

# The Amateur Astronomers who founded A.S.S.A.

Dedicated and Passionate People!

- The first Astronomical Society in South Africa was the Cape Astronomical Association (CAA) founded at Cape Town in December 1912.
- The Johannesburg Astronomical Association (JAA) was founded in February 1918.
- The two abovementioned Associations amalgamated in July 1922 to form the Astronomical Society of South Africa. (ASSA)
- The CAA became known as the Cape Centre and JAA as the Johannesburg Centre of ASSA.

# People involved at the Societies

## CAA (1912)

Hon. President: S.S. Hough

President: Dr J.K.E. Halm

Vice President: Dr S.J. Lunt

Vice President: Dr A.W. Roberts

Vice President: W.B. Jackson

Secretary: J.F. Skjellerup

Treasurer: J.F. Skjellerup

Committee: Messrs S.A. Davis

Committee: A.W. Long

Committee: D.G. Mills

Committee: W. Reid

## ASSA Council (1922)

President: S.S. Hough

Vice President: Dr J.K.E. Halm

Vice President: Dr A.W. Roberts

Secretary: T. MacKenzie

Treasurer: J.F. Skjellerup

Members of Council: W. Watson

Members of Council: A.W. Long

Member of Council: H.W. Schonegevel

Members of Council: W. Reid

Members of Council: H.E. Wood

Members of Council: W.M. Worsell

## JAA (1918)

President: R.T.A. Innes

Vice President: Dr T Reunert

Vice President: R.N. Kotze

Secretary: T. MacKenzie

Treasurer: F. Hall

Committee: Maj J.P. Edwards

Committee: Mrs J. Moir

Committee: Messrs Jackson

Committee: H.C. Green

Committee: R. Simpkins

Committee: J. Thom

Title of Mister is not indicated

# Amateurs involved with the Cape Astronomical Association

## **CAA** (1912)

Hon. President: S.S. Hough (Professional)

President: Dr J.K.E. Halm (Professional)

Vice President: Dr S.J. Lunt

Vice President: **Dr A.W. Roberts**

Secretary: **J.F. Skjellerup**

Treasurer: J.F. Skjellerup

Committee: Messrs S.A. Davis

Committee: **A.W. Long**

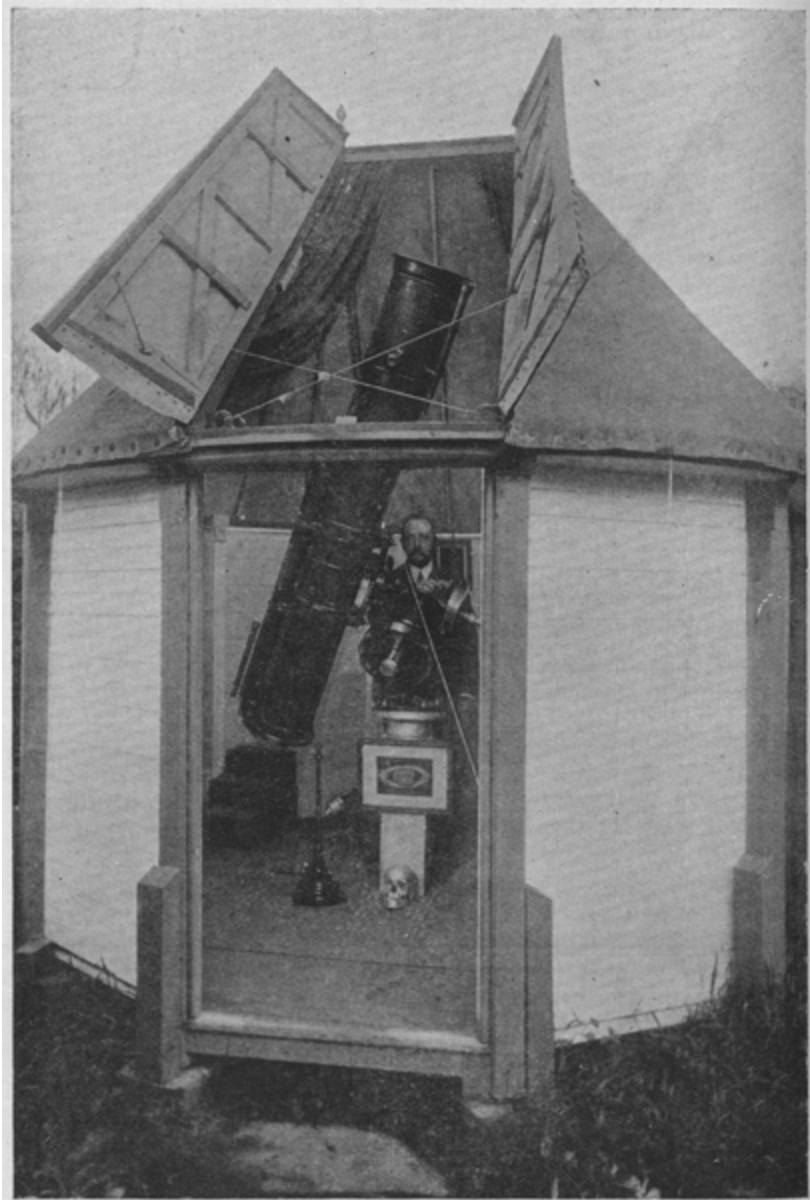
Committee: D.G. Mills

Committee: **W. Reid**

# Clement Jennings Taylor

1861 - 1922

- Published maps of the path of Halley's Comet in 1910. Roused public interest which led to the founding of the CAA.
- Elected President of CAA for 1916 / 7
- Discovered two comets but received credit for only one:  
P/1915 W1 (Taylor)  
C/1920 X1 (Skjellerup)
- 10 inch reflector from Herschel view, Claremont.
- Cloth Merchant
- Written on his Observatory entrance and gravestone "The Heavens Declare the Glory of God"



The late Clement Jennings Taylor, in his Observatory, "Herschel View," Claremont.



