

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Minutes of Council Meeting held on 1985 February 11 at 20h00 at SAAO

Cape Town

1. Present

The President, Mr. J. Bondietti, in the Chair Professor A. P. Fairall, Professor M. W. Feast, Professor Brian Warner, Dr. I. S. Glass, Dr. Peter Mack, Miss P. Booth, Messrs W. C. Bentley, J. Churms, R. Hurly, P. J. Janse van Rensburg, W. Neilson, F. N. G. Orpen (Hon. Treas.), M. D. Overbeek, M. G. Soltynski, C. R. G. Turk and the Hon. Secretary H. E. Krumm.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Dr. A. W. J. Cousins and Mr. J. Spenser Jones.

The meeting learnt with regret that Dr. Cousins was in hospital after having undergone an operation. The Hon Secretary to write to him expressing Council's wishes for a speedy recovery.

3. Welcome to Professor A. P. Fairall and Mr. Danie Overbeek

The Chairman extended a warm welcome to Professor Fairall who was attending his first Council after his return from overseas and to Mr. Overbeek who was on a short visit to the Cape from the Transvaal.

4. Minutes

Minutes of previous Council meeting held on 1984 November 19 at 20h00 at SAAO, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read, confirmed as a true record of the proceedings and duly signed.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes

(i) Appointment of Alternates

The appointment of Dr. T. H. H. Evans as the alternate for the Natal Centre was left over to the next meeting of Council.

(ii) MNASSA: Editorial Board

Dr. David Evans and Dr. R. H. Stoy had replied to the effect that they fully agreed with Council's decision to restructure the Editorial Board as indicated in the Minutes of the September meeting. Dr. P. A. T. Wild had not replied. Dr. Evans had enclosed a cheque to the value of £25 towards the funds of the Society. He was recently elected to the Jack S. Josey Centennial Professorship for the remaining two years before retiring. Both communications had been suitably acknowledged.

(iii) Society's Telescopes

(a) Insurance: Mr. Turk had nothing to report.

(b) Society's 4 inch refractor: This instrument was in the possession of Mr. J. Churms.

(iv) FINANCE

After the Hon. Treasurer had presented his Financial Statement (see Minute No below) Mr. Rupert Hurly proceeded to present a projection of the state of the Society's finances through to 30 June 1986. Basing his calculations on an exchange rate of 53 cents to the dollar and an annual subscription of R45, he estimated that the Society would show a deficit of R1830 at 30 June 1985 and one of R3190 by 30 June 1986.

After thanking Mr. Hurly for his report the meeting proceeded to examine ways and means by which the Society might extricate itself from its

financial dilemma. Although at least 300 members had indicated their acceptance of the increased subscription it was clear that at R45 per year it would not be possible to continue to supply members with SKY AND TELESCOPE under the present arrangements.

After a long and somewhat complicated discussion, which was characterised by its sincerity of purpose, it was proposed, seconded and agreed that:-

- (a) Mr. R.G. Glass, an accountant and a member of the Society and the Cape Centre be asked to examine the Society's finances in depth and that he thereafter draw up a budget based on the projected income and expenditure for the years 84/85 and 85/86. Mr. Hurly agreed with this proposal.
- (b) A suggestion by Professor Fairall be gratefully accepted that he write to his contact at SKY AND TELESCOPE enquiring whether they would be prepared to drop the number of copies and retain the special price to the Society.
- (c) A special meeting of Council be convened for 11 March 1985 for the purpose of considering the following points arising from the discussion:-
 - (1) Receive the accountant's report
 - (2) Professor Fairall's reply from SKY AND TELESCOPE
 - (3) The possible subvention by the Department of Education to cover or a part thereof the costs of MNASSA. Mr. Gray to be contacted.
 - (4) Drop SKY AND TELESCOPE
 - (5) Enlarge MNASSA in place of S&T
 - (6) Retain S&T and consider a further increase in the subscription
 - (7) Purchase dollars in advance
 - (8) Impose a levy to offset any losses incurred

(v) SKY AND TELESCOPE: Sale of Back Numbers

Agreed to revoke Minute No.8 and to increase the price of the sale of back numbers of S&T up to ten years old to R1.00 out of hand and R1.50 by post.

(vi) Computing Section

Judging by the contents of constructive letter from Mr. J. Campos and Mr. Danie Overbeek and a verbal report by Dr. Peter Mack it became fairly clear that the Centres favoured the formation of a Computing Section.

The meeting found it difficult, however, to come to any concrete conclusions as to how the Section should operate and the services which it was likely to offer, especially to the editor of the Handbook, as the views expressed only tended to confuse the issue.

After a long and somewhat involved debate it was agreed to accept Mr. Soltynski's offer to write to the Centres asking them for their views.

6. Finance

The Hon. Treasurer presented his Financial Statement, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. It was proposed by Mr. R. Hurly and seconded by Professor A.P. Fairall that the statement be adopted. All in favour.

Mr. Orpen intimated that his health had recently declined to such an extent that it was unlikely that he would be able to continue for very much longer as Hon. Treasurer. The meeting expressed its sorrow and regret. It was decided to ask Mr. R.G. Glass to act for Mr. Orpen with the possibility that he would become the Hon. Secretary in due course.

