

ASSA AGM 2019 MINUTES

DATE	8 Aug 2019	TIME	19:30 to 21:00	VENUE	St Henry's Marist College Durban http://www.sthenrys.co.za/
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Present

ASSA Council and Appointees

Piet Straus	Durban Centre Chair (AGM Host Chair)
Case Rijsdijk	President, Chair - Garden Route Centre, MNASSA Editor
Chris Stewart	Vice President, Section Director Instrumentation
Adv AJ Nel	Treasurer
Wilmi Nel	Membership Secretary
Lerika Cross	Secretary
Clyde Foster	Shallow Sky Section Director
John Gill	ASSA Web Manager and Durban Centre Member

Other Durban Centre Members:

Mike Hadlow
Debbie Abel
Corrine Gill
Ooma Rambilas
Sheryl Venter
Sihle Kunene
Peter Wunderlin
Robert Suberg
Prof Mike Watkeys
Richard Rowland

Special guest

Gareth Barry (from Pietermartitzburg)

Apologies

Dr Pierre de Villiers	President, Chair - Hermanus Centre
Dr Ian Glass	ASSET Trustee, ASSA Council Member
Louis Piovesan	ASSA Cape Centre
Peter Cramb	ASSET Trustee
Tim Cooper	ASSET Trustee
José Campos	Honorary Member

Distribution:

All Attendees

ASSA Council and Appointees not able to attend

All relevant reports and presentations will be placed on the ASSA website page <https://assa.saa.ac.za/about/council-and-officers/agm-reports/> and in MNASSA

Notification to be sent to the ASSA Info mail list once the minutes and reports and presentations are uploaded to the web site page

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	Agenda Points	Discussions / Decisions / Actions
1	Welcome	Piet Strauss, Durban Centre Chair, who fulfilled the role of ASSA Centre host and Chairman for the AGM, welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. Apologies received are recorded in these minutes.
2	Minutes	The minutes of the previous AGM meeting held on 6 August 2018 were accepted without amendments.
3	Report on Council	<p>3. President's Report on Council and Presentation The ASSA President, Case Rijdsdijk, presented his Report on Council and a well-received presentation on "Future of Astronomy".</p>
4	ASSA Director Reports	<p>4. Reports received from the ASSA Directors and Appointees The reports for the year 2018/19 from ASSA Directors and Appointees are available in full on the website.</p> <p>4.1 Case Rijdsdijk presented his reports on <u>Communication and the Editorial Board</u>. Highlights noted: Communications – approximately one enquiry every three days on average was received, with career queries being forwarded to SAAO. Several radio and TV interviews were fielded, notably by Clyde.</p> <p>Editorial board – MNASSA, SkyGuide, Nightfall & Website are competently handled as usual by the team, which lost Prof Feast (deceased) who has been replaced by Dr Vanessa McBride and Doug Bullis joined the board.</p> <p>4.2 Chris Stewart gave an overview of <u>annual reports submitted by Directors</u>:</p> <p>Deep Sky Section – Achievement awards for observation were issued to 10 members. 7 members were thanked for their contributions to Nightfall.</p> <p>Historical Section – Archiving and updates to the website are ongoing. An Historical Symposium was held in conjunction with the ASSA symposium in Cape Town, for which the organising committee are thanked. Two historical articles and 3 obituaries were published in MNASSA.</p> <p>Shallow Sky Section – 18 fireball reports were investigated and reported on in MNASSA, together with several meteor showers. Planetary Imaging and international pro-am collaboration on various lunar and planetary topics are ongoing. Martian dust storms, Lunar X & Y features, unprecedented developments of Jupiter's Great Red Spot, and Saturn's lunar occultations received much attention.</p> <p>Variable & Double-Star Section – Eclipsing binary photometry projects were collaborated on, with papers and articles on 4 such systems being published. An exoplanet transit was observed and published on, as part of an 8-country search for habitable exoplanets. Several variable star observers submitted reports to AAVSO, VSS, etc. databases, and talks were delivered. The director continues his survey of Southern wide double stars.</p> <p>Astrophotography/Imaging Section – 4 section members received international recognition for their contributions, both aesthetic and scientifically useful in nature. Astro images of South African origin are shared on Flickr and highlighted in Nightfall. The catchment area for the ScopeX astrophotography competition has been widened this year.</p>

