

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
Minutes of COUNCIL Meeting Held on 24 April 1995

1 PRESENT:

J Spencer-Jones (in the chair), P Booth, B Skinner,
D Duprez, C D Allen, J Bondiotti, C Turk, R Stobie,
C D Gray, M G Soltynski and P van Blommestein.

2 APOLOGIES: A Joubert and H Krumm. + *R. Hurly*

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: Accepted as read.
Proposed: C D Gray Seconded P van Blommestein

4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

4.1 Symposium 1995: Venue Bloemfontein Teachers Training College.
Approximate cost R200 per delegate which includes accomodation at a
hostel. Informal publication of papers will be undertaken if the
text is made available prior to the event.

4.2 Symposium 1993: The proceedings have been published. Council wish
to thank Prof Wargau and UNISA for undertaking this mammoth task.

4.3 Entrance fee: Discussed (see below).

5 FINANCE:

5.1 Treasurer's report tabled.

5.2 AS & TS Subscriptions: Payment to be deferred until further notice.

5.3 Non-payment of subscriptions: All persons not in good standing are
to be struck off the mailing list after 2 months. D Duprez will
assist Mrs Joubert in this matter.

5.4 Increase in subscriptions: As from 1 July 1995 the subscriptions
will be: R200.00 per annum with Sky & Telescope and
R 80.00 per annum without Sky & Telescope
Entrance fee R40.00 in all cases

Proposed: CRG Turk Seconder: D Duprez

(The subscription to Sky & Telescope has been increased by 70% and
they no longer will be covering excise duties levied.)

6 NEW MEMBERS: All applicants have been accepted pending the list
being tabled at the next meeting.

7 A.G.M.: Nominations for Council are to be submitted in writing to
the Hon Secretary before 15 June 1995.

8 GENERAL: The Curator of Instruments (C Turk) announced that the
object glass of the 4" Krumm refractor has been found and refitted.

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 19 June 1995

Prop C. Turk

Sec C.D. Gray

J.P.S.

Message from Colin Gray, Hon. Treasurer, ASSA

19 April 1995

Dear Ms Lit,

I received your letter dated March 29 regarding the Sky & Telescope price increase shortly before the Easter weekend. Your news is a great shock for our Society.

We are having a Council meeting to discuss your letter on Monday, 24 April and I would appreciate it if you could confirm the following as there seems to be small error in your figures: the price to ASSA will now be US dollars 34.00 per copy per annum, subject to a bulk discount of 19 percent making US dollars 27.54 which works out to a per copy price of US dollars 2.295 per copy, and not US dollars 2.31 as stated in your letter.

We would also be interested to know why the very long-standing arrangement whereby you very generously absorbed the clearing costs is abruptly being terminated by Sky & Telescope?

We are very concerned that the total increase you have notified us of will lead to many of our members being unable to pay our new annual subscriptions, leading to greatly reduced membership, and possibly even closure of ASSA. Surely this is not in the best interest of Astronomy?

ASSA has about 500 members (amateur and professional) throughout Southern Africa, and we charge an annual subscription fee which covers the cost of receiving and redistributing Sky & Telescope, and producing and distributing our own publication MNASSA and our annual handbook. This is really all we do on a financial basis and Sky & Telescope takes up most of this. ASSA is run by volunteers and is a non-profitmaking body. Our present annual subscription is Rand 110 (US dollars 30). We are continually faced with increasing costs due to the ongoing devaluation of our currency against the dollar, as well as an inflation rate of 10 percent. This means that to keep ASSA solvent we have had to increase the annual subscription from Rand 85 in 1993 to Rand 110 in 1994 and we are raising it to R 130 this year. This means that our members have been faced with an increase of 53 percent in 3 years. With your latest price increases we will have to levy an annual subscription of R 176 this year instead of R 130, an annual increase of 60 percent and 107 percent over three years.

Your charge to us per copy in November 1993 was US dollars 1.25 and this was increased to US dollars 1.47 in December 1993, an increase of 17.6 percent. Your new increase takes the price per copy to US dollars 2.295, plus the clearing costs of US dollars 0.22 per copy we will have to pay, making a total of US dollars 2.515 per copy. This is an immediate increase of 71 percent, and a total increase of 101 percent since December 1993 (in dollar terms). Have your costs really doubled in less than eighteen months?

