



# ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

*Incorporated in the ACT*

*ABN 37 660 297 848*

## **Minutes of the 49th Annual General Meeting held at 11 am on Wednesday 8 July 2015 Esplanade Hotel Fremantle**

The Meeting was opened at 11:02 am with the President in the Chair and approximately 110 members of all grades in attendance.

### **1. Apologies**

J.Dickey, Duncan Galloway, Amanda Karakis, Naomi McClure-Griffiths, Emily Petroff, Daniel Price, Gavin Rowell.

### **2. Minutes of the 48th Annual General Meeting**

Motion that the minutes of the 48th Annual General Meeting be accepted.

**Couch/Jackson  
Carried**

### **3. Business arising from the Minutes**

None.

### **4. President's Report**

A written report (included below) was distributed to members at the meeting. The President, Andrew Hopkins, outlined the contents of the report (below) in a powerpoint summary.

#### **1. ASA Council Members 2014 – 2015**

Andrew Hopkins	President
Darren Croton/Virginia Kilborn	Vice-President
Kate Brooks	Immediate Past President
John O'Byrne	Secretary
Marc Duldig	Secretary
Ravi Sood	Treasurer
Duncan Galloway	Councillor
Cath Trott	Councillor
Amanda Karakas	Councillor
Gavin Rowell	Councillor
Lee Spitler	Councillor
Emily Petroff	Student Representative
Bryan Gaensler/Daniel Price	(Ex-officio) Chair, PASA Editorial Board
Tanya Hill	(Co-opted) Prizes and Awards Coordinator
Michael Brown	(Co-opted) Media and Outreach Coordinator

I would like to thank all members of Council for their efforts and contributions. I am very grateful for the work of those council members who hold ongoing roles in the Society (John O'Byrne, Marc Duldig, Daniel Price, Tanya Hill, and Michael Brown).

### **2. Highlights**

#### *2.1 Anniversaries of national facilities*

The year 2014 was the 50th anniversary of Siding Spring Observatory and the 40th anniversary of the Anglo-Australian Telescope. These milestones were recognised through a wide variety of events during StarFest at Siding Spring in October 2014 and in other well- received and attended public activities.

#### *2.2 Decadal Plan Launch*

Substantial effort by a large fraction of the community during 2014 culminated yesterday in the formal launch of the 2016-2025 Decadal Plan for our community, *Australia in the Era of Global Astronomy*. This plan results from more

than one year's effort by the Australian astronomical community, and is based on reports from 11 working groups, comprising over 150 astronomers, engineers and educators from over 30 Australian institutions. It sets the strategy for our community for the coming decade, and we look forward to seeing its goals being realised.

### 2.3 Significant achievement and recognition of ASA members

Many of our members and institutes were acknowledged over the past year for their contributions to scientific excellence and the community. Those nationally recognized include:

- Tamara Davis was awarded the 2015 Nancy Millis Medal for Women in Science by the Australian Academy of Science for her research in cosmology.
- Naomi McClure Griffiths was awarded the 2015 Pawsey Medal for research in physics by the Australian Academy of Science for her research on the structure and content of the Milky Way.

These are in addition to many other National and State-based prizes and accolades that were awarded to our members across the country. These accolades are a testament not only to the high calibre of researchers, teachers and communicators in our society but also to the high profile and regard that Australian astronomy enjoys from the public.

### 2.4 NCRIS funding

The Federal budget in May 2014 included an allocation of \$150M to extend the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Scheme (NCRIS) by one year, from 1 July 2015 until 30 June 2016 to fund existing NCRIS capabilities (or a subset of those capabilities). Of this, \$8.6M has now been allocated to AAL to support NCRIS-funded astronomy infrastructure programs. This funding is contributing to the support of ASKAP and MWA operations and maintenance, international telescope access and Australian instrumentation projects, ASVO activities, and engagement with international high-energy astrophysics facilities. In recent weeks the Australian Government has re-affirmed its commitment to fund the NCRIS programme until at least June 2017.

### 2.5 APRIM 2017 and 2020

Following an earlier ASA Council priority to consider an Australian bid to host an Asia-Pacific Regional IAU Meeting, the Australian community was represented at the APRIM 2014 meeting by ICRAR to put forward a proposal to host the APRIM 2017 event. The Australian bid was not successful this year, but we anticipate submitting a new proposal, at the upcoming 2017 meeting, to host APRIM 2020 in Australia. At that time it will have been almost two decades since the IAU General Assembly was held in Sydney in 2003.