# Dr Alexander William Roberts

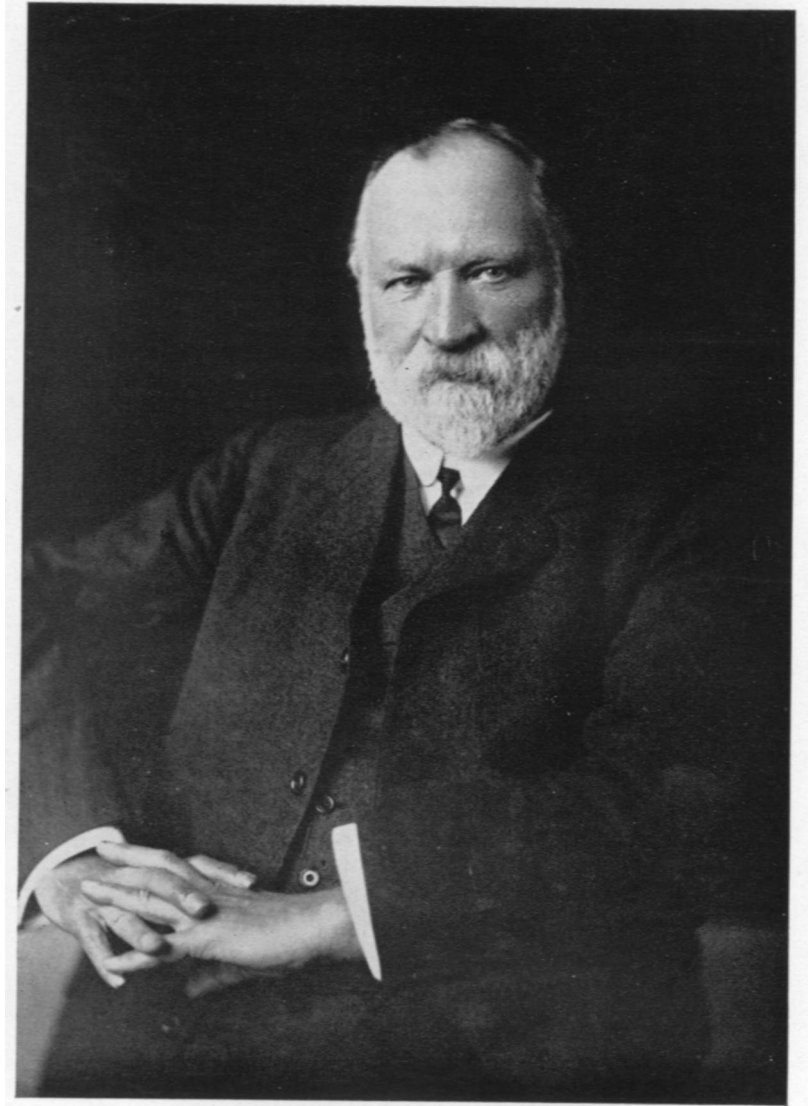
1857 - 1938

- One of the most prolific variable star observer, specialising in eclipsing binaries. Made over 250,000 observations of 98 variable stars over (1891 to 1920)
- Close contact with professional astronomers such as David Gill and Edward C Pickering from Harvard College
- President ASSA 1927 / 8  
F.R.A.S. 1894
- Theodolite with 1-inch aperture
- 3-inch Cooke Refractor (gift from Lord McLaren)
- 3.5-inch Ross Refractor (loan Royal Astronomical Society)
- 4-inch meridian photometer (loan from Harvard College)
- Visual photometer of his own design

# Roberts

- Born in **Sutherland**, Scotland
- Teacher in Lovedale, Eastern Cape
- Senator, Union of South Africa, 1920-1929
- Member, Native Affairs Commission, 1920-1935
- Obituary by General Jan Smuts “Roberts was truly a Prince amongst our scientific amateurs”





*Carl Robert.*

# John Francis Skjellerup (Frank)

1875 - 1948

Became interested in Astronomy due to Halley's Comet

- Discover 4 comets  
C/1919 Y1  
C/1920 X1 Discovered by Taylor and Skjellerup, but only Skjellerup got credit  
P/1922 K1 Discovered by Reid and Skjellerup, but only Skjellerup got credit 26P/Grigg-Skjellerup  
C/1922 W1
- Awarded 4 Donohoe Medals from “The Astronomical Society of the Pacific
- Awarded 2 Donovan Medals by the Donovan Astronomical Trust, Sydney

Born Australia, trained as telegraphist and came to South Africa during Anglo Boer War.

Settled in Cape Town.

Retired 1923 and return to Australia.



