

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Astronomical Society of Southern Africa (Natal Midlands Centre) held at College for Further Education, Havelock Road, PMB on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> July 1981, at 7.45 PM.

There were 14 members present and 9 visitors.

Apologies - Mrs Morton, Mr Gray, Mr Billig, Mr Baxter & Mr Jackson.

Mr Watson declared the meeting open and welcomed the past president of A.S.S.A. Mr A. Gray and the Chairman of the Natal Centre Mr J. Barker, as well as Mr W. Spiers.

Minutes of 1980 A.G.M. held on 23rd July 1980 were read and confirmed

Matters Arising - None

Chairman's Report - Mr John Watson gave a comprehensive report of the year's proceedings and congratulated the Committee on a successful year. It was pleasing to note that membership had remained about the same and welcomed the growing Student membership. He thanked the Principal of the College for the use of the centre and emphasised the need for a central venue for the Library.

Treasurer's Report - Mrs Dale presented the statement for Income and Expenditure and stated that the balance at 30/6/80 was R130.94 (Income) Cash in Hand 30/6/81 was R72.36. The report was accepted by Mr A. Gray & Mr J. Barker.

Constitution - After having been circulated to the members the new constitution was accepted



unanimously. The committee were thanked for their efforts in drawing this up.

### Election of Committee


There were 8 nominations for the 1982 committee.

|               |   |                |     |           |
|---------------|---|----------------|-----|-----------|
| Mr C. Lake    | - | Prof Mr Watson | Sec | Mr Welch  |
| Mrs S. Dale   | - | " Mr Barker    | "   | Mr Lake   |
| Mr R. Dale    | - | " Mr Gray      | "   | Mrs Mahon |
| Mr P. Welch   | - | " -            | "   | -         |
| Mrs C. Mahon  | - | " -            | "   | -         |
| Mrs T. Clare  | - | " -            | "   | -         |
| Mr J. Gray    | - | " -            | "   | -         |
| Mr A. Roberts | - | " -            | "   | -         |

The Secretary promised to forward this list once the office bearers had been chosen at a committee meeting on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> August 1981, together with the chairman's report.

A slide show of recent Voyager pictures as well as other astronomical items was then shown to the audience.

The meeting closed at 10.30 P.M.

Secretary 

Chairperson S. Dale

S.S.A. - Natal Midlands Centre  
Chairman's Report 1980/81.

On behalf of the Committee, it gives me pleasure to report on the activities of the Centre during the past year.

At the outset I must say that my term of office as Chairman of the Centre has been most enjoyable, primarily as a result of the untiring efforts and co-operation of the Secretary, Mr. Chris Lake, the Treasurer, Mrs Sheila Dale, the Librarian, Mr. Paul Welch, and also Mr. Bob Hulley who has recently moved back to greener pastures in Zimbabwe. My sincerest thanks go to them all, and it is with regret that I am unable to offer my services as a Committee member again due to the uncertainty of my movements during the coming year.

There have been 11 regular meetings during the past year covering a wide range of topics and activities. Thanks go to the speakers who have participated, especially to Mr. Andrew Gray, President of ASSA, and Mr. Ray Field from the Natal Centre in Durban. The Committee has however, been hard pressed at times to find speakers and/or topics of interest, and I must appeal to members of the Centre for helpful suggestions in this regard. The Committee has avoided the planning of formal viewing evenings, although we had a very enjoyable session at Ashburton in early June. Despite the fact that the weather is so often against us in this part of the world, I personally have doubts as to the benefits of 'en-masse' viewing, and would rather see this activity confined mainly to small groups consisting of members who live in the same neighbourhood, and would like to remind members that the Centre does possess a 6" reflector which is available to all. Lack of formal viewing has not, however, prevented us from learning more about our wonderful skies, thanks to the excellent series of well planned and illustrated talks that Mrs Sheila Dale has given us. I'm sure we are all most grateful to her for the time and effort she has put into these. The slides she has used have mostly been kindly loaned to us by Dr. Geoff Prosser, but I would like see the Centre aiming towards owning a collection of good slides which can be used for



similar talks in the future, and also be available for the use of all members.

The Committee's main objectives this year have been to improve the regular attendance at meetings and to increase membership by publicizing the existence and activities of the Centre. To this end, we have held meetings on a set evening each month, sought for and found a central venue suitable for meetings rather than gathering at members homes, notified the local Press of each meeting, arranged for a display at the Natal Society Library and given talks to schools, church groups, youth groups and service organisations. The results thus far have been modest but rewarding, and I feel that these activities must continue as I'm sure there are still plenty of interested people out there who don't know we exist, especially after watching Cosmos. In particular, it is pleasing to note the growing interest amongst youngsters at the Senior Primary level, and wonder if the time is not fast approaching when we should consider starting a Junior Section of the Centre.

Due to a small accumulation of funds, we have been able to have all the remaining volumes of Sky and Telescope decently bound so that with the exception of the latest volume, our library now has a full set dating back to 1959. I would like to encourage all members to make use of these, especially those who have recently joined the Centre.

It was with some degree of horror that the Committee realised during the year that the Centre did not appear to have an approved Constitution, even though attempts had been made to draw one up some 7 years ago. Therefore, the Committee set about the task of correcting this rather serious situation, the results of which are presented for your approval this evening.

Our links with the Natal Centre remain strong, and we are also sending Notice Papers to all the other Centres of ASBA. On the international scene, Mr Chris Lake is now receiving comprehensive computerised data from the U.S.A. on any occultations due to take place in the Pietermaritzburg district. Unfortunately attempts to observe and/or measure any occultations have again been thwarted by bad weather. Mr Chris Lake was also fortunate enough

The Astronomical Society Of Southern Africa  
Natal Midland Centre

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Income And Expenditure Account  
For The Year Ended 30th June 1981

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Income

|                       |        |
|-----------------------|--------|
| Subscriptions         | 101,50 |
| Sale of Books         | 1,20   |
| Balance as at 30-6-80 | 130,94 |
|                       | <hr/>  |
|                       | 233,64 |
|                       | <hr/>  |

Expenditure

|                              |        |
|------------------------------|--------|
| Stationary                   | 15,64  |
| Photostats                   | 2,10   |
| Stamps                       | 17,45  |
| Phone Calls                  | 50     |
| Insurance on Telescopes      | 13,06  |
| Subscription to A.S.S.A.     | 17,93  |
| Donation to Xmas Party       | 8,00   |
| Binding of Sky and Telescope | 85,80  |
| Tea                          | 80     |
| Cash in Hand                 | 72,36  |
|                              | <hr/>  |
|                              | 233,64 |
|                              | <hr/>  |