## 3. ASA and related events in 2014-15

### 3.1 ASA Women in Astronomy Workshop 2014

The fourth ASA women in astronomy workshop, *We Are All Made of Stars*, was held at ANU in Canberra over 28-29 August 2014. More than 130 people, including over 20 people participating online, attended the meeting. More information on the content and outcomes of the workshop is available from the Chapter's website:

<http://asawomeninastronomy.org/meetings/wia-workshop-2015/>

The 2015 Women in Astronomy Workshop, *Inspiring Diversity*, is scheduled for 22-23 July 2015 in Brisbane at the Women's College, University of Queensland: <http://asawomeninastronomy.org/meetings/wia-workshop-2015/>

### 3.2 ASA ANITA Theory Workshop and Astroinformatics School 2015

The Annual ANITA Workshop was held at Mt Stromlo Observatory over 9-10 February, 2015. There were 54 participants, with 29 presenting including 9 students. The ASA 2015 ANITA Astroinformatics School was held at Fellows Road Theatre, ANU, over 11-13 February 2015. There were 45 student participants and 5 lecturers. The school covered techniques and resources associated with coding and HPC programming.

### 3.3 ASA Harley Wood School of Astronomy 2015

The 2015 Harley Wood School of Astronomy was held over 2-5 July 2015 on Rottnest Island. This year's theme was "*Exploring Global Frontiers in Astronomy*" and was attended by 50 astronomy students and 11 invited speakers.

### 3.4 ASA Annual Science Meeting 2015

The ASA Annual Science Meeting is taking place at the Esplanade in Fremantle over 6-10 July 2015. There are around 200 registered participants and the program is extensive, with over 100 presentations (almost a third of which are student presentations), as well as many auxiliary meetings and events.

### 3.5 Support of other events

The ASA supported the attendance of two members, Ivy Wong, (UWA) and Alan Duffy (Swinburne), at the 2015 Science Meets Parliament event coordinated by Science and Technology Australia (STA).

As a cognate society partner of the Australian Institute of Physics, the ASA supported an astronomy session at the 21st Australian Institute of Physics Congress in December 2014. The ASA has endorsed the appointment of Warrick Couch, in his role as President of the AIP, to the STA Board for the next 2 years as the Board member representing the Physical Sciences Cluster.

The community will be aware of the current discussions regarding the future governance of astronomy facilities. The ASA Council stands ready to contribute to the consultations pursued by the Department of Industry and Science review of Australian astronomy governance.

#### 4. ASA Membership

Our membership continues to maintain its high numbers, reflecting the size and strength of our community. As of 30 June 2015 the current total membership is 696 including 240 student members. Our Corporate Members (AAL, AAO, CSIRO Astronomy and Space Science, Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics ANU, Centre for Astrophysics and Supercomputing, Swinburne University of Technology and the University of Sydney Physics Foundation) continue to support the Society.

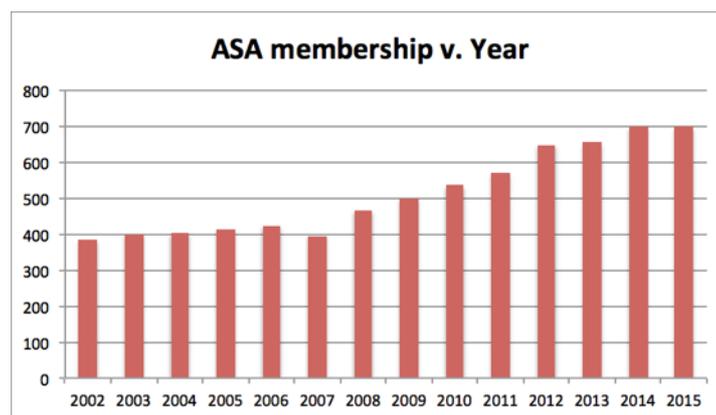


Figure 1: Membership number as a function of time.