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		<p>Citizen Science Section – This is a new section formed encourage and support ASSA members participating in citizen science projects, and to provide technical assistance to South African researchers who wish to set up their own citizen science projects. It was sparked by Dr Stella Kafka of AAVSO, is supported by Dr Pamela Gay of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific and has attracted the interest of Dr Corlia Meyer of Stellenbosch University. Plans regarding identification of projects suitable for the Section to tackle, are in progress.</p> <p>Instrumentation Section – Activities largely revolve around communication, outreach, guidance and education, plus the important aspect of encouraging people in the pursuit of their personal instrumentation projects. The telescope making class which has been continuously active since mid-1991 still enjoys an influx of newcomers, whilst experienced members are currently tackling ambitious projects such as f/3 paraboloids and high-resolution spectroscopes. Interested parties worldwide receive advice via the FaceBook group. The 18th ScopeX event will occur in September.</p> <p>Spectroscopy Section – The objective is to promote amateur spectroscopy and provide support to those who need to improve on their skills or get involved with pro-am activities. As a niche field, participation is low, though some beginners have been attracted and the Director is engaged in high-resolution spectroscopy with home-made equipment. Of the 181 spectra submitted to the AAVSO database from 7 active observers around the globe, 73 were submitted by the Director and they have attracted 179 downloads.</p> <p>Cosmology Section – Whilst the July 2018-2019 has been quiet in terms of scientific discovery, group discussion has been active with about 4 new topic threads per week and interest levels remain high.</p> <p>Observing & Outreach – Alerts for opportunities to observe various uncommon or transient events were published, while several reports from the public on sightings (e.g. of meteor/fireballs) were received and routed as appropriate. ASSA Centres across the country have held monthly meetings and (weather permitting) observing evenings, which are open to the public. Live video cover of the recent partial eclipse was fed to Slooh for the benefit of viewers worldwide.</p>
5	ASSA Scholarships	<p>5. ASSA Scholarships The report for the year 2018 19 was received from the ASSA Scholarship Convenor, Dr Claire Flanagan.</p> <p>It was noted by Chris Stewart (who presented the report in Dr Flanagan’s absence) that two scholarships of R20,000 each are administered. Of 15 applications received, 8 were eligible and both scholarships were awarded. Previous awardees are continuing their studies; one of the 2018 candidates is registered for BSc (Hons) on Dark Matter.</p>
6	Membership	<p>6. Membership This was prepared by W Nel and read by Adv AJ Nel. Highlights noted: There are currently 141 country members compared to 112 and 111 country members in the two preceding years. It was proposed that Country Members will in future receive the option of delivery via</p>

