and Mr. Molyneux as auditors was proposed and agreed to.
- Observing Section Reports were read by the Acting Secretary on behalf of the Directors and will appear in due course in MNASSA.
- (a) Variable Star Section
Director Mr R P de Kock
- 5145 observations were made by five observers as follows:-
- | | |
|---------------|------|
| A. Morrisby | 102 |
| C. Turk | 151 |
| M.D. Overbeek | 4410 |
| R.P.de Kock | 88 |
| C.R. Jenkins | 394 |
- The effort by Mr. Overbeek is particularly noteworthy.
- (b) Occultation Section
Director Mr A G Morrisby
- 290 observations were made by five observers. Particularly encouraging was the introduction of photoelectric techniques by M D Overbeek who, in addition, had also observed four occultations photoelectrically of Europa by Io. Observer details are:
- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|
| B. Fraser | 9 |
| A. Morrisby | 69 |
| M.D. Overbeek | 113 visual 19 photoelectric |
| C. Turk | 16 |
| J. Vincent | 64 |

(c) Comet Section

Director Mr. J. Bennett

Comet Kohoutek was observed by Morrisby, who made 33 observations (accompanied by pencil sketches), McBain (including a photograph) and by Smith and Bennett.

Comet Bradfield was observed by McBain, and photographs were taken by Smith and sketches made by Morrisby.

Comet Encke was observed by Bennett. Comet sweeping hours for 1973/74 were $97\frac{1}{2}$ hrs, comprised of $28\frac{1}{2}$ hrs. morning and 69 hrs. evening.

On June 13, 1974 a number of telescopic meteors was observed by Bennett apparently coming from the Ophiuchus radiant. On the actual night of supposed maximum (June 20-21) nothing was seen. A fuller report was being prepared.

During discussion of the observing section reports it was felt that more members should participate in these activities. In an attempt to achieve this Mr. Harding was to write a short piece in MNASSA.

Forbes Essay Competition The Chairman read the adjudicators report (a copy of which is attached) and the following statement of prize winners:

Senior Section

First Prize: -

Second and Third prizes to be shared between Lindsay Erasmus and Marina Grobbelaar.

Junior Section

First Prize: -

Second Prize: Dayle Taylor

All entrants came from the La Rochelle Girls High School, Paarl.

Despite the poor response of only seven entries it was felt that the competition should be continued and an attempt made to encourage teachers to advertise the competition. Some discussion followed on ways in which the situation could possibly be improved.

New Council: The Chairman read the names of Council members elected for 1974/75.

President: Mr C. Papadopolous

Vice-Presidents Mr. G.A. Harding
Dr. P. Wild
Mr. S. Booysen

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

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Hon. Secretary Mr. T.W. Russo
Hon. Treasurer Mr. G. Orpen
Business Manager Mr. W. Bentley

Further Business

A suggestion was made that the Society have an official badge or tie and this was generally agreed to. This proposal was to be put to Council to discuss and circulate, and the P.R.O, Mr. Hurly, was to prepare an item for "Centrepiece".

Miscellaneous

In the absence of the new President, the chairman then called upon himself to present the out-going President's address.

Mr. G. Harding then spoke on "Celestial Highways" during which he gave a most interesting talk on celestial navigation.

At the conclusion of the address, Dr. Wild thanked the speaker, who received enthusiastic applause.

The meeting officially ended at 9.45 p.m.

G. Roberts.
ACTING HON. SECRETARY

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE. 1974.

EXPENDITURE.

RECEIPTS.