#### 5. Honorary Fellow

It is with great pleasure that we announce Council's appointment of Professor Warrick Couch as an Honorary Fellow of the Society. Warrick Couch is the Director of the Australian Astronomical Observatory (AAO), as well as an adjunct professor at the Universities of Sydney and NSW and Swinburne University of Technology. Prior to becoming Director of the AAO, he was the Director of the Centre for Astrophysics and Supercomputing at Swinburne University. Warrick has a distinguished research career in the fields of cosmology and the evolution and clustering of galaxies that spans more than 30 years, having obtained his PhD in Astrophysics at the Australian National University in 1982. He is a joint winner of the 2007 Gruber Prize in Cosmology, the 2015 Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics, and a founding member of the Supernova Cosmology Project whose leader, Saul Perlmutter, jointly won the 2011 Nobel Prize in Physics for the discovery of the accelerating universe. Warrick is also a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science and current President of the Australian Institute of Physics. He is a former President of the ASA, and is a friend and a mentor to many of our members. The Society is proud to have him as an Honorary Fellow.

#### 6. Financial

Information on the Society's finances is available in the Treasurer's Report. I thank Ravi Sood for his efforts as Treasurer. I wish to acknowledge all of those groups and individuals who have made donations to the Foundation for the Advancement of Astronomy (FAA). The FAA is a tax-deductible Foundation that exists to enhance the ASA's efforts to promote Astronomy and related fields in Australia, and to recognise and support excellence in those fields. The purposes of the FAA are broadly defined to allow the support of prizes, scholarships, research and facilities. The FAA now funds all ASA Prizes. In addition, support from the Richard Cole Fund is now available to support ASA activities for students, in particular the ASA/ANITA Summer School in Theoretical Astrophysics and the Astroinformatics School. The Society will be supporting the new Peter McGregor Prize in future years (see Sec. 9 below), as well as progressing the implementation of a mid-career researcher prize. The ASA welcomes suggestions for other initiatives.

## **7. Publications of the ASA (PASA)**

This year saw the transition of the role of Editor in Chief for our Society's journal, Publications of the ASA (PASA), from Bryan Gaensler to Daniel Price. I extend my warmest thanks and appreciation to Bryan for his contributions to the evolution of the journal, through a change in publisher and through numerous refinements and improvements to the running and impact of the journal.

PASA continues to thrive under the leadership of Daniel Price and his editorial colleagues: Beatriz Barbuy, Dawn Erb, Brad Gibson, Alexander Heger, Melanie Johnston-Hollitt and Stephen Serjeant. The PASA International Advisory Board has 16 members who act as public advocates for PASA and to provide strategic advice.

PASA publishes continuously, with no division into individual issues. The current median turnaround times are 3 weeks from submission to first decision, 10 weeks from submission to acceptance (dependent on author response times) and 6 weeks from acceptance to publication. ASA members can sign up to receive an electronic table of contents alert. All papers submitted to PASA are reviewed with plagiarism detection software. Further information is provided in the PASA Report.

## **8. Loss of prominent Society members**

The Society lost several prominent members in the past year: John Greenhill, Jim Caswell, Peter McGregor, and just last week Ray Protheroe.

John Greenhill was a well-known member of staff at the University of Tasmania. His work in the 1970s and 1980s with the University's X-ray astronomy program played an important role in the early days of X-ray astronomy. His subsequent work at Mt Canopus and his efforts in developing the new observatory, which culminated in the opening of the "Greenhill Observatory" by the Governor of Tasmania, provide a valuable and lasting legacy for astronomy in Tasmania.

Jim Caswell was a fixture at the CSIRO. He was a member of the ASA since 1976 and served on the ASA Council between 1980 and 1982. Jim has more than 200 papers in the refereed literature dating back to his first paper in 1965. He made significant contributions to the Australia Telescope National Facility including during the construction of the Compact Array (ATCA) and recently as Project Scientist for the CABB upgrade on the ATCA. Jim's scientific passion was masers and Galactic structure and indeed some 90 of his papers have "maser" in the title. Most recently, he was a leader of the Parkes Methanol Multibeam (MMB) survey and subsequent follow up with ATCA, which discovered hundreds of methanol masers associated with high-mass star forming regions.

