

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Minutes of Council Meeting held on 1985 November 18 at 20h00 at SAAO
Cape Town

1. PRESENT

Mr C R G Turk, Vice-President, in the Chair, Professor A P Fairall, Dr I S Glass, Miss P Booth, Messrs W C Bentley, A D B Cameron, J Churms, R Hurly, W Neilson, F N G Orpen (Hon Treas), J H Spence Jones and the Hon Secretary H E Krumm.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Professor M W Feast, Professor Brian Warner, Dr T H H Lloyd-Evans and Dr Peter Mack.

3. MINUTES

Minutes of previous meeting of Council held on 1985 September 16 at 20h00, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read. Their adoption was proposed by Professor A P Fairall, seconded by Mr W C Bentley and confirmed and signed.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) ALTERNATES AND PRINCIPALS ON COUNCIL

The following information was received since the last meeting of Council:-

Principals

Natal Centre: Mr J P G Cramb
Pretoria Centre: Mr J Wolterbeek
Transvaal Centre: Mr M D Overbeek

Alternates

Professor A P Fairall for the Harare Centre
Mr A D B Cameron for the Pretoria Centre

Representative for Cape Centre: Dr Peter Mack

The full list will be recorded in the minutes when Council has been informed of the principal for the Harare Centre.

(ii) SKY AND TELESCOPE

After a long and contentious debate it was agreed that the present monthly order ^{of} 450 copies be retained until if and when circumstances indicate a change.

(iii) AFFECT ON THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE SOCIETY DUE TO THE DETERIORATION IN THE EXCHANGE RATE.

(1) Estimated Budget to 1986 June 30

Mr. Orpen had prepared a projected budget of income and expenditure for the remaining period of the present financial year. It showed that the Society would have sufficient funds to cover its obligations to 1986 June 30, provided that the exchange rate did not deteriorate any further.

(2) Finance Sub-Committee

It was agreed to appoint a sub-committee consisting of the Hon Treasurer, Mr C R G Turk and Mr J Spencer Jones. In addition Mr R Glass, who is a chartered accountant and who gave valuable advice at the time of last year's financial crisis, would be asked / to serve

to serve on this committee. Their function would be to closely monitor the effect of the general financial situation on the Society and to make recommendations where necessary.

(3) Consideration in respect of 1986-87 and subsequent years

Council noted that in the absence of any improvement in the economic situation, specifically the exchange rate, it may be obliged to increase the subscription for 1986-87. It was felt that this would be an undesirable move. Ideas were now discussed for alleviating this.

(a) ASSA could become an agent for SKY & TELESCOPE

Under the present arrangement with SKY & TELESCOPE all members of the Society must receive the magazine. If ASSA were to become an agent then all members would pay an annual subscription (considerably reduced from current levels) for MNASSA and the Handbook. In addition, those members who wished to continue receiving S&T could do so by subscribing through ASSA : S&T would be mailed direct to those subscribers from the U.S.A. The cost would be slightly higher than at present but much lower than that for private subscribers. The scheme would entail a certain amount of additional administrative work for which the Society would reserve the right to charge subscribers a fee. Certain logistic problems need to be gone into and Professor Fairall has undertaken to write to Mrs Brewer of S&T to obtain more information about the scheme.

(b) M.N.A.S.S.A.

If it were decided to drop S&T altogether, it would be necessary to broaden the scope of MNASSA. However, it was felt important that in addition to its being a journal for members, it should retain its international standing and further should not attempt to emulate S&T. One area in which improvement could be made is in the quality of production e.g having colour pictures; also more review-type articles could be encouraged. A suggestion was made that Centrepiece could be turned into a monthly newsletter; in these circumstances, it would be of interest to Centre members as well as ASSA members and could even replace the various Centre newsletters. However, it should be noted that the amount of work involved would be beyond the present Editorial Board of MNASSA, and much additional help would be required. Certain aspects of this scheme have been considered by the Editorial Board and be developed in conjunction with 3(a) above.

Council requested that Alternates inform their Principals of these discussions; that they give them their early consideration and bring them to the notice of their respective Centres. Council must take a final decision on the action to be taken for the 1986-87 year, at its next meeting on 1986 February 3. Any communications should be in the hands of Alternates by this date.

(iv) COMET AND METEOR AND COMPUTING SECTIONS

Mr Jose Campos acknowledged with pleasure Council's decision to appoint him Director of the Comet and Meteor Section. In his letter he gave an interesting account of his recent visit to Portugal where he met the Portuguese President and his wife and other members of the Portuguese Government. He had the pleasure of explaining his activities to the President at an international exhibition in Oporto where he had set up a static display of photographs, diagrams etc of his activities in astronomy. His report will probably appear in more detail in MNASSA. Council congratulated Mr Campos on the award of several honours bestowed on him by the Portuguese President, General Ramalho Eanes and requested that he be informed accordingly.

With regard to the Computing Section, Council agreed with Mr Campos' suggestion that the Transvaal Centre be asked to consider the formation of the Section as they were already active in this field.