	R. c.		R. c.
Subscription to "Sky & Telescope" for the Year	1885-19	Credit Balance at 1/7/1973	794-41
Cost of production of M.N.A.S.S.A., July 1973 to May 1974	1015-03	<u>Subscriptions.</u>	
Cost of reprints of articles in M.N.A.S.S.A.	16-00	Arrears	2-50
Expenditure on reproduction of Back Nos. of M.N.A.S.S.A.	4-84	Current	3304-50
Cost of production of Handbook for 1974	334-93	Advance	<u>311-00</u>
Postage on publications	365-48		3618-00
Stationery and equipment	104-75	Entrance Fees	207-50
Postage, other than above	32-64	Sale of M.N.A.S.S.A.	381-96
Essay Competition Prizes	21-50	Sale of reprints of articles in M.N.A.S.S.A.	35-00
Fire Insurance Premium	4-00	Sale of reproduced Back Nos. of M.N.A.S.S.A.	69-50
Transferred to Savings Bank A/c., July and August 1973	1000-00	Payment for publication of article in MNASSA	16-00
Placed on Fixed Deposit, 1st August 1973	1000-00	Sale of Handbooks	323-10
Bank Charges	78-27	Sale of back and extra nos. of "Sky & Telescope"	89-90
Credit Balance at 30/6/1974	354-64	Sale of other books	0-54
		Donations	43-10
		Advertisements in MNASSA	38-00
		Interest on Building Soc. Shares (Forbes Bequest)	15-42
		Interest on Fixed Deposit	32-50
		Savings Bank Interest	23-44
		Transferred ex Savings Bank A/c., June 1974	500-00
		Commission on cheques and airmail postage paid	28-90
	<u>R. 6217-27</u>		<u>R. 6217-27</u>

An amount of R1000-00 is on Fixed Deposit with the United Building Society at an interest rate of 6½%. This will be re-deposited on 1st August 1974 at 9½%. An amount of R550-00 was held in a Savings Bank A/c. with the Standard Bank, Heerengracht Branch: this amount fluctuates according to requirements, but remained at R1050-00 from August 1973 to June 1974. Since 30/6/1974 this amount has been transferred to a new "Plusplan" A/c at a higher rate of interest.

The Society also stands possessed of four shares in the S.A. Permanent Building Society to a total value of R200-00, per Certificate C.15778, dated 18/5/1960, and of equipment and apparatus insured against fire under Policy A01/01304 (previously 134760), dated 27/2/1961, in the amount of R1000-00 with the Southern Insurance Association.

The balance in the McIntyre Award Account is now R451-62. *There has been no award for the year.*

HON. AUDITORS.

HON. TREASURER.

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

FORBES ESSAY COMPETITION : 1974

(Draft Report of Judges)

The judges note with disappointment that only seven entries have been received, and that they have all come from the same school. They would like to recommend that all Centre Representatives be requested by Council to seek out teachers at schools in their neighbourhood who might be interested in advertising the existence of the annual Essay Competition.

The judges are unable to recommend a First Prize in either group. They recommend

- (a) Over 15 : 2nd and 3rd prizes to be shared between
Lindsay Erasmus)
Marina Grobbelaar } La Rochelle, Girls High School,
Paarl
i.e. R5 each
- (b) Under 15 : 2nd prize (R4) to Dayle Taylor, La Rochelle Girls High School, Paarl

Above is a draft report in the light of the reports by Prof. Cillie, Messrs. Dean and Roberts since my initial report (in which I failed to notice that Dayle Taylor should be treated quite separately as in the Under-15 group). I am quite happy to revise my previous decision and will go along with the suggestion that D. Taylor be awarded 2nd prize at standard rate.

I have been unable to contact Prof. Cillie since seeing his and the other reports.

c.c. Prof. G.G. Cillie - Stellenbosch
J. F. Dean - SAAC
G. Roberts - SAAC

A. D. THACKFRAY
28th June, 1974.

*Copy has been posted to Cillie
I am sorry in brief
with request to comment
before AGM
G.D.*

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Report of Council for the year ended 1974 June 30. *centre*

Para Five Council Meetings were held during the year with an average attendance of 12 members/alternates out of a possible 17.

MEMBERSHIP *not caps not indented*

Para Numbers ~~were~~ *are* still growing and the total nominal membership as at 30 June was about 500 of which 24 remain suspended. The corresponding numbers a year ago were 463 and 32. Last year's Council's report drew members' attention to the unnecessary additional work caused by some members not meeting their obligations promptly, apart from the extra postage incurred. At the end of last October, 58 members' subscriptions were 4 months in default, necessitating the withholding of publications. The previous year the figure was 38. The position is not improving.

PUBLICATIONS

Para The Editorial board has consisted of Dr. P.A.T. Wild (Editor of MNASSA), Mr. J. Churms and Mr. R. Hurly (Editors of "Centrepiece") and Dr. A.P. Fairall (Editor of the Handbook and in charge of distribution of publications).

Para Revenue from sales of Reprints, Back Issues and Advertisements has not been sufficient to offset rising production and postage costs, and must be increased. Once again the Editorial Board has found itself extended by its regular editorial duties and has not been able to tackle the additional tasks involved in fund-raising. Council has been asked to consider the advisability of increasing the number of officers on the Editorial Board for the session 1974/5.

