

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE  
ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA -  
NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE HELD AT COLLEGE FOR  
FURTHER EDUCATION & TRAINING, HAVELOCK RD,  
PIETERMARITZBURG, ON WEDNESDAY 24TH JULY 1985

There were 19 members present and 1 visitor. Apologies were received from 4 members.

The Chairman opened the meeting & welcomed everyone.

Minutes of 1984 A.G.M. held on July 25 1984 were read & accepted (Proposed: T. Brophy; seconded: J. Strauss).

Matter arising: none

Chairman's Report: Mr. Watson reviewed the activities of the centre during the year & said that 10 new members had joined. ~~also~~ He thanked members for their participation & also thanked the Committee & the Rector of the College. Mr. Watson mentioned in particular the <sup>High School</sup> activities which were shared by the Natal & Natal Midlands Centres, viz: the October meeting in Durban, H.C.W.



the Social evening at Esbon; the grazing occupation in Zululand; + the "highlight" of the year - Patrick Moore's visit.

The report was accepted (Proposed: T. Coetzee; seconded: )

Treasurer's Report: Mrs. Conling handed out a statement of Income & Expenditure showing a balance of R231-<sup>476</sup><sub>05</sub>-58. The report was accepted (Proposed: R. Dale; seconded: J. Strauss).

Election of 1985/1986 Committee: Mrs. Conling, Miss Weller + Mr. Strauss were not willing to stand for the Committee. The outgoing treasurer (Mrs. Conling) + secretary (Miss Weller) were presented with a gift. The following were nominated:

Mr. T. Coetzee

Mr. R. Tarmain

Mr. C. Lake

Mr. P. Moore

Mr. J. Watson

Miss B. van Hoogdalen

Mr. R. Dale

Mr. K. Turner.

Mr. R. Dale was not willing to stand for election. The remaining 7 were elected to form the new



## Committee.

### Other Business

- a) Mr. Billing said that he had a large variety of astronomy & science & magazines which he would like to bring to a meeting for the perusal of members.
- b) Membership of the "Friends of the Planetarium" Society was mentioned.
- c) An increase in annual subscription was proposed & passed by the members. The new fees are:  
Single members : R 8 = 00  
couples : R 12 = 00  
students : R 4 = 00.

The meeting was closed at 9.00 pm and tea was served. This was followed by a film of "The Majestic Clockwork" from the "Ascent of Man" series.

CHAIRMAN  
R. J. J. J.

SECRETARY  
J. J. J.



A.S.S.A. - Natal Midlands Centre

Chairman's Report 1984/85.

Having somewhat reluctantly accepted the position of Chairman of the Centre a year ago, I am happy to report on an eventful and happy term of office. The task has been made all the more enjoyable by the hard work put in by each and every committee member, to whom I publicly convey the thanks of all Centre members.

Centre activities I firmly believe that a Society such as ours should not be a source of monthly entertainment, but should provide an environment in which each member can participate, to a greater or lesser degree, in the exchange of information and experience. With this aim in mind, the committee has avoided calling on 'outside speakers' (pretty thin in Pietermaritzburg anyway !), preferring to involve our own members in the preparation and presentation of the theme or topic chosen for the evening. There have been 11 monthly meetings of the Centre, including our Christmas party, and thanks go to all those members who have participated. Some 10 or so new members have joined the Society during the year, but unfortunately an equal number have apparently lost interest. Certain members have again been active in speaking to schools, clubs and service organisations, and in particular Mr. Chris Lake's presentation on Halley's comet has aroused plenty of interest. Thanks go to Mr. Peter Moore for his enthusiasm in the organisation of a number of outings for the purpose of occultation viewing. Although the attendance at these outings is small, this is a first class means again of getting members involved, and I'm sure we can form other small special interest groups to make our Centre more dynamic. Under the direction of Mr. Rusty Jarmain, our library cupboard is full up, and the facility of being able to borrow individual copies of Sky and Telescope, suitably bound, is proving popular. Mr. Jarmain has also been responsible for the design of the Centre's logo which now appears on notice papers, letter-heads and constitution covers. The Centre's 6" reflector has been used well by members this year, and thanks go to Mr. Les Hunt for looking after it, as well as doing a fair amount of fetching and carrying. After considerable debate, the committee finally agreed to again put on a display at the local Hobbies Fair in November. This annual event certainly provides a great opportunity for the public to become aware of our existence, but the lack of support from Centre members in 'manning' the exhibit was disappointing to say the least, and I have grave misgivings about the growing atmosphere of competitiveness and commercialism surrounding what should be an enjoyable weekend.

Inter Centre contact As in the past, there has been a fair amount of interchange with the Natal Centre, and it is always enjoyable to do things together. Apart from individual attendance at the other Centre's meetings (including some mutual back-slapping at Christmas parties !), we formally attended the Natal Centre's October meeting en-masse, and thereupon arranged to get together again for a social-cum-viewing evening at a farm near Eston the following week. Several of our members were able to trek up to northern Zululand with the Natal Centre

to observe the eclipse in May 85, together with some worthwhile occultation measurements. Perhaps the scoop of the year was the visit to Durban of Dr. Patrick Moore organised by the Natal Centre committee, thus providing an opportunity for our members to meet and/or hear him.

Contact with A.S.S.A. Our Council Representative, Mr. Chris Lake, has kept us up to date with the affairs of our parent body, even though there has been no contact at all with our Capetown based alternate. We were happy to support the proposal that a Computing Section of A.S.S.A. be formed, as several of our members own micro-computers and bits and pieces of relevant software. It was indeed a great shock to learn that annual subscriptions to A.S.S.A. are to be dramatically increased, to the extent that this will undoubtedly cause some members of long standing to resign, and be somewhat of a deterrent to the recruiting of new members. Personally, I feel that the A.S.S.A. Council should be urged to reconsider the possibility of membership being offered without it being compulsory to subscribe to Sky and Telescope, even though this is undoubtedly a first class publication.

My thanks go to the Rector of the College for Further Training for the continued use of their premises and facilities, and I sadly accept the resignation from the committee of Miss Ann Weller (Secretary), Mrs Carol Couling (Treasurer) and Mr Jonathan Strauss who has so ably contributed to our monthly notice paper. My best wishes go to the incoming committee, and I'm sure we all look forward to a stimulating and active year ahead.

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*John Watson*

*Chairman.*



ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE JULY 1985

INCOME

Brought forward from 1984	R289-92
Teas	19-90
Handbooks	6-00
Membership fees	206-00
Donation re Cato Ridge gathering	15-00
Interest Barc. Bank savings book	9-86
	<u>R546-68</u>

EXPENDITURE

Tips - teas	3-40
Stamps, envelopes and printing	92-89
A.S.S.A. subs plus levy 1984/85	35-00
Handbooks	20-00
P.O. Box rental	14-00
Material Cupboard shelving	3-50
Tea, Coffee, sugar and milk	9-01
Covers Sky and Telescope	27-50
Subs 85 IOATA	30-00
Donation Natal Centre - visit Patrick Moore	25-00
Christmas Dinner - guests Mr and Mrs Jose Campos	17-60
Gift voucher Secretary July 84, gifts Mr and Mrs	
Bucher	26-63
Wine for 10th ann. meeting	10-57
	<u>R315-10</u>
Cash on hand	R9-82
Cash at Bank	221-76
	<u>231-58</u>
	R546-68

*Calvin*  
24/7/1985