Peter McGregor was a long-standing member of staff at RSAA and the ANU. Peter was well known throughout the astronomy community for both his research and his astronomical instrumentation. He was Project Scientist for NIFS, Australia's first instrument for the Gemini 8-metre telescopes, for GSAOI, Australia's second Gemini instrument, as well as GMTIFS, one of the first generation of instruments being developed for the Giant Magellan Telescope. These instruments and the science they enable will remain part of his legacy. After NIFS was destroyed in the 2003 Stromlo bushfires, when it was almost ready for acceptance, Peter oversaw the fabrication of the second version and its commissioning on Gemini North. Peter also played a substantial role in the reconstruction of Mount Stromlo after the fires, and the current Advanced Instrumentation and Technology Centre is largely the result of his vision. The Integration Hall at the AITC was named in his honour.

Ray Protheroe was 62 when he passed away last week, after suffering from illness for a very long time. Ray was an outstanding cosmic ray physicist at Adelaide University working on the highest energy cosmic rays from a theoretical standpoint but also involved in the university's experimental research. He published over 140 refereed papers and his international regard was outstanding. He was the inaugural winner of the Shakti P Duggal Award (the first international prize in cosmic ray physics) in 1985 for a cosmic ray physicist under the age of 35.

## **9. ASA Awards and Prizes**

We are pleased to note that the numbers of female nominees for prizes has increased substantially, following the inclusion of an encouraging statement in the calls for nominations. The percentage of female nominations in recent years is given in the following table.

	2015	2014	2013	2012
<b>Bok</b>	83%	50%	0%	17%
<b>Heisler</b>	40%	33%	25%	20%
<b>Webster</b>	100%	33%	0%	0%

*9.1 2015 Bok Prize for outstanding research in astronomy by an Honours or eligible Masters student at an Australian university.*

Awarded to Shyeh Tjing (Cleo) Loi for her thesis “Waves in the Sky: Probing the Ionosphere with the Murchison Widefield Array”. Cleo completed her honours research at the University of Sydney, supervised by Tara Murphy.

In addition, Sarah Leslie receives an honourable mention for her thesis “A Radio-Optical Study of Resolved Star-Formation in Galaxies from the SAMI Galaxy Survey” completed at the ANU and supervised by Lisa Kewley, Elaine Sadler (USyd) and Julia Bryant (USyd).

*9.2 2015 Charlene Heisler Prize for the best PhD thesis accepted by an Australian university.*

Awarded to Morag Scrimgeour for her thesis “Cosmology with Large-scale Structure and Galaxy Flows” completed at the University of Western Australia and supervised by Lister Staveley-Smith and Tamara Davis (UQ).

In addition, George Angelou receives an honourable mention for his thesis “On the role of doubly-diffusive mixing in low-mass red giant branch stars” completed at Monash University and supervised by John Lattanzio.

*9.3 2015 Louise Webster Prize for outstanding research by a scientist early in their post- doctoral career.*

Awarded to Dr Madusha Gunawardhana from the AAO for the paper “Galaxy and Mass Assembly (GAMA): the star formation rate dependence of the stellar initial mass function” published in MNRAS (2011) 415, 167.

*9.4 2015 Harley Wood Lecture – an annual public lecture in honour of the first President of the Society.*

“The Light Fantastic” by Dr Tanya Hill (Museum Victoria).

*9.5 2014 Annual Science Meeting Student Prizes (from last year’s Annual Scientific Meeting)*

Best student Talk at the 2014 ASM:

Winner:

Emily Petroff (Swinburne/CAASTRO/CSIRO), “The first real-time FRB: multi- wavelength follow-up of a fast radio burst”

Runner up:

Ben McKinley (ANU/CAASTRO), “Modelling of the Spectral Energy Distribution of Fornax A: Leptonic and Hadronic Production of High Energy Emission from the Radio Lobes”

Best Student Posters at the 2014 ASM:

Winner:

Anthea King (UQ/CAASTRO), “AGN as high-redshift standard candle candidates and the role of OzDES”

Runners up (all tied for second):

Claire-Elise Green (UNSW), “New detections of HC5N toward hot cores”

Daniela Opitz (UNSW), “Searching for Binary Y dwarfs with the Gemini GeMS Multi-Conjugate Adaptive Optics system”

George Zhou (ANU), “Characterising exoplanets by their Kepler light curves”

Thanks to the generosity of many Society members and associated institutions, the ASA Council is pleased to announce a new ASA award, the *Peter McGregor Prize for Excellence in Instrumentation*. This award serves to honour the memory of Peter McGregor who was a dedicated scientist and a great leader in astronomical instrumentation development. Most of the pledges necessary to fund this award have been identified, and Council strongly encourages additional donations. We also encourage the membership to donate to support the broader range of ASA prizes.

