

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the home of Mrs S.Dale at 7.30 pm
on 14 July 1993

1. The meeting was attended by 11 members, with 4 apologies
2. The Chairman, Mr T.Chance, extended a warm welcome to everyone present, and thanked Mrs Dale for the use of her new house.
3. Minutes of the 1992 Annual General Meeting held on 8 July 1992 had already been posted to members, and were taken as read (Prop: G.Prosser, Sec: H.Chance)
4. Matters Arising i) It had not been possible to form a sub-committee to complete the telescope project, due to lack of interest.
ii) Membership had remained static despite efforts to inform the public of the Centre's existence.

5. Chairman's Report (Prop: B.Lawrence Sec: S.Dale)

Mr T.Chance summarised the programme of activities at the Centre's monthly meetings, as well as the many other requests responded to by members for talks and viewing sessions. He thanked the Committee and all others who had worked hard to make the past year a success.

6. Treasurer's Report (Prop: G.Prosser Sec: A.Norris)

Mrs H.Chance presented the Statement of Income and Expenditure for the previous year, which reflected a closing balance of R 1467-49, a gain of some R 450 over the opening balance. By way of explanation it was noted that:-

- i. The Amateur Astronomy course income and expenses and income were included in the statement - this was currently some R 500 in profit, but it was anticipated to run at a loss, for which a grant had already been approved by the Dept of Culture & Education.
- ii. Due to re-organisation, very little had been spent on the Library
- iii. We still anticipate certain capital expenses in completion of the telescope project.

It was agreed to maintain annual subscriptions at their present levels, and a vote of thanks was given to Mrs Chance for her efforts.

7. Election of New Committee

The following members were and nominated and elected:-

Mesdames S.Dale, B.Lawrence, H.Chance and K.Hampson

Messrs T.Chance, R.Jarmain and J.Watson

8. Instruments

Dr G.Prosser reported on the current status as follows:-

- i. The 6" reflector has not been used or re-furbished
- ii. The 10" Lipschitz mirror has been used as the basis of a Dobsonian telescope which is performing well.
- iii. No further progress has been made in procuring/making a tube for the completed 12" mirror telescope, nor has there been any progress in finding a suitable site for a permanent mounting.

Dr Prosser then suggested that as there seemed to be very little interest in general (see Matters Arising), maybe the Centre did not really want to own any instruments. After a certain amount of discussion it was agreed that the Committee should explore all relevant suggestions regarding construction, siting and finances before a final decision is made.

9. Other business

- a) All members should actively encourage better attendance at Centre meetings.
- b) Library has been re-organised by S.Dale and is now ready to operate fully.
- c) A 2½" refractor (TOWA) plus extras has come up for sale (Mr Jenkins)
- d) Upcoming events
 - i) Talk/viewing at Cedara Land Camp (23/7)
 - ii) Talk to Philatelic Society (26/7)
 - iii) Public viewing evening - Ladysmith (6/8)
 - iv) Viewing with Astrology group - Lidgetton (21/8)
- e) A new Astronomical Society has been formed in Ladysmith - not yet a formally constituted Centre of ASSA
- f) Education
 - i) The Amateur Astronomy Course is under way with 20 participants
 - ii) The University of Natal (Pmb) have approached us to run a similar course under the auspices of their Adult Education programme in August.

10. The meeting closed at 9.15 pm, after which everyone present enjoyed a cheese and wine supper together

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY



ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Natal Midlands Centre

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 14/7/93

MEMBERS

Aminé Norris
Jan & Bianca Lawrence
Kerry Hampson
Anne Turpin
Sella
John Watson
Gwen Prosser
Gina & Hilary Chance
Stirlingwood

VISITORS

APOLOGIES

R. JARMAIN.
S. TONGUE
D & B. MORTON

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 1992/93

It is my pleasure to report on the activities of the Natal Midlands Centre for the year 1992/93.

The year has been a busy one for the Society, with a great deal of emphasis being placed on adult education, of which I will speak in due course.

Membership has, as usual, fluctuated during the year, and although we lost some members, we welcomed Kerry Hampson, Bill York and Colin Mackay to the Society's fold. While on the subject of membership, we were all delighted that the 1993 Astronomical Handbook had a photograph of our late friend and colleague, Ron Dale, on the front cover.