**Figure 1.** Frank Skjellerup (1875–1952) as a young man (Orchiston Collection).

A W Long

President of ASSA 1928 - 9



# William Reid

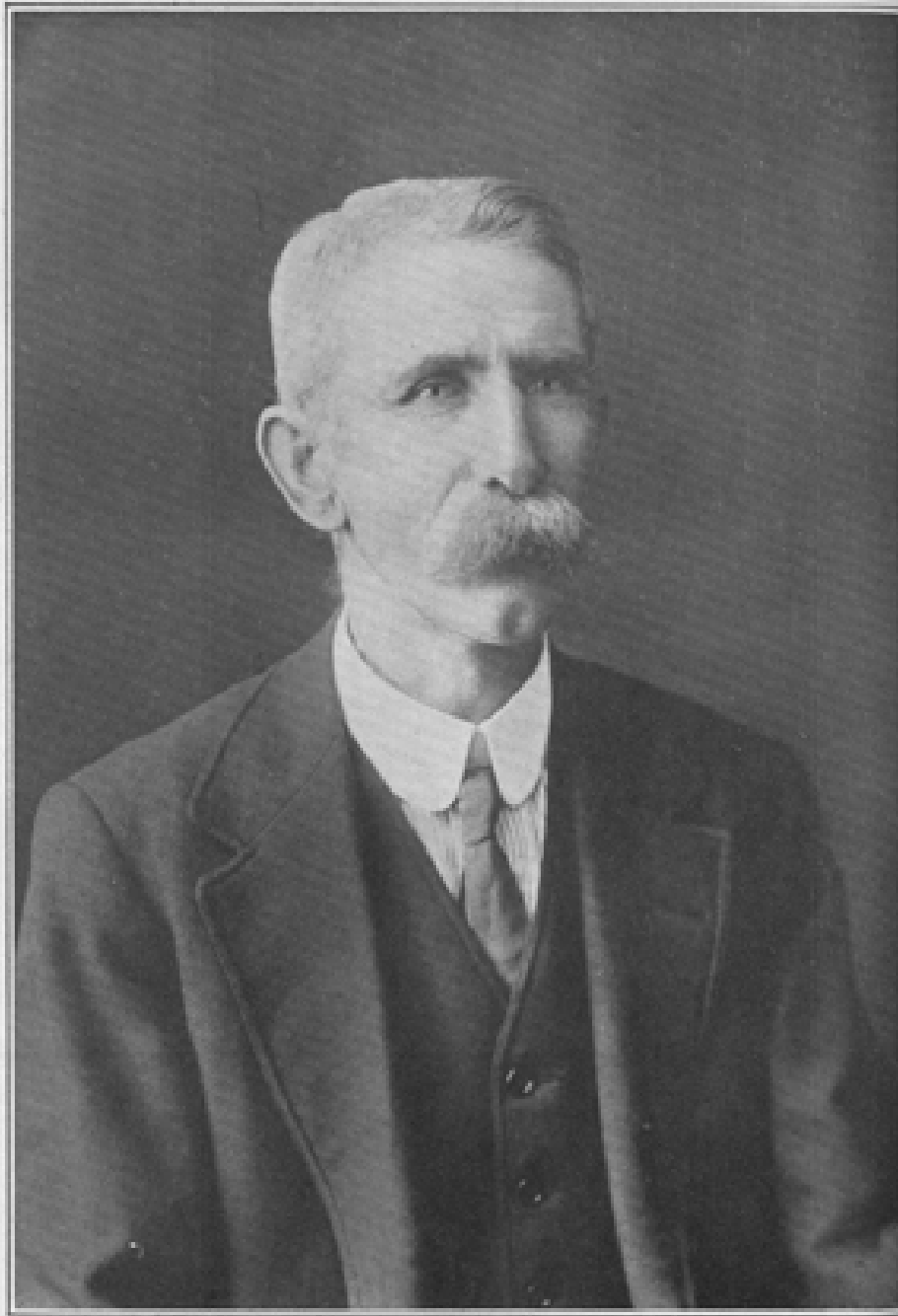
1861 - 1928

President ASSA 1925 / 6

Director of the Comet Section.

Director Variable Star

- Discover 6 comets. Rediscovered d'Arrest's comet.  
C/1918 L1                      C/1921 E1  
C/1922 B1                      C/1924 F1  
C/1925 F2                      C/1927 B1
- Awarded 7 O'Donohoe medals from The Astronomical Society of the Pacific.
- Awarded Jackson-Gwilt Medal by the Royal Astronomical Society .
- 14 March 1920 W Reid / D McIntyre / J Ditton discovered that Saturn's A ring is translucent.  
3 years before it was discovered that Saturn's B ring was translucent.



WILLIAM REID.

# Comet Discoveries

## From Taylor

- Discovered two comets but received credit for only one:

P/1915 W1 (Taylor)

**C/1920 X1** (Skjellerup)

## From Skjellerup

- Discover 4 comets

C/1919 Y1

**C/1920 X1** Discovered by Taylor and Skjellerup, but only Skjellerup got credit

P/1922 K1 Discovered by Reid and Skjellerup, but only Skjellerup got credit 26P/Grigg-Skjellerup

C/1922 W1

## From Reid

- Discover 6 comets. Rediscovered d'Arrest's comet.

C/1918 L1

C/1921 E1

C/1922 B1

?

C/1924 F1

C/1925 F2

C/1927 B1

The second comet of the year [1920] was discovered on December 8 by Mr. C.J. Taylor at Cape Town. He was in bad health, and unfortunately read the hour-circle an hour wrong, which prevented the discovery from being verified till Mr. Skjellerup made it independently on December 11.... It was at its brightest at discovery, being then nearest both to Sun and Earth.

By rights, this comet could have been assigned to both Taylor and Skjellerup, and Crommelin (1920; 1921a) refers to it as such in the literature. Meanwhile, Halm used Cape Observatory observations to compute some of the orbital elements (c.f. his values and those of Marsden and Williams in Table 3).



into service. Success came quickly, with the discovery of a new comet on May 16. On this date, Skjellerup recorded the following entry in his fieldbook:

8.0 pm Suspicious object sighted in Geminorum took position at 8.17 pm from 81 Geminorum R.A.  $7^{\text{h}} 48.^{\text{m}} 3$   $+18^{\circ} 45'$  Very faint Suspicion of slight motion to E. Mr Reid advised. (Skjellerup 1912–1948: 81).

On the same page of the fieldbook is a small sketch showing the comet's position relative to nearby stars. Early the following evening Skjellerup confirmed that the suspicious object of the previous night was indeed a comet, and he "Went to Royal Observatory saw Dr. Halm reported discovery to him. Rough positions taken with 6 inch [refractor]." (*ibid.*) On the way home he called on another close astronomical friend, A.W. Long, and told him about the new comet. Skjellerup then continued his observations, sighting it on May 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27 and 28 (*ibid.*), while others with superior instrumentation followed it for the next two months (Crommelin, 1923c).