## 10. Women in Astronomy Chapter (WiA)

<http://asawomeninastronomy.org/>

The aim of the Women in Astronomy Chapter is to raise the profile of women in Australian astronomy. The current AGM Minutes 2015

Chair of the Chapter's Steering committee is Sarah Brough (AAO). The primary goal of the Chapter is to monitor the status of women working in astronomy in Australia and recommend future actions that will improve the environment for all astronomers. Statistics are now available for the following: ASA membership, ASA Council membership, ASA award recipients and the ASA Annual Science Meetings. <http://asawomeninastronomy.org/statistics/>

The Chapter coordinated the Women in Astronomy 2014 Workshop "*We are all made of stars*," held on 28-29 August 2014 at the ANU in Canberra: <http://asawomeninastronomy.org/meetings/wia-workshop-2014/>. The next workshop will be in Brisbane at the Women's College, University of Queensland, 22-23 July 2015: <http://asawomeninastronomy.org/meetings/wia-workshop-2015/>

The Chapter launched the Pleiades Award scheme in 2014, which had a great response with 14 institutions applying. Nine institutions were awarded Bronze Pleiades Awards and two were awarded Silver Pleiades Awards. The Chapter has also recently polled the Society membership about the potential for a change of name and broadening of remit, toward a more comprehensive equity agenda. In the coming months the ASA Council will consider recommendations from the Chapter arising from the outcomes of this process and subsequent discussions among the Chapter members.

## **11. Education and Public Outreach Chapter (EPOC)**

<http://asaepoc.wordpress.com/>

The Mission of EPOC is to advance the level of public awareness of the excitement of astronomy and of the international importance of Australian astronomy, while promoting the teaching of astronomy to students and the public. The current Chair of the EPOC Steering Committee is Rob Hollow (CASS). The new EPOC Steering Committee is currently discussing the role, goals and activities of EPOC.

EPOC produces the popular ASA Factsheets series. These information sheets cover a number of topics of interest to the general public, such solar and lunar eclipses, comets and general astronomy information with an Australian flavour. EPOC had been planning to run a workshop on science communication in early 2015, but this has now been deferred to December 2015.

## **12. Australian National Institute for Theoretical Astrophysics (ANITA)**

<http://anita.edu.au/>

ANITA is a virtual national institute, which aims to ensure that the needs of Australian theoretical astrophysics are represented at a national and international level. The goals of ANITA are to raise the profile of Australian theoretical astrophysics, encourage national collaboration, foster international links, facilitate theoretical astrophysics meetings, and provide input into national policy.

The current Chair of the ANITA Steering Committee is Cathryn Trott (Curtin/ICRAR). ANITA supports the ongoing education of astronomy students, postdocs and staff by hosting a series of monthly online lectures through Google's Hangouts on Air. These lectures cover a wide range of topics: from basic statistics and computational techniques, to advanced specialised subjects and more. ANITA ran the annual ANITA workshop, followed by the Astroinformatics School at Mt Stromlo Observatory, RSAA/ANU, over 9-13 February 2015, attended by 54 people.

## **13. Early Career Research Chapter**

<http://asaecr.smp.uq.edu.au/>

The ASA ECR Chapter aims to support the needs and development of early career astronomers, including students, in Australia. The ECR Chapter strongly encourages student members to join. The priorities of the Chapter are to:

1. Highlight opportunities for professional training and support.
2. Provide training in professional development.
3. Connect members and provide a support network.
4. Advocate for and represent the ECR community.

The current Chair of the Steering Committee is Sarah Martell (UNSW). The ECR Chapter coordinated two writing workshops, one at AAO in September 2014, and one at ANU in November 2014. They have produced reference material including briefing notes for ASA representatives to Science Meets Parliament, and a list of astronomers who have left academia. The Chapter instituted a mentoring program in early 2015, and also coordinates the Speed-Meet-A-Mentor session at the ASA ASM together with the WIA Chapter.

