

**Minutes of the ASSA Council meeting held at 20h00 on March 30, 2004
in the
SAAO Lecture Hall**

1 Welcome

The President welcomed all present.

2 Janet Mattei

It was with great sadness that the ASSA had learnt of the passing of Janet Mattei. The president said that he had written a letter of condolences and then asked all to rise for a minute in remembrance of her.

3 Register

Present were: I S Glass, P van Blommestein, L Simone, A Jones, A Mahomed, C Turk, A Slotegraaf, M Soltynski, P Martinez, C de Coning, Dave Laney and C Rijdsdijk.

4 Apologies

A McConnell, R Hurly, M A Gray and all up country members.

5 Minutes of the previous meeting, January 20, 2004

- 5.1 The spelling of A McConnell needs to be corrected.
- 5.2 Under Matters Arising 5.2 refers to the Sky Guide.
- 5.3 Last line of 5.2 should be “. . . by all . . .” and typo “pf” should be “of”
- 5.4 In 6.2 it was the cost of postage that almost doubled.
- 5.5 In 6.3, second last sentence “. . . interest earned by the scholarship fund was . . . “
- 5.6 Last sentence of 9 the word honour should be honorary.

With these corrections the minutes were accepted. Prop. Peter van Blommestein and Sec. Ian Glass

6 Matters Arising

- 6.1 The constitutional amendments were to be posted in MNASSA and all members would be asked to vote on the included voting slip, which was to be returned to the secretary on or before August 1st 2004.
- 6.2 The competition for the new ASSA logo would be announced in the next issue of MNASSA and that a prize of R250 would be awarded to the winning submission.
- 6.3 Scope-X was held on the 24th in JHB since this was World Astronomy Day. He was attending Scope-X 2004 and would report back.
- 6.4 There was some discussion on the SAAO/ASSA relationship i.t.o. membership, both at the Cape Centre and National levels: very few SAAO staff were members. Maciej Soltynski mentioned that there was little in the way of press about SALT and that the issue needed to be addressed. It was a notional high profile project that could, and should, be used to promote astronomy. Peter Martinez, as acting director of SAAO, responded that SALT was an international collaboration and therefore needed to be sensitive to these partners, but would look into it. Maciej Soltynski added that further discussion with SAAO w.r.t. the handbook had been held and that these had been extremely positive.

7 Awards

A nomination for the Gill medal was received and discussed. Council members were reminded to bring the nominee's name to their alternates, so that a decision could be reached at the next council meeting.

There was also a nomination for a long service award that was unanimously approved.

8 Treasurers Report

The treasurer reported that the June accounts were the auditors and that he would submit a quarterly report by the next council meeting.

Maciej Soltynski expressed concern at the cost of MNASSA, especially about the difference between production costs and income. The treasurer said that he would produce some statistics at the next meeting to try and clarify this matter.

9 Scholarships

Maciej Soltynski informed Council an application from a member had been received for the ASSA Scholarship. The Scholarship Committee had rejected the application as it did not meet the published criteria but suggested that Council consider the application on its own merits, outside the scope of the Scholarship. Council decided not to support the application.

10 Correspondence

10.1 There was the receipt of the usual local newsletters which were forward to A Slotegraaf

10.2 The president had received the Memorandum of Understanding from the South African Institute of Physics

10.3 A letter was received from Michael Pool commenting on the idea of a new logo, which he supported. He remarked on some grammatical issues, which were noted.

11 New Members

A Mahomed had received 7 new membership applications. Names were read out and were accepted. Proposed by Maciej Soltynski and seconded by Auke Slotegraaf. These would as usual be published in MNASSA.

Presently there were 236 members, of which 96 bought S&T, 119 were non-subscribing members and 13 were honorary.

12 AOB

Chris de Coning proposed that a symposium be held in 2005 to coincide with the opening of SALT on "The history of Astronomy in Southern Africa". He proposed that it be held at SAAO under the auspices of the ASSA. Ian Glass said that he supported the idea and would help.

13 Next meeting

The next meeting of Council would be at 19h30, in the SAAO Lecture Hall on June 08, 2004.