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		<p>a Courier service (at their cost) and that members who have not received Sky Guides by the end of February 2019 will receive a further copy via their preferred delivery method</p> <p>Country membership cost for the 2019 to 2020 year will remain at R 75.00 and R50 for the joining fee and country members will receive a reminder email by mid-August.</p>														
7	Financial Report	<p>7. Financial Report 2018 19 The report was prepared and presented by Adv AJ Nel Two key highlights noted and discussed:</p> <p>Drop in the interest received from investment at Sanlam Glacier Fund. A proposal will be discussed at the first Financial Sub Committee meeting to revert these funds to exposure only to the Money Market.</p> <p>Reduction in number of Sky Guide internal sales. Some proposals were made of how to increase the Sky Guide sales such as encourage Centres to use the publication for outreach purposes and to include it in the annual subscriptions.</p>														
8	Independent Compiler Appointment	<p>8. Independent Compiler Appointment Not covered at the meeting. To be followed up after the meeting: ASSA to ask Ronnie Glass of Chartac Advisory Services Pty Ltd if he is willing to continue as ASSA's Independent Compiler.</p>														
9	ASSET	<p>9. ASSA Endowment Trust Peter Cramb, Acting Secretary for ASSET Trustees, submitted a report. In summary:</p> <p>The remaining outstanding matters since the Master of the High Court re-registered the Trust in 2018:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The re-registration of the new Trustees with ABSA Bank to enable the Trustees to gain access to the bank accounts. 2 The preparation of accounts showing their current status. 3 Communication with SARS to verify the Trust's tax commitments and pay any tax due. 														
10	Office Bearers 2019 20	<p>10. ASSA Office Bearers 2019/20</p> <p>10.1 The <u>Council Members</u> were presented (plus the latest Centre Chair information). Case Rijdsijk introduced the new Council Member Dr Pieter Kotze to the meeting and welcomed him onto ASSA Council.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="395 1697 1417 2101"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="395 1697 911 1749">Role</th> <th data-bbox="911 1697 1417 1749">Council 2019 20</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="395 1749 911 1812">President</td> <td data-bbox="911 1749 1417 1812">Chris Stewart</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="395 1812 911 1874">Vice President</td> <td data-bbox="911 1812 1417 1874">Case Rijdsijk</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="395 1874 911 1937">Treasurer</td> <td data-bbox="911 1874 1417 1937">AJ Nel</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="395 1937 911 2000">Membership Secretary</td> <td data-bbox="911 1937 1417 2000">Wilmi Nel</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="395 2000 911 2063">Secretary</td> <td data-bbox="911 2000 1417 2063">Lerika Cross</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="395 2063 911 2101">Council Member</td> <td data-bbox="911 2063 1417 2101">Dr Pieter Kotze</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Role	Council 2019 20	President	Chris Stewart	Vice President	Case Rijdsijk	Treasurer	AJ Nel	Membership Secretary	Wilmi Nel	Secretary	Lerika Cross	Council Member	Dr Pieter Kotze
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	Council Member	Clyde Foster																						
	Bloemfontein Chair	TBA																						
	Cape Chair	Marius Reitz																						
	Durban Chair	Piet Strauss																						
	Garden Route Chair	Case Rijdsdijk																						
	Johannesburg Chair	Carmel Ives																						
	Pretoria Chair	Bosman Olivier																						
	Hermanus Chair	Dr Pierre de Villiers																						
	10.2 <u>ASSA Council Appointees'</u> positions for the 2019 20 year were presented:																							
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11	Awards	<p>11. ASSA Awards The ASSA Awards Committee comprises the ASSA President and two Vice Presidents and the Committee decided on the following awards, announced by Case Rijdsdijk:</p> <p>11.1 Director’s Awards C Rijdsdijk announced Director Awards to:</p> <p><u>Percy Jacobs</u> <i>For building a Ha solar telescope & spectrograph, providing quality spectra to researchers internationally</i></p> <p><u>Johan Smit</u> <i>For countless hours of support to the telescope making fraternity plus constant explorations of new technologies and techniques for telescope making.</i></p> <p>11.2 President’s Award C Rijdsdijk announced President’s Award to:</p> <p><u>Clyde Foster</u></p>																																		

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		<p><i>For Internationally recognized, collaborative Planetary imagery and promoting the ASSA, both Nationally and Internationally.</i></p> <p><u>Pierre de Villiers</u> <i>For his outstanding service to the ASSA, its Council and his commendable Outreach programmes in Hermanus</i></p> <p><u>AJ Nel</u> <i>For many years of managing and securing ASSA finances and thus enabling many successful projects and scholarships.</i></p> <p>11.3 McIntyre Award C Rijdsdijk announced McIntyre Award to:</p> <p><u>Magda Streicher</u> <i>For having made many significant contributions to MNASSA and Nightfall, and for her books, especially "Astronomy Delights"</i></p>
12	Any other business	As no other formal item was raised, the Chairman closed the formal part of the meeting.
13	Presentation	A talk was presented by Clyde Foster, Section Director – Shallow Sky: "The Planets up close and personal- my journey into planetary imaging"
14	Closure	<p>Case Rijdsdijk handed over the ASSA President's Baton (which was crafted by Dr P de Villiers in 2016) to the incoming President, Chris Stewart, who expressed his sincere thanks for Case for his excellent contribution and leadership to the ASSA over the past 2 years as President.</p> <p>In closure of the AGM, Case Rijdsdijk extended a gracious thank you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Piet Strauss and the Durban Centre for hosting the AGM and all their excellent preparation and kind hospitality; - All attendees to the AGM. <p>The meeting and socialising closed at 21:00</p>
15	Next Council meeting	The meetings will be confirmed in due course.

Minutes Approved: _____ Date: _____

Attachments: on the ASSA website: <https://assa.saa.ac.za/about/council-and-officers/agm-reports/>

1. Presidential Report by Case Rijdsdijk
2. Future of Astronomy: Case Rijdsdijk
3. Communication and Editorial Board Report: Case Rijdsdijk
4. Deep Sky Section: Douglas Bullis
5. Observing and Outreach: Kos Coronaios
6. SA Astronomy History Section: Chris de Coning
7. Shallow Sky: Clyde Foster
8. Double Stars: Dave Blane

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9. Imaging / Astrophotography: Martin Heigan
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14. ASSA Scholarship Convener report: Dr Claire Flanagan
15. Membership Report: Wilmi Nel
16. Financial Report: Adv AJ Nel
17. ASSET Report

ASSA Council and Appointees 2019 20