#### 14. Communications (Information flow to members)

The ASA email mailing list remains the primary communication avenue for ASA news. Members can post directly to the list [asa@physics.usyd.edu.au](mailto:asa@physics.usyd.edu.au). The ASA Facebook Page continues to be a valuable avenue for quickly highlighting recent articles, awards and upcoming events. The ASA Events Calendar lists all ASA-sponsored events as well as conferences, workshops and meetings that are open to broad Australian and international participation (see <http://asa.astronomy.org.au/calendar.html>).

#### 15. Progress against 2014-2015 priorities

In addition to the ongoing work of the ASA, the Council had defined the following series of priorities for 2014-2015 (<http://asa.astronomy.org.au/priorities.html>).

1. Continue documenting the early history of the ASA.  
This item is now complete, with the publication of an article by Nick Lomb, titled “How Astronomers Focused the Scope of their Discussions: The Formation of the Astronomical Society of Australia” in Historical Records of Australian Science. Link to the journal is <http://www.publish.csiro.au/?nid=108> and direct link to the paper is <http://www.publish.csiro.au/paper/HR14030.htm>
2. Run a workshop on science communication.  
This has not been completed, but is a priority for EPOC for the coming year, with a workshop currently in planning for December 2015.
3. Survey membership about the timing of the ASM.  
Council surveyed the membership early in the second half of 2014 to assess opinions on holding the ASM in early or late July, alternating, or in another period. The results of the poll were mixed, with equal numbers favouring early and late July, and a moderate fraction comfortable with an alternating arrangement. In consequence Council will recommend that ASM dates alternate between the AVCC common week in early July and a week later in July chosen to avoid the majority of state school holidays. Consideration will still be given to host institutions that bid requesting a specific timing that is necessary for logistical reasons.
4. Consider how to improve support of membership, such as instituting a Mid-Career Researcher prize?  
A mid-career research prize will be initiated by the ASA Council in the coming year, with further details to follow.
5. Consider how to broaden engagement with the amateur or broader community, such as a possible seed funding program?  
A seed funding program was explored by Council and after consideration of potential target groups, practicalities and costs, Council made the decision not to proceed with this initiative at this time.
6. Update biographies on the “Becoming an Astronomer” page.  
A start has been made on this, with several existing profiles updated. See: <http://asa.astronomy.org.au/become.html>. The Council would welcome contributions for current members (especially younger members) and also former members (who current members may know) who have now left astronomy.

#### 16. New Priorities for 2015-2016

Council has discussed a selection of priorities for the coming year, and proposes the following list for the consideration of the Membership.

1. Run a workshop on science communication.
2. Consider whether to continue the history project beyond the formation of the Society.
3. Implementing the Peter McGregor Prize.
4. Strategic planning with the ASA Chapters regarding structures and priorities.
5. Review of student engagement with the ASA, including the cost and ASA support of ASM attendance for students.
6. Review of engagement with the New Zealand professional astronomy community.
7. Conduct a census of Society membership to establish detailed demographic information.
8. Review ASA documents and policy with a view to ensure diversity and inclusion principles.
9. Consider the ASA’s role in providing resources to aid students and supervisors in raising awareness of the broad range of career opportunities for students.

## 17. ASA Council for 2015-2016

Following the Constitutional Amendment passed by the membership in early 2013, the terms of office for Councillors are now two years. This year saw the first round of nominations since then. The Council nominated a selection of potential new Council members and no additional nominations were received from the community. Accordingly, the nominees are elected unopposed. I would like to thank all Councillors for their efforts over the past year, and to give a special thanks to our outgoing Council members, Kate Brooks, Amanda Karakas and Gavin Rowell. I thank Bryan Gaensler as outgoing PASA Editor in Chief for his substantial contributions to the journal and the Society for many years. Daniel Price was appointed in January as the new Editor in Chief following Bryan's departure. I welcome our new Councillors, Naomi McClure-Griffiths, Stuart Wyithe and Chris Power, and I look forward to continuing to work with them in the coming year. Following the resignation of Darren Croton from the Vice-President role in late 2014, Council appointed Virginia Kilborn to the role. I now welcome Virginia Kilborn to the role of President and Duncan Galloway to the role of Vice-President, and wish them the very best for their terms. Nominations were sought from the student membership for a new student representative. Three nominations were initially received and an election was held. The new student representative is Alex Codoreanu, who I welcome to the Council. I would like to thank the outgoing student representative, Emily Petroff, and to recognise the outstanding role she has played in communicating student views to the ASA Council and providing feedback from the Council to the student members.