Para An effort has been made during the past year to provide more material in MNASSA that would be of interest to our amateur members. It is hoped that the new feature CENTREPIECE has improved the balance of material in MNASSA, but we continue to have some difficulty in extracting contributions from members and from Centres! We are particularly grateful to those stalwarts who do come up regularly with items of interest to all our members.

Para The distribution of "Sky and Telescope" has continued reasonably smoothly except that in recent months, issues for a particular month have only arrived half way through the following month. This is disappointing in view of the

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fact that the magazine is airfreighted part of the way. There is also the prospect of increased cost to the Society in 1975. MNASSA circulation overseas - outside the society - remains around 130. A general difficulty experienced with distribution is the ever increasing burden on the voluntary help. In the last four years, the membership has nearly doubled and the monthly task of dispatching publications has grown accordingly.

As for 1973, 1500 copies of the Society's "Astronomical Handbook for Southern Africa" were printed and circulated. Production cost was reduced and has been covered by sales outside the Society.

FORBES ESSAY COMPETITION

The subject set was "Comets", with particular reference to "Kohoutek". We have to report with regret that the downward trend in the number of entries submitted, as reported last year, is still continuing. Only seven entries were received, all being submitted by the one school, La Rochelle of Paarl. It will be a matter for serious consideration by the new Council as to whether this annual competition should be repeated next year. The Adjudicators' report is given separately.

ASTRONOMY IN SCHOOLS

Council has this matter still under consideration. The ~~literature~~ ^{handbook} used by the Cape Education Department to impart knowledge of the subjects in the standards 6 & 7 has been scrutinized, and it is hoped to propose amendments to the Department. Some schools have been offered old and redundant copies of Sky and Telescope for use in their libraries, and these have been gratefully received.

NEW CENTRE

Council is pleased to announce the formation of a Natal Midlands Centre.

Natal members are to be congratulated on their enthusiasm and the growth of the Astronomical activities in Durban District, now leading to expansion in Pietermaritzburg, the headquarters of the new Centre.

S A INSTITUTE OF PHYSICS

The Society was represented at the S A Institute of Physics Conference held at Potchefstroom University early this month.

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GILL MEDAL

No proposal for an award was received.

MCINTYRE AWARD

No proposal for an award was received.

MISCELLANEOUS

Council wishes to place on record its appreciation of the work done by Directors of Observing Sections and the Committees of individual Centres. Particular mention should be made of meetings organized at schools by the Natal Centre.

Writers of articles on astronomical subjects, which appear in several newspapers, are to be congratulated and thanked.

The Society is greatly indebted to the following:

Mr. Bentley, the Business Manager

Mr. Orpen, Hon. Treasurer, who ^{has} completed 24 years in this office.

Mr. Hurly, Public Relations Officer

Editorial Board - Dr. Wild, Dr. Fairall, Mr. Churms and Mr. Hurly for compilation of ^{the} Monthly Notes ^{and} the Annual Handbook, and the despatch of publications to individual members. In this connection a special vote of thanks is due to Prof. Warner of the University of Cape Town, head of the Department of Astronomy, of which Drs. Wild and Fairall are members. ^{for making a generous amount of staff time available to the Society.}

Mention should also be made of the facilities for meetings afforded by the Director of the SAAO. ^{South Africa Astronomical Observatory}

Council regrets to report the passing of Mr. G. Knipe of the former Republic Observatory in Johannesburg, on 19th December 1973. Mr Knipe represented the Transvaal Centre on Council. An obituary appeared in the February issue of MNASSA.

In November, 1973, Mr. R.V. Laurence, of Somerset West passed away suddenly. His widow, in accordance with the express wish of her late husband, donated a 4" ^{inch (10 cm)} Unitron telescope, complete with accessories, to the Society for use by ~~amateurs~~ ^{members}.

Council also regrets to report the passing of Dr. W.H. van den Bos of the former Union Observatory in Johannesburg on 30th March 1974. Dr. van den Bos was director of the Union Observatory from 1941 ^{until} his retirement and was a world expert on double stars, discovering nearly 3000 new double stars and making nearly 72,000 measures of superlative accuracy. An obituary has appeared in the ^{May} latest issue of MNASSA.