As in the case of his previous comet, this discovery also was clouded in controversy. Crommelin (1922a: 281) states that this comet

... was independently found by Mr. Skjellerup and Mr. W. Reid on the night of May 16. The former had the priority and Mr. Reid asks that it should be known simply as Skjellerup's Comet. But our warmest congratulations will be extended to both astronomers ...

Elsewhere, Crommelin (1923c: 288) states that Reid found the comet “... a few hours ...” after Skjellerup, but one of Reid’s obituaries contains a quite different version:

His desire to encourage others in searching for comets was so great that he undertook not to claim discovery of any comet found by himself if any other discoverer communicated with him before he had himself reported to the Royal Observatory. In at least one instance he had announced to his family a discovery and described the position and appearance of the comet *some hours before* a report was made to him by another amateur who had also picked up the new arrival. This comet bears the name of the other amateur. (Obituaries, 1928: 269; my italics).

Whatever the facts of the matter, Skjellerup felt compelled to query the veracity of this independent discovery claim. As we have seen, he actually advised Reid of the discovery on the evening of May 16, and later on the same page of his fieldbook he includes the following cryptic comment: “Mr Reid claims to have discovered this comet on same evening, but when asked on phone (follg day) if he had a comet in sight he replied in negative. He admits however my prior Discovery of object.” (Skjellerup 1912–1948: 81; his underlining). Given that Skjellerup and Reid were close friends (see Section 5, below), this is all very curious.

In a strange twist of fate, Skjellerup did eventually end up sharing this comet, but not with Reid. Soon after the orbital elements were circulated, Professor Leuschner was one of the first to suggest (Crommelin 1922a) that Skjellerup’s latest comet was none other than the ‘lost’ comet observed by New Zealander John Grigg, in 1902 (see Orchiston 1993 for

# Amateurs involved with the Johannesburg Astronomical Association

**JAA** (1918)

President: **R.T.A. Innes**

Vice President: **Dr T Reunert**

Vice President: R.N. Kotze

Secretary: T. MacKenzie

Treasurer: F. Hall

Committee: Maj J.P. Edwards

Committee: Mrs J. Moir

Committee: Messrs Jackson

Committee: H.C. Green

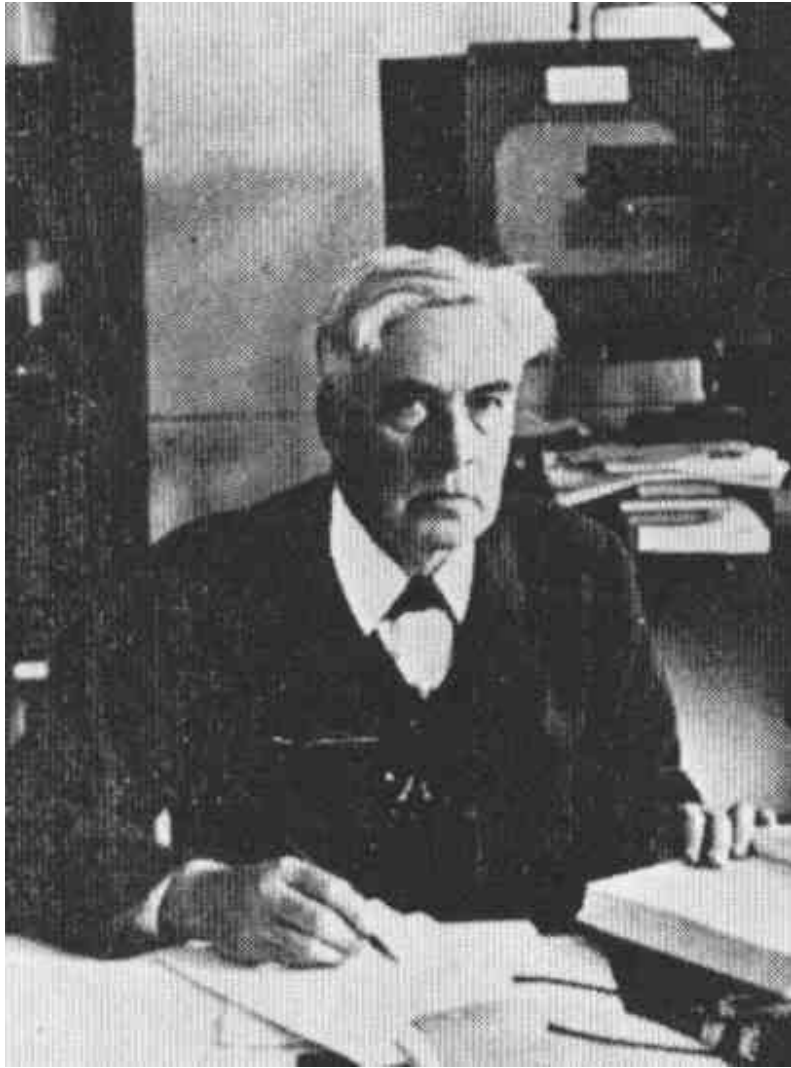
Committee: R. Simpkins

Committee: J. Thom

# Robert Thorburn Ayton Innes

1861 - 1933

- Amateur turned Professional
- At age of 18 years elected as Fellow Royal Astronomical Society
- Discover Proxima Centauri
- Discover comet C/1910 A1
  
- Director of the Johannesburg Observatory
- President of ASSA
- Director computing section
- 26 inch telescope bears his name.



R. T. A. INNES.

# Dr Theodore Reunert

1856 - 1948

- Reunert was the Honorary Secretary of the "South African Association for the advancement of Science". In 1902 the association petitioned the Governor of the Transvaal Colony to establish an Observatory at or near Johannesburg. The letter was signed by Reunert. Dr Gill chose the site and Innes was appointed first director.
- 9 inch telescope named after him.



