

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the home of Mrs Annette Dybwad of 8A Grimthorpe Avenue, Lincoln Meade on Saturday, 12 July 1997 at 7:00 pm.

The meeting was attended by 9 members of the Natal Midlands Centre ('the Centre'). 4 apologies were received and 2 visitors were present.

1. The Chairman, Mr John Watson, welcomed everybody present and thanked Mrs Dybwad for allowing the Centre the use of her very comfortable home.

2. Minutes of the previous AGM

The minutes of the previous AGM were read and accepted unanimously. No comments were forthcoming.

Prop. P. Hawkins Sec. R. Jarman

3. Chairman's Report

Mr Watson reviewed all the activities of the Centre for the past year and thanked the outgoing committee and members for making the year a very successful one. Points discussed were:

i 25 new members joined the Centre, 5 resignations. The Centre bade farewell to four valuable members during the year: Mike and Lorraine Christianson (to Cape Town) and Tim and Hilary Chance (to England).

ii A wide variety of very successful educational programmes were embarked upon during the course of the year. Contact with other Centres included a successful inauguration of the Natal Centre's new telescope facility in Durban. The annual symposium, ~~Isinkanyesi~~, did not get off the ground in Durban as planned.

ASSA

iii Sadly the Ladysmith Centre had to close down due to several pivotal members leaving the Society.

iv Some hefty expenses were borne by the Centre during the year, mainly going towards the construction of the observatory. Fortunately finances are still fairly healthy.

v Stardust is not as big or as expensive to produce as other Centre's newsletters (a plus in our favour) but has been more than good enough thanks to the Editor.

vi Many audio-visual programmes were presented to audiences at schools, clubs, Scouts, Rotary and various other organisations during the year. Funds for the observatory project were forthcoming in the form of many cash donations.

vii Several new books were purchased for the library. Binding of previous volumes of Sky & Telescope is in progress

viii The observatory floor has been completed. Sufficient bricks are present for the next phase of the project. Control of the wattle regrowth is a continuing problem - many thanks are due to certain members for spending many hours of hard labour clearing the site. A 'Meritorious Service' award for 1997 was presented to Mr Ivan Schroeder for his contribution in this regard.

ix Telephonic communication with the general public led to much free publicity for the Centre during the year. Preliminary

discussions are in progress with the Natal Museum re. the establishment of a planetarium facility.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Centre, bade a fond farewell to Rusty and Anne Jarmain who's immense contribution to the Society over the years cannot adequately be expressed in words.

Prop. P. Hawkins Sec. S. de Vos

4. Treasurer's Report

A statement of Income and expenditure was presented reflecting a closing balance of R1549-09 (R568-65 in the General Fund and R929-54 in the Observatory Fund).

Prop. R. Roth Sec. A. Norris

It was proposed that the annual subscriptions be revised and simplified:

Single and Family Membership R50-00
Senior Citizen and Student R30-00

Prop. P. Hawkins Sec. R. Roth

5. Election of Office Bearers

As there was a general paucity of members present at the AGM only five members were nominated and elected to serve on the committee for 1997/98. They are:

Messrs P. Hawkins, R. Roth and J. Watson,
Ms K. Hampson and L. Hearmon.

Prop. R. Jarmain Sec. P. Hawkins

6. Other Business

- a) The Chairman thanked Mr S. de Vos for his contribution to the Society over the past year as he was no longer able to occupy his position on the Committee.
- b) Mr P. Hawkins proposed that the Society spend it's efforts and finances at establishing a planetarium rather than an observatory as this would be more accessible to the general public and would 'put Pietermaritzburg on the map'. Mr C. Lake then suggested that the Society stays with the observatory idea and purchase a selection of educational videos in lieu of an expensive planetarium. Mr Rusty Jarmain then pointed out that a planetarium projector can be fabricated from a cistern float and a few tobacco cans (!).

On this rather interesting note Mr P. Hawkins thanked the Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, for his dedication and hard work through the year.

- 7. The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm and all present partook in a light supper and some successful stargazing from Mrs Dybwads patio.



ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF
SOUTHERN AFRICA

Natal Midlands Centre

AGM 1997

12/7/1997

Members

Arminee NORRIS

Heanne Hearmon

Philip Hawks

John Watson

Gene de Vos

Rusty Jamnain

Rosemary Roth

Mark Stok

Annette Dybwood

visitors

Anne Jamnain
Margaret Lake

APSTs

{ K. HAMPSON
{ willing to stay a committee
as librarian (det.) }

J. Stewart

Jour Bianca Lawrence

Veronica Collingwood

A.S.S.A. - NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE

CHAIRMANS REPORT 1996/97

1. Membership

25 new members joined the Centre during the year, with only 5 resignations being recorded. We also sadly said goodbye to Tim and Hilary Chance (to U.K.) and Mike and Lorraine Christianson (to Capetown)

2. Monthly Meetings

As usual, a wide variety of programmes have been arranged, ranging from quizzes through slide/video presentations to star parties.