I am pleased to announce that Council for the following 12 months will be:

Virginia Kilborn	President
Duncan Galloway	Vice-President
Andrew Hopkins	Immediate Past President
John O'Byrne	Secretary
Marc Duldig	Secretary
Ravi Sood	Treasurer
Lee Spittler	Councillor
Cath Trott	Councillor
Naomi McClure Griffiths	Councillor
Stuart Wyithe	Councillor
Chris Power	Councillor
Alex Codoreanu	Student Representative
Daniel Price	(Ex-officio) Chair, PASA Editorial Board
Tanya Hill	(Co-opted) Prizes and Awards Coordinator
Michael Brown	(Co-opted) Media and Outreach Coordinator

I welcome our new Councillors, our new PASA Editorial Board Chair, and our new student representative to the Council.

## 18. Harley Wood School of Astronomy and ASM/AGM 2016

The year 2016 is the 50th anniversary of the ASA's first meeting, held at the University of Sydney. The inaugural meeting was held in the Chemistry building over 30 November to 2 December 1966 and was attended by 130 people. Elections were held for an eleven-member Council and Harley Wood was elected foundation President in recognition of the part he had played in bringing the ASA into being. The foundation council comprised: Vice-Presidents: Gascoigne, Wild; Secretaries: Sheridan, Smerd; Treasurer: Shobbrook; Members of the Council: Carver, Eggin, Harris, Giovanelli, Mugglestone.

In 2016 it will be 11 years since the University of Sydney previously hosted the ASA (see the history at <http://asa.astronomy.org.au/asm.html>). The ASM/AGM will be held in the new Australian Institute for Nanoscience at the University of Sydney. The HWSA will be held at the Tops Conference Centre. The Tops is located in Stanwell Tops, approximately an hour's drive south from the centre of Sydney, and situated in a quiet location near bushland and the coast.

The ASA Council looks forward to what promises to be an exciting and significant event in the life of the Society. We are grateful to the team at Sydney for coordinating and hosting this major activity.

## 19. Closing remarks

I close with thanks to the organisers of our very successful 2015 Harley Wood School of Astronomy and Annual Science Meeting, and the many auxiliary events and meetings that have been attached to the week. A big thank you to Cath Trott and Andrew Walsh, and to the dedicated teams on the Scientific Organising Committees and especially to the Local Organising Committees, for both events.

## Discussion

The President presented the list of possible Council priorities for the coming year and then opened the meeting for comment. Warrick Couch commented on retention of student members and asked if the Society had ever looked at what students did if they moved beyond astronomy.

The President noted that, apart from several initiatives that were happening, his first priority was the census of Society membership to establish the demographic profile of the membership.

Secretary, John O'Byrne, noted that the news had just come through that Professor Harry Messel had died at he age of 93. He noted that Professor Messel had been a major influence in the growth of astronomy at the University of Sydney in the late 1950s and 1960s with his support of the construction of the Mills Cross radio telescope and the Narrabri Stellar Intensity Interferometer. He also had a major impact on Science education in Australia, most obviously through the well known blue science books.

Motion that the President's report be accepted.

**Colless/Brooks  
Carried**

## 5. Treasurer's Report and presentation of accounts

The Treasurer, Ravi Sood, presented a summary of a printed report for the Society's financial year ending 31 March 2015.

The Society's finances continued to be on a solid foundation.

There are about 695 active members. Of these active members 65% are financial as of June 2015. There was still around \$35k of subs to be collected for 2015. There had been about \$79k in subs invoiced to date (excluding GST).

This year the Foundation for the Advancement in Astronomy (FAA) had received about \$4.1k in donations from members. There was a further anonymous donation of \$30k to the FAA.

Some of the existing ASA and FAA bank accounts were consolidated to take advantage of higher interest rates and lower bank charges, where applicable.

