

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Minutes of Council Meeting held at the S A Astronomical Observatory on Monday 1976  
May 3 at 8 p.m.

Present: Prof. Warner in the chair. Drs. Cousins, Wild, Messers-Bentley, Bondiëtti, Churms, Duveen, Hurly, C. Larmuth, G. Larmuth, Molyneux, Orpen, Roberts, Russo Simenhoff and Turk.

Apologies for absence from Dr. Feast, Dr. Thackeray and Mr. Poole

Minutes of previous meeting held 1976 February 23 had been circulated and were taken as read and approved.

Matters Arising Essay Competition. Agreed that this should be re-introduced in 1977. Prize monies would be increased over those offered in the past, but instead of entries being divided into two groups according to age, each group having three prizes, there would be only one group, covering scholars up to the age of 18 years and the Matriculation standard. However judges would take age into account when assessing the merit of a particular entry. There would be three prizes, R20, R10 and R5. Every endeavour should be made to publicize this contest among schools. A suitable topic would have to be decided upon before the year end.

Mr. Lincoln The Secretary read a letter received from Mr. Lincoln, thanking Council for continuing to send publications now free of charge. Advancing years were proving a handicap hence his earlier decision to resign.

Advertising in MNASSA Mr. Duveen reported that no action had been taken by him since the last meeting due to other heavy commitments, and asked to be relieved of this charge. Prof. Warner agreed to try and enlist the assistance of Mr. J. Penfold.

Associate Members and possible Constitution Inconsistencies

Mr Turk asked that his sub-committee's report be deferred to the next meeting. Decisions on the financial situation of the Society to be discussed later, could affect their deliberations.

New Members The following were elected as full members, subject to the usual proviso of publication of names in MNASSA and no objection being received.

Mr J.J. Bodenstein  
C/o Metallurgical Dept  
P O Box 1  
BLESKOP 0292

Dr W.E.L. Clarke  
Helderberg College  
P O Box 22  
SOMERSET WEST 7130

Mr J.S. Brown  
P O Box G.D. 52  
Greendale  
SALISBURY  
Rhodesia

Mrs K. Gove  
C/o P O Box 31078  
BRAAMFONTEIN 2017

Dr. H. Koefman  
59 Krantzview Rd  
KLOOF Natal  
3600

Master J. Luther  
969 Pretorius St  
Arcadia  
PRETORIA 0083

Mr. M.S. Nolte  
479 Kay Avenue  
Menlopark  
PRETORIA 0002

Mr J.A. Richards  
44 Forbes Str  
Fellside  
JOHANNESBURG 2001

Mr A.L. Smith  
Bergengaten 36bv  
16335 Spånga  
Sweden

Mrs E. Willer-Smith  
P O Box 2871  
PRETORIA 0001

Mr W.L. Stedman  
3 Essex Road  
Avondale  
SALISBURY Rhodesia

The next Council meeting was fixed for Monday June 14.

The Annual General Meeting was fixed for Wednesday July 28, and would be held in Cape Town

Dr. Stoy would be in Cape Town about the middle of June and there was some informal discussion as how best to arrange for members to see him. This would have to be in consultation with the Cape Centre. Prof. Warner undertook to try and ascertain the exact dates he would be in Cape Town, and a possible convenient date for him to meet members.

Wellington Astronomical Society of New Zealand sent their greetings and expressed appreciation of the high standard of MNASSA and of the Handbook.

Insurance of Society's telescope

The "All risks" policy giving coverage of R2,350 at a premium of R15,00 p.a. was handed to the Secretary by Mr. Turk. R 23,50 ~~R 15,00~~

Finance The Hon. Treasurer presented the following statement:

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		<u>RECEIPTS</u>	
	R. c.		R. c.
Subscription to Sky & Telescope" July 1975 to April 1976	2632-35	Credit Balance at 1.7.75.	88-67
Cost of production of MNASSA, June 1975 to February 1976	1227-07	<u>Subscriptions</u>	
Expenditure on reproduction of MNASSA back Nos.	5-17	Arrears 30-36	
Expenditure on production of Summary volume of early back nos. of MNASSA	250-40	Current 3496-82	
Cost of production of Handbook for 1976	904-08	Advance <u>133-50</u>	3660-68
Addressing and despatch of publications, June 1975 to March 1976	121-92	Entrance Fees	152-50
Postage on publications June 1975 to March 1976	366-87	Sale of MNASSA	504-63
Stationery	277-23	Sale of Back Numbers of MNASSA	68-00
Postage, other than above	53-92	Sale of Handbooks	220-90
Variable Star Charts	14-28	Sale of back and extra copies of "Sky & Telescope"	57-10
Insurance of Telescopes	15-15	Advertisement in MNASSA	30-00
Transferred to Plusplan A/c. July 1975	1000-00	Donations	64-06
Bank charges	90-28	Interest on Fixed Deposit	100-00
Credit Balance at 3.5.76	30.71	Interest on Building Soc. Shares (Forbes Bequest)	19-00
		Withdrawn from Plusplan A/c Feb. and March 1976	1450-00
		Borrowed from United Bldg. Socy. on security of Fixed Deposit	500-00
		Commission of cheques, airmail postage paid and gains on exchange	<u>73-83</u>
	<u>R 6989-37</u>		<u>R 6989-37</u>