In the light of the above, we would be grateful if you could reconsider your price increase to some extent so as not to drive away our members, who are after all part of the worldwide astronomical community in the new and developing South Africa.

Your very truly,
Colin Gray

Hon. Treasurers Report
to the ASSA Council meeting
on Monday 24 April 1995

Year to date

The income statement for the nine months of this financial year to date indicates a surplus of income over expenditure of R8000. However, this was achieved by deferring payment to some creditors so that funds would be available to finance the quarterly draft required for ordering Sky & Telescope for the months April, May and June.

Cash Flow

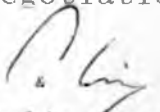
Now that members have been advised of the new subscription rate of R130 per annum from 1 July, it is expected that cash flow will be positive in the final quarter as subscriptions are received for the new year. But it remains to be seen whether we shall suffer from a spate of resignations.

Estimate for the Year

Total expenses for the year are now estimated at R66000, which will result in an overall loss of about R8000 for the year. This will be the third consecutive annual loss and drastic steps must be taken to right the situation e.g. members must pay or be struck off.

Sky & Telescope

The latest bombshell to hit the Association is contained in a letter dated 29 March from Sky Publishing. They intend to increase our price for S&T magazine from 1 July from \$1.47 to \$2.31 per copy and will no longer absorb the clearing costs. These two amounts translate into an annual increase of about R45 per member, on top of the new subscription of R130 i.e. a total of R175. Negotiations are under way through Maciej and his e-mail wizardry!


Colin Gray

Bergvliet April 1995.

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
BALANCE SHEET AT 31 MARCH 1994.

ACCUMULATED FUNDS

	MARCH 1995	JUNE 1994
Deficit at start of year	4747	Funds 4304
Surplus for year to date	<u>8010</u>	Deficit <u>11136</u>
	3263	6832
Funds transferred from McIntyre	<u>4112</u>	<u>2085</u>
Accumulated funds	R <u>7375</u>	Deficit R <u>4747</u>

REPRESENTED BY

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash resources		
32 days notice account	5430	10690
Current account	55	3224
Plusplan account	<u>2205</u>	<u>3000</u>
	7690	16914

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Owing to Asset	315	1261
Cheques not presented	-	50
Subscriptions in advance	<u>-</u>	<u>20350</u>
	315	21661

NET CURRENT ASSETS	R <u>7375</u>	Deficit R <u>4747</u>
--------------------	---------------	-----------------------

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
 INCOME STATEMENT
 FOR THE NINE MONTHS ENDED 31 MARCH 1995

INCOME

	THIS QUARTER	YEAR TO DATE
Subscriptions	4954	44269
Interest	286	980
Entrance fees	451	691
Mnassa Sales	1532	2355
Handbook Sales	1292	1431
Advertising	160	174
Donations	-	2195
Asset donations	100	315
Sundry income	<u>-</u>	<u>90</u>
	8775	52500

EXPENDITURE

S&T subscriptions	6849	19811
Freight & Clearing	809	2558
Surcharge & VAT	1670	5874
Mnassa production	1426	5791
Handbook production	-	-
Postage on S&T	2129	6281
Postage on Mnassa	403	1020
Printing & Stationery S&T	767	1041
Printing & Stat. Mnassa	47	112
Bank charges	92	342
General postages	17	197
Honoraria	-	1000
Asset donations	100	315
Sundry expenses	<u>114</u>	<u>148</u>
	14423	44490

NET DEFICIT

R 5648

NET SURPLUS

R 8010

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
 CASH RECONCILIATION
 AT 31 MARCH 1995

Cash at 1 July			
32 day account	10690		
Current account	3224		
Fixed deposit	<u>3000</u>	R	16914
 Add surplus for 3/4 year	 8010		
funds transferred from McIntyre	4112		
owing to Asset	<u>315</u>		<u>12437</u>
			29351
 Less outstanding cheque paid	 50		
Paid to Asset	1261		
subscriptions received in advance	<u>20350</u>		<u>21661</u>
 Cash at 31 March			
32 day account	5430		
Current account	55		
Plusplan account	<u>2205</u>	R	<u>7690</u>