# Reunert

1879 Kimberley

1883 Elected to (British) Institution of Mechanical Engineers

1884 Company - T. Reunert, Engineer and Machinist.

1886 Publish - “Diamond mining at the Cape”

1888 Member - South African Geological Society

1889 Member - Institute of Civil Engineers

1889 Company - “Reunert & Lenz”

1892 Foundation member - South African Association of Engineers and Architects (President 1897/8)

1894-7 Help establish South African School of Mines (1922 - Wits University) which conferred its first honorary Doctor of Literature (DLit) degree on him for his services to education and culture.

1895 Foundation member - Geological Society of South Africa

1901 Member - South African Philosophical Society which became Royal Society of South Africa in 1908

1902 [Honourable Secraty - South African Association for the Advancement of Science](#)

1902 [Reunert proposed a meteorological and astronomical observatory near Johannesburg](#)

1905 Member - Secondary Education Commission

1918 [Vice President of the Johannesburg Astronomical Association](#)

Founders Member - Johannesburg Public Library

**Table 1(b). Discoveries 1915–1936**

---

<b>Comet</b>	<b>Discoverer</b>
P/1915 W1	C Taylor
C/1918 L1	W Reid
C/1919 Y1	JF Skjellerup
C/1920 X1	JF Skjellerup
C/1921 E1	W Reid
C/1922 B1	W Reid
P/1922 K1	JF Skjellerup
C/1922 W1	JF Skjellerup
C/1924 F1	W Reid
C/1925 F2	W Reid
C/1925 X1	GE Ensor
C/1926 B1	TB Blathwayt
C/1927 A1	TB Blathwayt
C/1927 B1	W Reid
P/1929 P1	AFI Forbes
C/1930 L1	AFI Forbes
C/1932 G1	HE Houghton/GE Ensor
C/1932 Y1	AFI Forbes
C/1935 A1	EL Johnson
C/1935 M1	C Jackson
P/1936 S1	C Jackson

---



# More interesting Amateur Astronomers

## **Alexander Forbes Irvine Forbes 1871 - 1959**

- President ASSA 1942/3
- Director of Comet and Zodiacal light Section
- Discovered 2 comets
  - P/1929 P1            Comet 1928 Pons\_Coggia-Winnecke-Forbes
  - C/1930 L1            Comet 1932n Dodwell-Forbes

## **Dr J Lunt**

- President CAA
- 1914 discover comet , but it was independently discovered 9 hours before in Nieu Zeeland
- Designed built sundial Castle

# More interesting Amateur Astronomers

## **Donald Glencoe McIntyre 1896 - 1966**

- President ASSA 1933/4 Chairman Cape Centre
- McIntyre Award

Africana: he loved Africana and created Africana by publications on Herschel and La Caille / Comets in the old Cape Records / Early Organs and Organists at the Cape, Alexander William Roberts / Translucency of Saturn's Rings

Great chess player and published a book on chess problems.

## **W Watson**

Beaufort West Philosophical Club

## **John Warren**

From Robben Island he discover a comet (naked eye) in 1914 however this comet was discovered in the Northern Hemisphere but nobody cabled Southern Hemisphere Observatories.

# The Amateur Astronomers who founded A.S.S.A.

Dedicated and Passionate People!

- The first Astronomical Society in South Africa was the Cape Astronomical Association (CAA) founded at Cape Town in December 1912.
- The Johannesburg Astronomical Association (JAA) was founded in February 1918.
- The two abovementioned Associations amalgamated in July 1922 to form the Astronomical Society of South Africa. (ASSA)
- The CAA became known as the Cape Centre and JAA as the Johannesburg Centre of ASSA.

## People involved at the Societies

### CAA (1912)

Hon. President: **S.S. Hough**

President: Dr **J.K.E. Halm**

Vice President: Dr S.J. Lunt

Vice President: **Dr A.W. Roberts**

Secretary: **J.F. Skjellerup**

Treasurer: **J.F. Skjellerup**

Committee: Messrs S.A. Davis

Committee: **A.W. Long**

Committee: D.G. Mills

Committee: **W. Reid**

### ASSA Council (1922)

President: **S.S. Hough**

Vice President: Dr. **J.K.E. Halm**

Vice President: **Dr A.W. Roberts**

Vice President: W.B. Jackson

Secretary: **T. MacKenzie**

Treasurer: **J.F. Skjellerup**

Members of Council: W. Watson

Members of Council: **A.W. Long**

Member of Council: H.W. Schonegevel

Members of Council: **W. Reid**

Members of Council: H.E. Wood

Members of Council: W.M. Worsell

### JAA (1918)

President: R.T.A. Innes

Vice President: Dr T Reunert

Vice President: R.N. Kotze

Secretary: **T. MacKenzie**

Treasurer: F. Hall

Committee: Maj J.P. Edwards

Committee: Mrs J. Moir

Committee: Messrs Jackson

Committee: H.C. Green

Committee: R. Simpkins

Committee: J. Thom

Title of Mister is not indicated

The colour scheme shows people involved across the societies. Note the amount of women involved. In 1912 female voters in Cape TOWn were given the right to vote in Municipal matters.