Our new home at St Charles has, despite a few initial glitches, proved to be a happy one, with several school boys showing a keen interest in the Society's meetings.

The past year's talks and presentations have been both entertaining and informative. A brief resumé of the activities is as follows :-

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| August | We held a viewing evening at Chris and Veronica Collingwood's home in Hilton. |
| September | A talk on the Mercury and Gemini space projects entitled Winged Messengers and Heavenly Twins presented by myself. |
| October | A bring and share session of Time and the Calendar convened by John Watson, at which Ray Forder presented a talk entitled "A Short History of Time Reckoning". |
| November | A Big Bang evening which opened with a short video loaned to us by Ewart Kleinhans, followed by a talk presented by Arminé Norris entitled "Creation : Accident or Design". |
| December | A Christmas braai was held at Ray Forder's home in Ashburton. |
| February | The New Year opened with a "Look around 1993" presented by John Watson, followed by a quiz. |
| March | A talk entitled "The Man in the Moon" delivered by Geoff Prosser, followed by 2 short videos from the British Council. |
| April | A demonstration of two computer programmes - EZ Cosmos and Instant Track - by Rusty Jarman and Geoff Prosser. |
| May | Another viewing evening at Chris and Veronica Collingwood's home. This turned out well, in spite of initial inclement weather. |
| June | A talk and slide presentation entitled "The Great Moon Race" delivered by myself. |

Apart from the Society's general meetings, we were also kept busy with requests from various schools and other organisations for viewing evenings. Although the July viewing evening at Wagon Hill, in support of our Ladysmith friends, was a resounding success, most of our viewing ventures were thwarted by bad weather.

In September, John and Jill Watson, Chris and Margaret Lake, Sheila Dale and myself had the privilege of attending the opening of the Jimmy Barker Observatory in Durban. Unfortunately the clouds intervened, as usual, and we were unable to try out their 10 inch reflector.

Besides the above activities, the Society also gained publicity from a display at the Natal Museum. This display was assembled by Bianca Lawrence and myself, and was mentioned in the Natal Witness and Town Talk. Bianca also had the unenviable task of being interviewed by the SABC.

Further publicity came when city residents mistook Venus for a UFO in January. Despite the Society's best efforts, during which Rusty Jarman was horrendously misquoted in the Natal Witness, the public made the same mistake just 3 months later.

As mentioned earlier, adult education had taken up most of the Society's energies during the past year. The basic course in Amateur Astronomy began on the 19th May and will run through to 3rd November. There are 20 persons attending the course, and a provisional grant from the Department of Education and Culture has enabled us to keep the course fees to a minimum.

In the meantime, we have also been approached by the University of Natal's Adult Education Centre with a view to running another course concurrently with our own. This second course will commence on 3rd August, but will run for a duration of only four weeks.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my committee members for their unstinting support during the last year; particularly John Watson for his administrative assistance, Rusty Jarman for his continued Editorship of Stardust, despite somewhat altered circumstances; and also Geoff Prosser and Sheila Dale for their lively and invaluable input during committee meetings. I would also like to thank you, the members for your support and participation in the various activities during the year.

14/7/93

Bianca Lawrence

THE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

(NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE)

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT AS AT 30 JUNE 1993

INCOME

Brought forward 91/92	Bank	907.33	
	Cash	110.42	
Subscriptions		855.00	
Handbooks		75.00	
Bumper Stickers		10.00	
Donations		15.00	
Sale of S & T		22.60	
Interest		32.09	
Astronomical Course		<u>912.00</u>	
	TOTAL		<u>2 939.44</u>

EXPENDITURE

Annual Payments			
ASSA Subscription		85.00	
PMB Publicity Association		30.00	
Post Box Rental		30.00	
Purchase of Handbooks		80.00	
Refreshments		121.80	
Stardust		467.73	
Postage		27.15	
Christmas Party		63.42	
AGM 92/93		93.64	
Photo Album		44.00	
Cards for Library		12.16	
Astronomical Course		417.05	
Carried Forward	Bank	1 200.42	
	Cash	<u>267.07</u>	
	TOTAL		<u>2 939.44</u>