

ASSA FUTURE PROJECT

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- To enlist new members.
- To get the fun back into our hobby.
- To motivate members to observe more and to make Scientific Contributions

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■ Website:

<http://assa.saao.ac.za/future/>

ASSA National

History:

ASSA History

- 1912: Cape Astronomical Association
- 1918: Johannesburg Astronomical Association

ASSA History

- 1922: Cape and Johannesburg Societies amalgamate to form the "Astronomical Society of South Africa"
- 1956: Name changed to the "Astronomical Society of Southern Africa"

ASSA Centres

- Bloemfontein
- Cape
- Durban
- Garden Route
- Harare
- Johannesburg
- Natal Midlands
- Pretoria

ASSA Observing Sections

- Comet and Meteor: TP Cooper
- Deep Sky: A Slotegraaf
- Double Star: C Middleton
- Occultation: B Fraser
- Solar: J van Delft
- Variable Star: B Fraser

ASSA Sections (Non-observing)

- Dark Sky: C Turk
- Education & Public Communication: C Rijdsdijk
- Historical: C de Coning

ASSA Future Project

Problems

Problems

Points to Ponder:

- **Astronomy is our hobby.** Each person must be allowed to practice astronomy in such a way as to stimulate the most enjoyment and satisfaction. If council, centres or other institutions tries to force any unwanted scheme onto members, the fun will be taken from the hobby and the members will disappear.
- None of us are as clever as all of us.

Problems

Apathy

- Not enough members observe and contribute data to different projects.
- From Council.
- From Members.

Double edged sword

Advantages

- The present government is willing to invest phenomenal resources on Science and Technology. We must make use of the opportunities opening to us, but at the same time retain our independence as a society.
- Our finances are very strong, actually quite impressive. This is due to sound management and the good sales of the handbook. Acknowledgement needs to be made to Auke Slotegraaf and Cliff Turk.

Reasons for the Problems

- Technology
- The Marketplace
- Scientific Redundancy of Amateurs
- Lack of Interest

Reasons for the Problems

- Modern Post Apartheid South Africa.
Traditionally most of our observers were white South Africans. In the past decade and more a great brain drain took place and a large percentage of our potential support base emigrated. No doubt that this will mean a great-unexpected bonus for the Astronomical Societies of Australia, New Zealand, U.K., and Canada.

WHAT TO DO?

Structural Changes

Four Options

- Status Quo
- Trust
- League
- Professional involvement

BE ACTION ORIENTATED

Bring the fun back into Astronomy as
a hobby

- Cater for the new market by using
technology: Robotic Observatory
- Video Conferencing
- Paid Personnel

BE ACTION ORIENTATED

- Centre orientated programs aimed at beginners.
- Train observing section directors in how to motivate members.
- Train members in new technologies. Symposiums more practically orientated