## Amateurs involved with the Cape Astronomical Association

### **CAA** (1912)

Hon. President: S.S. Hough (Professional)

President: Dr J.K.E. Halm (Professional)

Vice President: Dr S.J. Lunt

Vice President: **Dr A.W. Roberts**

Secretary: **J.F. Skjellerup**

Treasurer: J.F. Skjellerup

Committee: Messrs S.A. Davis

Committee: **A.W. Long**

Committee: D.G. Mills

Committee: **W. Reid**

The people in Bold will be discussed  
CAA Founder members jassa v2 n4 p157

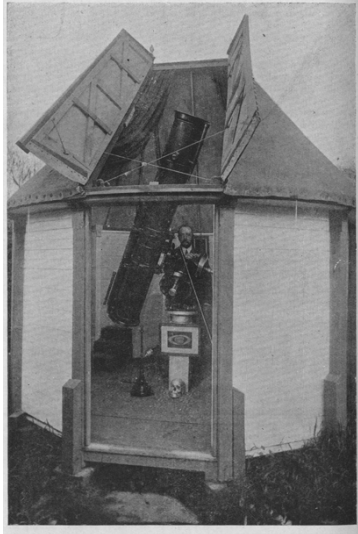
## Clement Jennings Taylor

1861 - 1922

- Published maps of the path of Halley's Comet in 1910. Roused public interest which led to the founding of the CAA.
- Elected President of CAA for 1916 / 7
- Discovered two comets but received credit for only one:  
P/1915 W1 (Taylor)  
C/1920 X1 (Skjellerup)
- 10 inch reflector from Herschel view, Claremont.
- Cloth Merchant
- Written on his Observatory entrance and gravestone "The Heavens Declare the Glory of God"

Discovered two comets but received credit for only one:  
P/1915 W1 (Taylor) Obit says he discovered 1916a

Born in Linconshire, England



The late Clement Jennings Taylor, in his Observatory, "Herschel View," Claremont.





## Dr Alexander William Roberts

1857 - 1938

- One of the most prolific variable star observer, specialising in eclipsing binaries. Made over 250,000 observations of 98 variable stars over (1891 to 1920)
- Close contact with professional astronomers such as David Gill and Edward C Pickering from Harvard College
- President ASSA 1927 / 8  
F.R.A.S. 1894
- Theodolite with 1-inch aperture
- 3-inch Cooke Refractor (gift from Lord McLaren)
- 3.5-inch Ross Refractor (loan Royal Astronomical Society)
- 4-inch meridian photometer (loan from Harvard College)
- Visual photometer of his own design

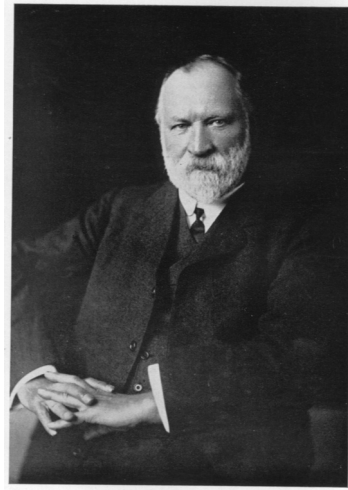
The instruments that he used was extremely small

## Roberts

- Born in **Sutherland**, Scotland
- Teacher in Lovedale, Eastern Cape
- Senator, Union of South Africa, 1920-1929
- Member, Native Affairs Commission, 1920-1935
- Obituary by General Jan Smuts “Roberts was truly a Prince amongst our scientific amateurs”

The Scottish had a great influence on Astronomy in SA

| Obit Jan Smuts JASSA v4n3 April 1938



*CoorAdah.*

## John Francis Skjellerup (Frank)

1875 - 1948

Became interested in Astronomy due to Halley's Comet

- Discover 4 comets  
C/1919 Y1  
C/1920 X1 Discovered by Taylor and Skjellerup, but only Skjellerup got credit  
P/1922 K1 Discovered by Reid and Skjellerup, but only Skjellerup got credit 26P/Grigg-Skjellerup  
C/1922 W1
- Awarded 4 Donohoe Medals from "The Astronomical Society of the Pacific"
- Awarded 2 Donovan Medals by the Donovan Astronomical Trust, Sydney

Born Australia, trained as telegraphist and came to South Africa during Anglo Boer War.

Settled in Cape Town.

Retired 1923 and return to Australia.

Source: Mnassa v62 n3&4 April 2003 (skjellerup-orchison)

Mnassa v62 n7&8 Aug 2003 (sa\_comet\_discovery-cooper)



**Figure 1.** Frank Skjellerup (1875–1952) as a young man (Orchiston Collection).

A W Long

President of ASSA 1928 - 9

?

We know nothing about Long. He was President in 1928-9 but there is no Obituary. Doesn't appear in Glass biographical index and only references in Slotegraaf Index to his articles. The information for this talk comes mainly from Long's Presidential address published in JASSA (assaj\_v2\_n4\_1930-Jan)

We do have an award named after him - The Long Service Award (joke)

## William Reid

1861 - 1928

President ASSA 1925 / 6  
Director of the Comet Section.  
Director Variable Star

- Discover 6 comets. Rediscovered d'Arrest's comet.  
C/1918 L1                      C/1921 E1  
C/1922 B1                      C/1924 F1  
C/1925 F2                      C/1927 B1
- Awarded 7 O'Donohoe medals from The Astronomical Society of the Pacific.
- Awarded Jackson-Gwilt Medal by the Royal Astronomical Society .
- 14 March 1920 W Reid / D McIntyre / J Ditton discovered that Saturn's A ring is translucent.  
3 years before it was discovered that Saturn's B ring was translucent.

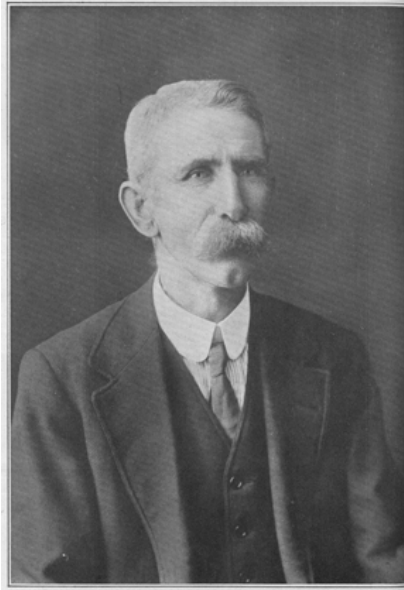
William Reid 1861 - 1928 Born 23 August 1961 (4 days short of 100 years to my birthday)

Director Variable Star (JASSA v2n3 p157)

14 March 1920 W Reid / D McIntyre / J Ditton discovered that Saturn's A ring is translucent. Southern Suburbs Tatler 26 July 1984

Born Aberdeenshire, Scotland (Roberts / Reid)

Entomology: Scots Moth named after him



WILLIAM REID.