3. Contact with other Centres

It was good to get together with Natal Centre for their November meeting to christen their re-furbished telescope. Unfortunately, the Annual Symposium scheduled for May 1997 did not materialise, and we are sad that the Ladysmith Society is folding up.

4. Funds

Despite some fairly hefty expenses, together with rising costs of administration, you will be glad to see that our finances are healthy for now.

5. Stardust

Although not as large as the newsletters produced by other Centres, ours has been more than adequate, and of exceptional quality thanks to the faithful efforts of our editors.

6. Education

Talks/slide shows/star parties have been presented to many and varied groups on a fairly regular basis. Our 5th course in Basic Astronomy is currently in progress with some 24 students.

7. Library

Apart from the monthly Sky & Telescope and MNASSA, one or two new books have been purchased, and videos are currently being added. The library has been well used, and old copies of Sky & telescope are earmarked for binding in the near future.

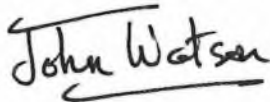
8. Observatory

The building is now completed to floor level, and a sufficient quantity of bricks is available to commence the next phase. Control of gum/wattle regrowth continues to be a major problem, and sincere thanks are due to those loyal members who have spent hours in keeping this under control.

9. General

- a) The two comets that have paid us a visit during the year have aroused a lot of public interest, not to mention the Mars Pathfinder. This in turn has given us quite a lot of free publicity.
- b) Preliminary discussions have been held with the Natal Museum regarding the establishment of a planetarium in Pmburg.
- c) A number of ideas regarding fund-raising have been discussed by your committee, not least of which is an Astronomical Calendar for sale to the public in 1998.

In conclusion, may I on behalf of all the members of the Centre say a very big thankyou to the committee which have worked so hard to make this another memorable year

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Watson". The signature is written in dark ink and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

CHAIRMAN

THE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

(NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE)

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENTS AS AT 2 JULY 1997
GENERAL FUND

INCOME

BALANCE AT BANK AS AT 30 JUNE 1996		548.14	
	SUBSCRIPTIONS	2531.50	
	SALES	464.00	
	DONATIONS	1520.80	
	INTEREST	60.36	
	TOTAL		5124.80

EXPENDITURE

	TFR; TO OBSERVATORY		
	FUND	1275.80	
	STATIONERY	250.47	
	REFRESHMENTS	60.45	
	TELEPHONE CALLS	28.01	
	POSTAGE	787.35	
	HANDBOOK PURCHASES	240.00	
	PHOTOCOPYING	379.82	
	BOOK PURCHASE	100.00	
	SUBSCRIPTIONS(ASSA96/97)	400.00	
	(ASSA97/98)	560.00	
	(PMB. PUBLICITY ASS)	55.00	
	SUNDRIES	419.25	
	TOTAL		4556.15
BALANCE AS PER BANK BOOK AS AT	2 JULY1997		568.65

OBSERVATORY FUND

BALANCE AS AT 1 JULY 1996		2838.14	
INCOME	TFR; FROM GENERAL FUND	400.00	
	DONATIONS	1405.80	
	SALE OF EQUIPMENT	150.00	
	INTEREST	48.01	
	TOTAL		4841.95
	EXPENDITURE BUILDING MATERIALS & LABOUR TOTAL		3912.41
BALANCE AS 2 JULY1997			929.54

PETTY CASH

CASH ON HAND AS AT 1 JULY 1996		129.22	
DISBURSEMENTS	PHOTOCOPYING	16.60	
	SECONDHAND SLIDE SCREEN	10.00	
	CLUB PHOTOS	49.00	
	QUIZ PRIZES	2.72	
	TOTAL	78.32	
CASH ON HAND AS AT 2 JULY 1997			50.90
TOTAL CASH ASSETS AMOUNT TO			<u>1549.02</u>

A.S.S.A. - NATAL MIDLANDS CENTRE

1997/1998 COMMITTEE

Chairman	Mr J. Watson
Vice-Chairman	Mr R. Roth
Secretary	Miss L. Hearmon
Treasurer	Mr P. Hawkins
Newsletter	Mr R. Roth
Library	Miss K. Hampson
Education	Mr J. Watson
P.R.O.	Miss K. Hampson
Instruments & Observatory	Mr R. Roth
Council Rep	Miss K. Hampson

Addresses & Telephone numbers

Mr J. Watson	P.O. Box 330, Hilton, 3245	0331-433646 (h)
		0331-452510 (w)
Mr R. Roth	P.O. Box 100210, Scottsville, 3209	0331-442635 (h)
		0331-2605147 (w)
Miss L. Hearmon	16 Holder Rd, Bisley, Pmb 3201	0331-461206 (h)
Mr P. Hawkins	1 Ashbourne, Harwin Rd, Pmb 3201	0331-460303 (h)
Miss K. Hampson	P.O. Box 212095, Oribi, 3205	0331-966772 (h)
		0331-426773 (w)

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All correspondence should be addressed to:-

The Secretary
A.S.S.A. (Natal Midlands)
P.O. Box 2106
Pietermaritzburg
3200

NB Additional members to be co-opted
onto a sub-committee for our
observatory building project.