(v) LOWVELD ASTRONOMY CLUB

Mr W J Fraser of White River had intimated in a letter dated 1985 October 31 that the members of the Club were interested in forming a Centre of the Society. In reply to his request for a list of the members of the Society from which he might select the names of those members living near to the Nelspruit/White River area, Council decided that a copy of the letter be sent to Mr Andrew Gray, who was conversant with the situation, and that he be requested to extract the relevant information required by Mr Fraser.

5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Hon Treasurer presented his financial statement, copies of which are attached to these minutes. It was proposed by Professor A P Fairall and seconded by Mr J Spencer Jones that the statement be adopted. All in favour. Council appreciated the fact that the financial operations of the Society had become very involved and wished to thank Mr Orpen for the confident manner in which he was handling the situation.

6. NEW MEMBERS

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

MR N KRALLIS 44 Voortrekker Avenue, EDENVALE 1610
MR A NANA P.O.Box 46145, Belle Ombre, PRETORIA 0142
MR C P KRUGER p/a Dr P W B Kruger, Posbus 3173, PRETORIA 0001
MR D W TRENNERY P.O.Box 443, WALKERVILLE 1876
DR D A SCHOLTZ Chopinstraat 50, Van der Byl Park 1900

(The above names will be published for information in MNASSA)

7. CORRESPONDENCE

PROPOSED WORKSHOP ON COMETS

A letter dated 1985 November 07 was received from the President of the Society, Dr G D Nicolson, in connection with the above. He had enclosed a letter dated 1985 October 5 sent to him by Mr Jose Campos proposing that a one-day Workshop on Comets be held, preferably at the Cape, sometime after mid-April 1986 with the Cape Centre as host. He had in mind inviting guest speakers such as Mr Patrick Moore, who would be visiting South Africa on his way back from Australia, Mr John Bortle who would be arriving in Johannesburg early in April, Professor M.W. Feast, Professor Brian Warner, Dr Peter Mack and Mr Jack Bennett.

Copies of his letter had been sent by Mr Campos to the Hon Secretary and the Chairman of the Cape Centre.

Dr Nicolson endorsed Mr Campos' suggestion and supported the idea that it be held at the Cape. It would be preferable to hold the Workshop on a Saturday as this would suit the amateurs. Financial considerations would require some thought. He went on to mention that plans were being made to make radio observations of hydroxyl radicals released by Comet Halley and that one of the staff members of the Hartebeesthoek Radio Astronomy Observatory would probably be able to report on this at the Workshop.

Council likewise endorsed Mr Campos' suggestion and gave the idea their blessing. They were not, however, in a position to render any financial assistance. It was agreed to refer the whole matter to the Cape Centre.

8. HALLEY'S COMET POSTAGE STAMPS - CISKEI

The designs had now been finalised and a brochure had been issued. It was agreed that copies of the brochure be sent to all members of the Society.

9. NEXT MEETING: Agreed to hold it on 1986 February 3

10. CLOSING: The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 22h35, there being no further business.

Date. 1986 Feb 3.

Chairman. 

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR PRESENTATION TO COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON 13th NOVEMBER 1985.

RECEIPTS.

EXPENDITURE.

	R. R. c.		R. c.
Balance Brought Forward 1/7/1985.	4436-48	"Sky & Telescope", including freight charges thereon, July to October 1985	5014-34
<u>Subscriptions.</u>		Cost of production of M.N.A.S.S.A., July to October	981-75
Arrears	25-00	Despatch of publications, July to September 1985	119-31
Current	5807-50	Postage on publications, July to September 1985	502-34
Advance	85-00	Stationery	6-44
"Levies" on 1984/85 Subscriptions	610-00	Postage, other than above	33-70
Entrance Fees	145-00	Import Surcharge on "Sky & Telescope", October 1985	123-20
Sales of M.N.A.S.S.A.	310-02	G.S.T. on "Sky & Telescope", July to October 1985	729-96
Sale of Handbooks	6-00	Fire Insurance premium	50-50
Sale of back and extra copies of "Sky & Telescope"	32-20	Bank charges	98-06
Donations	223-00	Credit Balance at 13/11/1985	6200-21
Interest on Fixed Deposits	125-00		
Interest on Current Account	54-36		
Commission	0-25		
Transferred from "32 Days Deposit"	2000-00		
	<u>R13859-81</u>		<u>R13859-81</u>

The Credit Balance of R6200-21 shown consists of R2250-21 in the Current A/c at the Standard Bank, Kenilworth and R3950-00 in the "Plusplan" A/c. There is also an amount of R329-99 interest up to date of transfer ex Heerengracht Branch, which will be transferred to the Current A/c together with further interest which will have accrued by then at the end of June 1986.

The amount of R9.000-00 on "32 days deposit", mentioned in the previous statement, has been reduced by R2.000-00 transferred to the Current A/c; but has been increased by interest amounting to R416-81, bringing the present total to R7.416-81.

There is also an amount of R1.000-00 on Fixed Deposit with the United Building Society.

The balance in the McIntyre Award Account is now R3.794-74, of which R3.000-00 is on Fixed Deposit with the United Building Society.

Garrett O'Brien
HON. TREASURER