## Comet Discoveries

### From Taylor

- Discovered two comets but received credit for only one:  
P/1915 W1 (Taylor)  
C/1920 X1 (Skjellerup)

### From Skjellerup

- Discover 4 comets  
C/1919 Y1  
C/1920 X1 Discovered by Taylor and Skjellerup, but only Skjellerup got credit  
P/1922 K1 Discovered by Reid and Skjellerup, but only Skjellerup got credit 26P/Grigg-Skjellerup  
C/1922 W1

### From Reid

- Discover 6 comets. Rediscovered d'Arrest's comet.  
C/1918 L1                      C/1921 E1  
C/1922 B1                      ?                      C/1924 F1  
C/1925 F2                      C/1927 B1

Recap from previous pages. Blue Taylor Skjellerup /  
Green Skjellerup Reid

The second comet of the year [1920] was discovered on December 8 by Mr. C.J. Taylor at Cape Town. He was in bad health, and unfortunately read the hour-circle an hour wrong, which prevented the discovery from being verified till Mr. Skjellerup made it independently on December 11.... It was at its brightest at discovery, being then nearest both to Sun and Earth.

By rights, this comet could have been assigned to both Taylor and Skjellerup, and Crommelin (1920; 1921a) refers to it as such in the literature. Meanwhile, Halm used Cape Observatory observations to compute some of the orbital elements (c.f. his values and those of Marsden and Williams in Table 3).

Skjellerup Taylor C/1920 X1 Extract from Cooper  
Mnassa v62 n7&8 Aug 2003 (sa\_comet\_discovery-  
cooper)

into service. Success came quickly, with the discovery of a new comet on May 16. On this date, Skjellerup recorded the following entry in his fieldbook:

8.0 pm Suspicious object sighted in Geminorum took position at 8.17 pm from 81 Geminorum R.A.  $7^{\text{h}} 48.^{\text{m}} 3$   $+18^{\circ} 45'$  Very faint Suspicion of slight motion to E. Mr Reid advised. (Skjellerup 1912–1948: 81).

On the same page of the fieldbook is a small sketch showing the comet's position relative to nearby stars. Early the following evening Skjellerup confirmed that the suspicious object of the previous night was indeed a comet, and he "Went to Royal Observatory saw Dr. Halm reported discovery to him. Rough positions taken with 6 inch [refractor]." (*ibid.*) On the way home he called on another close astronomical friend, A.W. Long, and told him about the new comet. Skjellerup then continued his observations, sighting it on May 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27 and 28 (*ibid.*), while others with superior instrumentation followed it for the next two months (Crommelin, 1923c).

As in the case of his previous comet, this discovery also was clouded in controversy. Crommelin (1922a: 281) states that this comet

... was independently found by Mr. Skjellerup and Mr. W. Reid on the night of May 16. The former had the priority and Mr. Reid asks that it should be known simply as Skjellerup's Comet. But our warmest congratulations will be extended to both astronomers ...

Skjellerup Reid P/1922 K1 Extract Cooper  
Mnassa v62 n7&8 Aug 2003 (sa\_comet\_discovery-  
cooper)

Elsewhere, Crommelin (1923c: 288) states that Reid found the comet "... a few hours ..." after Skjellerup, but one of Reid's obituaries contains a quite different version:

His desire to encourage others in searching for comets was so great that he undertook not to claim discovery of any comet found by himself if any other discoverer communicated with him before he had himself reported to the Royal Observatory. In at least one instance he had announced to his family a discovery and described the position and appearance of the comet *some hours before* a report was made to him by another amateur who had also picked up the new arrival. This comet bears the name of the other amateur. (Obituaries, 1928: 269; my italics).

Whatever the facts of the matter, Skjellerup felt compelled to query the veracity of this independent discovery claim. As we have seen, he actually advised Reid of the discovery on the evening of May 16, and later on the same page of his fieldbook he includes the following cryptic comment: "Mr Reid claims to have discovered this comet on same evening, but when asked on phone (follg day) if he had a comet in sight he replied in negative. He admits however my prior Discovery of object." (Skjellerup 1912–1948: 81; his underlining). Given that Skjellerup and Reid were close friends (see Section 5, below), this is all very curious.

In a strange twist of fate, Skjellerup did eventually end up sharing this comet, but not with Reid. Soon after the orbital elements were circulated, Professor Leuschner was one of the first to suggest (Crommelin 1922a) that Skjellerup's latest comet was none other than the 'lost' comet observed by New Zealander John Grigg. in 1902 (see Orchiston 1993 for

Skjellerup Reid P/1922 K1 Extract Cooper  
Mnassa v62 n7&8 Aug 2003 (sa\_comet\_discovery-  
cooper)

## Amateurs involved with the Johannesburg Astronomical Association

**JAA** (1918)

President: **R.T.A. Innes**

Vice President: **Dr T Reunert**

Vice President: R.N. Kotze

Secretary: T. MacKenzie

Treasurer: F. Hall

Committee: Maj J.P. Edwards

Committee: Mrs J. Moir

Committee: Messrs Jackson

Committee: H.C. Green

Committee: R. Simpkins

Committee: J. Thom

JAA Founder Members Jassa v2 n4 p165

## Robert Thorburn Ayton Innes

1861 - 1933

- Amateur turned Professional
- At age of 18 years elected as Fellow Royal Astronomical Society
- Discover Proxima Centauri
- Discover comet C/1910 A1
  
- Director of the Johannesburg Observatory
- President of ASSA
- Director computing section
- 26 inch telescope bears his name.