Account balances at 31/3/15 were:

<b>ASA accounts</b>		<b>FAA accounts</b>	
ASA chq 062 166 0090 2732	49,310.53	FAA Chq 065004 10222301	35,866.77
ASA online business 2284 1028 1061	32,992.73	FAA online 2284 1028 7949	11,873.34
Term Deposit 06 2284 50140052	140,257.73	Term deposit 06 2284 50140060	0
Term Deposit 06 2284 50130794	0	Term deposit 06 5004 50120254	0
		3 year term deposit 06 2210 50131569	202,917.41
<b>Total</b>	<b>222,560.99</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>250,654.52</b>

The Foundation for the Advancement of Astronomy (FAA) received donations of \$ 34,106, dominated by a single anonymous donation of \$30,000.

The allocation of FAA funds among the various nominal funds at 31/3/15 was:

	<b>David Allen Prize</b>	<b>Charlene Heisler Prize</b>	<b>Louise Webster Prize</b>	<b>No Preference[1]</b>	<b>Bok Prize</b>	<b>Page Medal</b>	<b>Gascoigne Fund[2]</b>	<b>Harley Wood Fund[3]</b>	<b>Richard Cole Fund[4]</b>
Total	31,250	30,436	19,367	17,231	11,565	1,568	24,648	46,088	35,941

[1] No preference will be allocated to prizes/funds to make them self-sustaining.

[2] to support the Ellery lectureship.

[3] to support student travel to the HWSA.

[4] to support student workshops.

The basic table of membership rates proposed was changed for 2016, in line a new policy of increasing rates approximately in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Discounted rate</u>	<u>Full rate</u>
Honorary Fellows	no cost	no cost
Fellows	\$167	\$200
Full members	\$135	\$168
Student/Retirees/Associates	\$58	\$80
Associate Societies		\$112
Corporate members		\$585

The discounts applied to most grades for payment by the due date. Overseas members paid rates less GST.

It was noted that the audited accounts were not yet available and these would need to be presented at a later date.

Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report and the new Fee structure.

**Spitler/Codoreanu**  
**Carried**

## **6. Election of Auditor**

The Treasurer recommended the continued appointment of Wong and Mayes as Auditor for 2015-2016.

It was noted that there was a suggestion last year to periodically change the auditor as a matter of good governance, however with the recent change in Treasurer it was felt that it was not yet the time to make an extra change.

Motion that Wong and Mayes be appointed as Auditor for 2014-2015.

**O'Byrne/Couch**  
**Carried**

## **7. Editorial Board Report**

The PASA report was presented by Daniel Price, the new Editor-in-Chief and Chair of the Editorial Board. The report began by once again encouraging members to publish in PASA, emphasising the advantages of publishing in PASA – electronic only, fast publication, free to authors with a 'moving paywall' model, high standards with rigorous refereeing and plagiarism checking, a solid ISI impact factor of 2.65 and an experienced and prestigious publisher in Cambridge University Press (CUP).

Highlights of 2014/2015 included a 24 day average turnaround time between submission and first decision, a steady stream of high quality Murchison Widefield Array (MWA) papers, plus the Dawes reviews and high quality special issues (which are *not* conference proceedings, but can be inspired by conference).

The Dawes Review list was expanding to now include:

- "Kinematic studies of galaxy assembly across cosmic time" by Karl Glazebrook (2013)
- "Nucleosynthesis and stellar yields of low and intermediate-mass stars" by Amanda Karakas & John Lattanzio (2014)
- "The atmospheres of extrasolar planets and brown dwarfs" by Jeremy Bailey (2014)
- "Spiral structure in disk galaxies" by Dobbs & Baba (2014)
- "Australian Aboriginal Astronomy" by Norris (2015, in prep)
- "The progenitors of Type Ia Supernovae" by Podsiadlowski (2015, in prep)
- "Binaries across the mass spectrum" by De Marco (2016, in prep)

Recent and forthcoming special issues include:

- Murchison Widefield Array
- Supernovae in the local universe
- Galactic Bulge
- High redshift galaxies
- Gravitational waves

The 13 members of the PASA International Advisory Board members were listed, as were several new initiatives including a plan to trial "data curation" (i.e. publish and archive raw data alongside a paper in a PASA datastore) in partnership with gSTAR Data Management and Collaboration Platform.

Motion to accept the PASA Report.

**Pearce/Wayth**

**8. Any other business**

Finally the meeting acknowledged the Andrew Hopkins' work over two years as President of the Society

The meeting was closed at 12.10 pm by the outgoing President.