

**Minutes of the ASSA Council Meeting held at 19h30 on October 28, 2003
in the
SAAO Lecture Hall.**

1 Welcome

The chairman, Case Rijdsdijk, welcomed everybody, thanked them for coming and as there was a quorum, started the meeting at 19h30.

2 Register

This was passed around and signed. The following were present:

Peter Martinez, Laurie Simone, Chris de Coning, Paul de Villiers, Cliff Turk, Peter van Blommestein, Maciej Soltynski, Ian Glass, Pat Booth, Abe Mahomed, Andrew McConnell, Auke Slotegraaf and Case Rijdsdijk.

3 Apologies

MA Gray and Dr D Laney and out of town members.

4 Minutes of the Previous meeting – September 09, 2003

Corrections asked for were:

- 4.1 Spelling of Abe Mahomed.
- 4.2 Out of town members to be added to apologies
- 4.3 In #5 reference was for an invoice of R500 from the Natal Midlands. However their minutes indicated an amount of R170. C Turk to investigate.
- 4.4 In #6 C Turk asked that "... or as soon as possible thereafter" be added.

With these corrections the minutes were accepted. Prop. Peter van Blommestein, Sec. Laurie Simone.

5 Matters arising

- 5.1 OK a meeting had been held and the matter was in hand..
- 5.2 There was considerable discussion on the title of the handbook. It was felt that "Africa Sky Guide South" looked like a typo! Cliff Turk objected on the grounds that preliminary promotional material had a different title. Brian Warner had suggested "Sky Guide Africa South". The editors would decide on something starting with "Sky Guide". SAAO sponsorship would probably be OK, but to be confirmed by Peter Martinez to council. There would need to be a by-line for SAAO. HartRAO would be contacted. Maciej Soltynski to contact Mike Gaylard at HartRAO. Case Rijdsdijk said that contact with Game Reserves/National Parks would be made. Peter van Blommestein thanked those involved for producing the handbook and Ian Glass gave a vote of thanks, on behalf on the Council, to Pat Booth for her untiring efforts in editing the handbook for many years. Pre-prints of selected pages were available for Council members to look at after the meeting.
- 5.3 Maciej Soltynski briefly explained the proposed amendments, and the reason for them, again and said that he would draft these amendments and circulate them so that they could be tabled at the next council meeting.
- 5.4 Case Rijdsdijk would be traveling to Sedgefield on November 1 to present Jan Hers with his award.
- 5.5 Case Rijdsdijk and Cliff Turk would compile the list of members and their alternatives.

6 Treasurers Report

Cliff Turk reported that the balance to March 31 was OK but that there was an anomaly of R2 500 in the bursary fund that had not been taken out. The chairman expressed a little concern over the fact that no financial report had been tabled for some time and Cliff Turk said that he felt confident that one would be tabled at the next meeting and assured council that there were no major anomalies.

7 New Observatory in the Cedarberg.

Case Rijdsdijk presented an e-mail from an astronomer in the Netherlands about a proposed observatory in the Cedarberg and asked if anyone had any information about this. No-one had. Peter Martinez commented that he had received the same e-mail and could add nothing further.

8 Correspondence

In addition to the normal receipt of newsletters etc from other centres there was a letter from:

- 8.1 the UN about Space Week,
- 8.2 Kluwers publishing, promoting the publication of "Communicating Astronomy"
- 8.3 John Watson of the Natal Midlands centre with a corrected invoice for the banner and a photograph of it.

9 New Members

Abe Mahomed reported that there 10 new members bringing the total to 193 of which 90 received Sky & Telescope, S&T. In addition there were 14 applications from National Astrophysics and Space Sciences Programme, NASSP, students. Abe Mahomed would liaise with Peter Martinez about this.

10 AOB

- 10.1 John Watson had complained that he had not received the council minutes recently. Case Rijdsdijk said that he had no e-mail address for him. It appears that there is no e-mail facility there that can be used by centre members. The secretary will snail mail John Watson @:

John Watson,	or	John Watson
P O Box 2106,		P O Box 330
PMB		Hilton
3220		3245

- 10.2 Case Rijdsdijk suggested the formation of an Education Section within ASSA as they were becoming progressively involved in this activity and would be proposing such a division at the next meeting.
- 10.3 There had been complaints about members not receiving S&T. Maciej Soltynski felt that ASSA had some responsibility for this. There was some discussion on the matter in which Abe Mahomed said that there was an apparent problem with a local distributor who had "gone under". Council asked if he would please look into the matter and report back at the next meeting.

11 Next meeting

The next meeting would be held at the same venue, at the same time on January 20, 2004.

After the meeting ended council spent some time looking at the pages of the new handbook. These met with very favourable comment from those present.