Robert Thorburn Ayton Innes 1861 - 1933

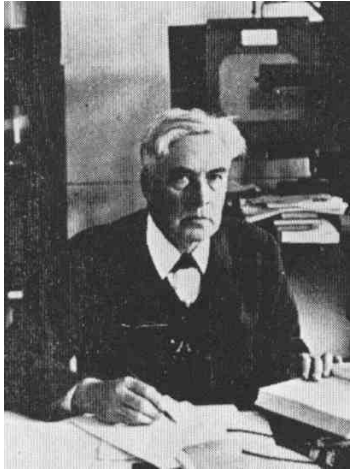
Born 10 November in Edinburg Scotland (Roberts / Reid / Innes)

Was wine merchant in NSW, Australia and then moved to Cape Town.(Gill) Worked as secretary, librarian and accountant.

Discover comet C/1910 A1 Mnassa v62 n7&8 Aug 2003 p.170

Story Innes watched Venus and as it descended low it moved behind a house. In the house he saw a girl in the window, upside down. He said "that is the girl I'm going to marry" and he did (jhb\_obs-finsen)

It is said that he had many friends, few critics and no enemies.



R. T. A. INNES.

## Dr Theodore Reunert

1856 - 1948

- Reunert was the Honorary Secretary of the "South African Association for the advancement of Science". In 1902 the association petitioned the Governor of the Transvaal Colony to establish an Observatory at or near Johannesburg. The letter was signed by Reunert. Dr Gill chose the site and Innes was appointed first director.
- 9 inch telescope named after him.





## Reunert

1879 Kimberley  
1883 Elected to (British) Institution of Mechanical Engineers  
1884 Company - T. Reunert, Engineer and Machinist.  
1886 Publish - "Diamond mining at the Cape"  
1888 Member - South African Geological Society  
1889 Member - Institute of Civil Engineers  
1889 Company - "Reunert & Lenz"  
1892 Foundation member - South African Association of Engineers and Architects (President 1897/8)  
1894-7 Help establish South African School of Mines (1922 - Wits University) which conferred its first honorary Doctor of Literature (DLit) degree on him for his services to education and culture.  
1895 Foundation member - Geological Society of South Africa  
1901 Member - South African Philosophical Society which became Royal Society of South Africa in 1908  
1902 [Honourable Secraty - South African Association for the Advancement of Science](#)  
1902 [Reunert proposed a meteorological and astronomical observatory near Johannesburg](#)  
1905 Member - Secondary Education Commission  
1918 [Vice President of the Johannesburg Astronomical Association](#)  
Founders Member - Johannesburg Public Library

Born 1856 Leeds, West Yorkshire, UK

**Table 1(b).** Discoveries 1915–1936

<b>Comet</b>	<b>Discoverer</b>
P/1915 W1	C Taylor
C/1918 L1	W Reid
C/1919 Y1	JF Skjellerup
C/1920 X1	JF Skjellerup
C/1921 E1	W Reid
C/1922 B1	W Reid
P/1922 K1	JF Skjellerup
C/1922 W1	JF Skjellerup
C/1924 F1	W Reid
C/1925 F2	W Reid
C/1925 X1	GE Ensor
C/1926 B1	TB Blathwayt
C/1927 A1	TB Blathwayt
C/1927 B1	W Reid
P/1929 P1	AFI Forbes
C/1930 L1	AFI Forbes
C/1932 G1	HE Houghton/GE Ensor
C/1932 Y1	AFI Forbes
C/1935 A1	EL Johnson
C/1935 M1	C Jackson
P/1936 S1	C Jackson

## More interesting Amateur Astronomers

### **Alexander Forbes Irvine Forbes 1871 - 1959**

- President ASSA 1942/3
- Director of Comet and Zodiacal light Section
- Discovered 2 comets
  - P/1929 P1            Comet 1928 Pons\_Coggia-Winnecke-Forbes
  - C/1930 L1            Comet 1932n Dodwell-Forbes

### **Dr J Lunt**

- President CAA
- 1914 discover comet , but it was independently discovered 9 hours before in Nieu Zeeland
- Designed built sundial Castle

Forbes Born Aberdeenshire Scotland

Architect living in Hermanus

Mnassa v62 n7&8 Aug 2003 p.170 (sa\_comet\_discovery-cooper)

Forbes\_AFI-obit

Lunt

9 hours before in Nieu Zeeland (JASSA v2n4 p160)

Designed built sundial Castle (CAA circular 5 / JASSA v2n4 p160)

## More interesting Amateur Astronomers

**Donald Glencoe McIntyre** 1896 - 1966

- President ASSA 1933/4 Chairman Cape Centre
- McIntyre Award

Africana: he loved Africana and created Africana by publications on Herschel and La Caille / Comets in the old Cape Records / Early Organs and Organists at the Cape, Alexander William Roberts / Translucency of Saturn's Rings

Great chess player and published a book on chess problems.

**W Watson**

Beaufort West Philosophical Club

**John Warren**

From Robben Island he discover a comet (naked eye) in 1914 however this comet was discovered in the Northern Hemisphere but nobody cabled Southern Hemisphere Observatories.

Donald Glencoe McIntyre 1896 - 1966

14 March 1920 W Reid / D McIntyre / J Ditton discovered that Saturn's A ring is translucent. Southern Suburbs

Tatler 26 July 1984

McIntyre Award

Popular lecturer

Wrote articles Cape Times and radio talks.

Accountant and fought in East Africa campaign (von Lettow Vir beck) in WW1

Source: Mnassa v58 n5&6 June 1999, pp63-4 /

McIntyre\_DG-obit /

W Watson

Beaufort West Philosophical Club MNASSA v6 n5 p48  
(sa\_amateur\_astr)

Warren (JASSA v2n4 p160) / MNASSA v6 n5 p46