The amount in the Plusplan A/c. with the Standard Bank, Heerengracht Branch is now R626-26, including R126-26 interest, added in March 1976, and the amount of R1000-00 is still on Fixed Deposit with the United Building Society at an interest rate of 10%, against which R500-00 has been borrowed at an interest rate of 11%. The balance in the McIntyre Award A/c is now R755-88, fixed deposit interest of R22-50 having been added in January 1976 and Bond interest of R34-79 during March 1976.

(Sgd.) Garrett Orpen  
Hon. Treasurer

This was accepted on the motion of Mr. Duveen seconded by Mr. Hurly.

Discussion on the general financial situation then followed. The Hon. Treasurer was confident that the year would end with a small credit balance anticipating some further receipts during the coming two months.

Reserves were down to about R1100, but Sky & Telescope and MNASSA alone to the end of June would cost about R800. Postage and despatch of publications could cost R80-R100. Mr. Orpen was empowered to close the Plus Plan account if the situation warranted this step.

Over the year expenditure would have exceeded income by a considerable amount. It was recognized that subscriptions would have to be increased, and a reserve again built up to assist in a situation as has now arisen.

Various views were expressed by members, and extracts of letters from absent principals were read. Mr. Poole produced a very useful breakdown of Society's costs and advocated an increase in subscription plus a capital levy to restore the reserves. There was also a suggestion to enlist the aid of a Government Department for MNASSA. However this had already been thoroughly investigated last year. It was found that a continuing support could be fraught with difficulties.

Mr. R. Smith also conveyed the views of the Transvaal Centre. Two subscription rates were suggested:- one to cover a nominal membership fee plus handbook, a second to cover publications. It was pointed out however that the reduced price for Sky & Telescope applicable to the Society was conditional upon all members receiving it.

Mr. Gray of the Natal Centre informed Council that the Centre had placed the sum of R200 at the Society's disposal as a free gift should the Society need it. Council was gratified at this thoughtful gesture on the part of Natal Centre. However as it now seemed probable that all commitments would be fully met by 30 June, Council considered that at this stage advantage of this very generous offer should not be taken.

It was unanimously agreed that subscriptions should be increased from R8 p.a. to R12 p.a. as from 1976 July 1. In passing it was observed that the annual rate of subscription to Sky & Telescope for an individual in South Africa is \$15 (USA), the equivalent of which is more than the R12 quoted above.

The Hon. Treasurer together with Mr. Turk and Mr. G. Larmuth were asked to act as a small sub-committee to consider the establishment of a reserve fund. It was envisaged that a capital sum should be raised by an appeal for voluntary donations, such sums to be invested in a registered Trust Fund, from which the interest only would be used in cases of a financial emergency. A report to be made at the next Council Meeting.

The McIntyre Award account now had a credit balance of R755-88. Mr. Bondietti suggested that a portion of this could be transferred to the Trust Fund if and when established. This was left over for consideration at a later date.

Gill Medal

A proposal to make an award was discussed and the Hon. Secretary empowered to arrange for a ballot in terms of Appendix I of the Constitution.

Miscellaneous

A minor had joined the Society as a full member, and a cheque in payment of the subscription was forwarded by his father. However the parent passed away soon afterwards before the cheque was cashed. Agreed

that no action to recover the sum due should be taken. However at the end of the current year issue of publications would cease unless a desire to continue as a member was expressed and subscriptions paid from 1st July next.

The Hon. Secretary read a letter from the Chief of Staff Personnel of the S.A.D.F. This follows previous correspondence as a result of a directive at the previous Council Meeting for the Hon. Secretary to offer the possible services of the Society to the Defence Department in the sphere of astral navigation. In this letter it was asked whether a meeting with representatives of the SADF could be arranged to discuss the utilization of the Council's offer. Mr. Hurly undertook to reply.

The meeting thereupon adjourned, the time being 22h25m.

T.W. Russo  
HON. SECRETARY

S. A. Hald  
CHAIRMAN