

**MINUTES OF ASSA COUNCIL MEETING**  
**TUESDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2007**

Held in the Board Room, SAAO, at 20.00

- 1) Welcome: Patricia Booth, Vice President, ASSA
- 2) Present:  
P.Booth, A. Herder, C. de Coning, D. Field, L. Simone, Ian Glass, Peter Martinez
- 3) Apologies:  
Dave Laney, Maciej Soltynski, Lia Labuschagne, Andrew Gray, Willie Koorts, Magda Streicher, Cliff Turk,
- 4) The previous minutes of Council meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> February ratified with minor corrections.
- 5) Matters Arising:  
The Membership Database was completed by Polla Tosen using Microsoft Access, with the exception of the label printing function. D. Field is maintaining a dual system at present. D. Field will email the database to Atze Herder who would approach someone with knowledge of Access to complete the label function.
- 6) Section Directors:  
Polla Tosen is no longer available for the position of Imaging Director. L. Simone to correspond with D. Laney regarding the vacancy.
- 7) Lunar Eclipse March 3rd:  
The above competition received 17 entries. Two prizes will be awarded to the winners. Willie Koorts will publish an article with photographs in MNASSA. Pat Booth is to advise Cliff Turk the names and addresses of the winners, so that they can each receive a copy of Sky Guide.
- 8) The next Astronomy Month: October – 2007:  
Correspondence from Gerrit Penning was read to Council regarding funding for projects to take place during Astronomy Month. G. Penning stated that we were too late to apply for funds and that an application should have been submitted to SAASTA before March. Peter Martinez implied that this need not be the case and that we should still try to submit an application and gauge the response.  
  
Dudley Field suggested a nation wide star party during a new moon. MTN will also be doing something, further that we determine what other projects have been arranged for Astronomy Month for possible participation. Peter Martinez reminded us that October is also the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Space Agency that is when the first Sputnik was launched into space.  
  
For Astronomy Year 2009, Peter Martinez advised Chris de Coning to contact Kevin Govender regarding any projects for that year.
- 9) The Way Forward:  
Laurie Simone advised Council that there is no more to be said that has not been said already, and that if members wanted to implement change they should simply submit a proposal. For instance, should you feel the President should stand for two years instead of one, or if you are in favour of email votes, submit a proposal?  
  
Chris de Coning / Ian Glass to prepare an article for publication in MNAASA and that the article would be Pro-Active.

10) Video Conferencing:

Atze Herder stated that Video Conferencing with Skype is limited to 4 people. He proposed that we make use of Telkom facilities for Teleconferencing with the next Council meeting. An expense of approximately R 300.00 will be incurred. Speaker phones will also be required. Up country Council Members to forward their phone numbers by the 15<sup>th</sup> June for the next Council meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2007.

11) Light Pollution:

A) Cliff Turk to write to 50/50:

Magda Streicher has been in contact with Cliff Turk. She has communicated with 50/50. Correspondence received from Willie Koorts confirms that 50/50 have broadcasted a piece on light pollution. The ASSA web site was also displayed on the screen. Willie Koorts suggested we follow up the broadcast. Magda Streicher has also been successful, through Tersius Harmse to broadcast a piece on light pollution during the weather report on RSG radio. This happened on Sunday Night.

B) Cliff Turk to write an article for MNASSA on “What has worked”

C) Fact-file for publication in MNASSA

D) Lectures at various Centres with Dark Sky monies

Laurie Simone to correspond with Cliff Turk regarding B, C, and D

E) Each Centre to have a Dark Sky representative:

The Johannesburg Centre has appointed Oleg Toumilovitch to be their Dark Sky representative. No appointments were received from the remaining Centres.