7. New Members

The following were elected to the Society in terms of Art.5(1) of the Constitution:-

Miss S.GARDEE	69 Bree Street, Newtown, JOHANNESBURG 2001
Mr.R.LINDSAY	Dept. of Physics, University of the Western Cape, Private Bag X17, BELLVILLE 7530
Mr.D.J.P.O'DONAVON	14 Long Place, PINELANDS, Cape 7405
Mr.P.H.D.STUBBS	32 Tulbagh Avenue, KENRIDGE 7550
Mr.J.J.van ELLINCKHUIJZEN	P.O.Box 1427, SWAKOPMUND 9000

8. Correspondence

Lowveld Astronomy Club - See Minute No.9 of Council Meeting of 1984 Sept.24 On 3 December 1984 Mr.Jan Hers had written to say that he was disappointed that Council could have taken such a deplorable decision. He felt that no other organisation was better able than the ASSA to publicise the existence of local astronomical groups whether they were affiliated with the Society or not. He could think of no better place for listing such clubs, societies, associations, etc. than the Annual Handbook of the Society. The Society could protect its interests by stating that these groups were not "duly constituted Centres" and that the Society can, therefore, take no responsibility for the information supplied.

Mr. Overbeek said that he understood that Mr. Andrew Gray knew something about this Club and that he would approach him for further information. Either he or Mr. Gray would report back to Council in due course.

9. Halley's Comet: Black out of street lights.

Mr.R.Hurly said that he had had correspondence and talks with the municipalities of Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London, Escom and the traffic authorities regarding his suggestion that street lights be switched off on a night between 6th and 10th April 1986 and between, say, 11.30 and 12.30.

Cape Town Municipality was prepared to accede to his request while Port Elizabeth and East London were keen. Neither Escom nor the traffic authorities could foresee any difficulties. In fact he had received a great deal of support.

In thanking Mr.Hurly for his initiative and efforts, it was agreed that he may henceforth speak in the name of the Society.

10. Handbook

Mr.R.Hurly reported that our distributors, A.M.A., had erroneously included copies of the Handbook in the envelopes containing MNASSA for distribution to overseas subscribers. This had resulted in the loss to the Society of 150 copies, in addition to which Mr. Hurly was now short of stocks.

A.M.A. accepted responsibility for the mistake and offered to credit the Society's account with R180. It was agreed to accept their offer.

11. Stocks of Back Numbers of MNASSA

The University of Cape Town were no longer able to keep the stocks of back numbers of MNASSA. These would probably have to be transferred to SAAO.

Dr.Peter Mack to discuss the matter with Professor Brian Warner.

12. Halley's Comet - Brochure

A very useful brochure on Halley's Comet had been prepared by Dr.Peter Mack on behalf of the SAAO, in English and Afrikaans. With the cooperation of Mr.Janse van Rensburg it was agreed to have the brochure in a slightly different format and sold to the public, by kind permission of SAAO. Mr.Turk to discuss printing and costing with the Trustees of ASSET.

13. CLOSING: No further business. Chairman adjourned the meeting at 22h45.

Date.....

Chairman.....

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR PRESENTATION TO COUNCIL: MEETING of 11th FEBR 1985.

<u>RECEIPTS.</u>		R. c.	<u>EXPENDITURE.</u>	R. c.
Balance brought forward 1/7/1984:		3215-73	Subscription to "Sky & Telescope", including freight charges, July to December 1984	6298-26
<u>Subscriptions.</u>			Cost of production of MNASSA, October 1983 to October 1984	3022-21
Current	10700-75		Cost of production of Handbook for 1985	2005-10
Advance	<u>220-00</u>	10920-75	Addressing and despatch of publications	336-45
Entrance Fees		135-00	Postage on publications	1277-23
Sales of M.N.A.S.S.A.		913-81	Stationery and printing	124-28
Sales of Handbooks, 1984 (6)		551-70	Postage, other than above	53-04
Sales of back nos. of "Sky & Telescope"		1-10	General Sales Tax on "Sky & Telescope"	689-40
Interest on Fixed Deposit		142-50	Fire Insurance premium	50-50
Interest on Building Society Shares (Forbes Bequest)		14-33	Long Service Award, Mr. Churms	43-95
Donation		2-00	Engraving Gill Medal	2-50
Airmail postage paid by M.N.A.S.S.A. subscribers		15-50	Variable Star Charts	19-00
Commission paid by MNASSA sub- scribers, and exchange gains		783-78	Bank charges	58-97
Interest on Current Account		4-88	Credit Balance at 11/2/1985	2720-19
		<u>R.16701-08</u>		<u>R.16701-08</u>

The balance of R2720-19 consists of R270-19 in the Current Account and R2450-00 in the "Plusplan" A/c.

R1 000 is on Fixed Deposit with the United Building Society.

The balance in the McIntyre Award Account is now R3109-77, of which R3 000 is on Fixed Deposit with the United Building Society.

Garrett Capen
HON. TREASURER.