12) SAASTA:

A) Funds available:            B) Applying for funds            C) Centres to plan forward

Correspondence between Laurie Simone and Case Risjdijk was read to Council regarding all the above. The approximate annual amount of funds available is R 250,000.00. The Johannesburg Centre received R 63,000.00 for Scope X. To apply for funds, Centres need to plan projects well in advance. Laurie Simone asked Peter Martinez if it was possible to have the Observers Workshop sponsored by SAASTA. He emphasizes the disappointment at the cancellation and suggested the Workshop for 2009 to coincide with Astronomy Year. Peter Martinez said it could be possible if we called the Workshop a Preparatory Conference for Training people for IYA 2009 and that we invite an overseas speaker, like Colieta Feiro – Mexico, or John Percy – Canada, people with internationally recognised experience. Peter Martinez is to make the initial contact. Peter further suggested that we liaise with K Govender as regards the proposal. Laurie Simone said he would correspond further with Case Risjdijk with the possibility of drawing up a business plan. Laurie Simone also stressed that if we are successful in receiving sponsorship for the Conference, Council should determine the date and venue of the event.

13) MNASSA:

D Field reported that MNASSA is in final stages for printing.

14) Sky Guide:

Dudley reported that Anthony Jones was making good progress with the next publication.

15) SAAO/ASSA Scholarship:

Correspondence was received from Maciej Soltynski and the details are as follows;

**The first SAAO-ASSA Scholarship has been awarded to Mpati Ramatsoku.** She is a second year BSc student at UCT doing Astronomy / Astrophysics subjects. A notice will appear in the next MNASSA. There were two applicants and the decision was made by the SAAO- ASSA scholarship committee of M. G. Soltynski (convenor) K. Govender (SAAO) and A. Gray (ASSA).

16) The 8<sup>th</sup> ASSA Symposium 2008:

Correspondence was received from both Frikkie de Bruyn and Mike Reid and they have both declined to hold the above symposium for good reasons. Laurie Simone is to correspond and extend an invitation to the remaining Centres to hold the above Symposium. 18<sup>th</sup> of June is cut-off date, after which, if no volunteers, the Cape Centre will be approached to host it. Laurie Simone also asked Peter Martinez if it was possible to have SAASTA sponsor the Symposium. He did not think so because it has to have an outreach element. Atze Herder said that the Symposium is held at the Centres Expense and that he paid to attend the Bloemfontein Centre Symposium which for the record attracted 60 to 70 people.

17) Johannesburg Centre Scope X:

To quote Case Risjdijk "It was the best Scope X ever". Congratulations to Lerika Cross and the Johannesburg Centre.

The above event was opened by the CEO of SAASTA Ms Beverly Damonse, SAASTA being the sponsor of the guest speaker Richard Berry who gave a workshop on Astro Image Processing. Case Risjdijk, Auke Slotegraaf representing the Deep Sky section and Willie Koorts, editor of MNASSA were also invited. Willie Koorts submitted correspondence expressing the lack of exposure from ASSA. We should have been there advertising the Society and signing up members.

Over 1000 people attended Scope X. There were lots of exhibits and a great dark sky for the star party.

18) Treasurer Report:

No report tabled.

19) AGM:

The date for the ASSA AGM was approved and set for Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> July. It will take place in the Auditorium at the Observatory, Cape Town 7.30 for 8.00 pm. Nominations for Council closes on the 15<sup>th</sup> June. Reports are required from the Section Directors.

20) A) New Members:

Dudley Field submitted a report. The application of 14 new members was approved. Total membership now stands at 238 (a net gain of 3 members over this time last year) of which 99 are full members, 10 honorary members, 115 limited members and 14 new members. We are running out of Lapel Badges. Pat Booth is to make enquiries with Brian Skinner regarding availability.

B) Sky & Telescope:

S. & T. have appointed an outside agency to handle distribution; Palm Coast Data

The Membership secretary will provide new member with details. Subscription will be direct from member to S. & T. and not via ASSA banking account. Thereafter the secretary will confirm the member is affiliated to ASSA and membership to S. & T.

Subscribers will receive a renewal notice together with all the relevant contact details, method of payment, etc. S. & T. will send an annual club list to confirm ASSA (affiliated) membership is still valid. Missing copies are handled by Palm Coast Data.

Council approved to continue Honorary Member S. & T. subscription.

21) Correspondence:

There was no further correspondence to refer to.

22) Any Other Business:

Chris de Coning suggested drawing up a Journal for Future Events

23) Date of the next meeting:

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> June

The meeting finished at 10.00 pm