



ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

Incorporated in the ACT

Minutes of the 33rd Annual General Meeting held on Sunday July 11 1999 at the University of Western Sydney, Nepean.

The Meeting was opened at 11:36 am with the President in the Chair and approximately 30 members of all grades in attendance.

1. Apologies

L.R. Allen, R.N. Manchester, W.B. McAdam, J.W. O'Byrne, E.M. Sadler.

2. Minutes of the 32nd Annual General Meeting

Motion that the minutes of the 32nd Annual General Meeting be accepted as presented.

**Mould/Dawson
Carried**

3. Business arising from the Minutes

None.

4. President's Report

A written report was distributed to members before the meeting. The President, Roger Clay, outlined the contents of that report.

The President opened his report by noting that the 1999 Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) was the second joint meeting with the Royal Astronomical Society of New Zealand (RASNZ). The ASM led into the meeting "Astronomy Education for the Next Millennium", also hosted by the Nepean Centre for Astronomy.

The Harley Wood School had been held in Katoomba immediately before the Scientific Meeting. The President reported that more than 40 students had attended a successful School, although Council had expressed some concern about the amount of free time and that speakers had drifted away from the advertised theme.

Craig Smith had reached the end of his time on the Council and the President expressed his gratitude for Craig's service. He also thanked Elaine Sadler for her achievements during her terms as Vice President, President and, most recently, Immediate Past President. This meeting also marked the end of Doug Milne's term as Treasurer of the ASA. The President expressed the Society's thanks for Doug's long service and welcomed Bruce Dawson as his successor.

The 1999 Bok Prize (for an undergraduate project completed in 1998) was awarded to Michael Murphy from the University of New South Wales, who also won the prize for best student poster at the ASM. Special lectures presented during the meeting were the Ellery Lecture, by Professor John Storey, and the Harley Wood Lecture, by the Reverend Robert Evens. An Honorary Fellowship was awarded to Dr Marc Duldig, one of the current Secretaries of the Society. The President described Marc's service on Council since 1985, with most of that time as Secretary.

The President announced that the 2000 Scientific Meeting was to be held in Hobart, with the expected dates of 2 to 6 July.

The President described the continuing success and high standards of the *Publications of the Astronomical Society of Australia* (PASA). He noted that the contract with CSIRO Publishing was about to be renewed. He also described changes to the Editorial Board which had broadened its international representation. PASA consumed a sizeable proportion of the members' fees and so the Society needed to be sure PASA was serving the members requirements. To this end, the Editor had instigated a survey of members to assess those requirements.

The next item in the report described the preparations for the IAU2003 General Assembly in Sydney. The National Organising Committee (NOC) had requested the Society to act as the legally responsible body for the event. The ASA was one of the few appropriate organisations, although a wide range of Australian astronomical institutions had agreed to support the General Assembly by contributing to a substantial float. After considerable discussion, Council had agreed that the ASA would act as the legally responsible body subject to several conditions:

- the Society was to be represented on the NOC,
- the meeting was to be insured against losses caused by events beyond the Committee's control,
- the Society was to be involved in monitoring cash flow, and
- the Society should receive 10% of any profit.

The President moved on to note the continuing activity of the Education Sub-committee, with Alan Vaughan as chair and Nick Lomb as deputy Chair. The President also thanked Bob Duncan for his work over many years in preparing the ASA Newsletter. Bob had retired as newsletter Editor and Brad Carter had taken over. More urgent communications were conveyed by the Society's Web pages and email exploder.

The Council had decided to increase the amount of support for students to attend overseas conferences from \$400 to \$500. Seven students had been supported in the first grant round of the year, but Council had decided to tighten the requirements slightly. In future, postgraduate students would not generally be supported in their first year of study and they would need to have been members of the Society for at least 6 months before the application deadline.

Other items were briefly mentioned in the report, including the Society's continuing membership of the Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies (FASTS). The Society's representative on the Antarctic Science Advisory Committee (ASAC) was Michael Burton. John Storey was also involved, having prepared a 5 year strategic plan for astronomy to be included with all other Antarctic science plans. The Society's nominee on the Standards Australia Committee for Obtrusive Lighting had recently changed to Reg Wilson, a lighting engineer with strong interests and experience in the area.

Finally, the President noted with regret the death of Olin Eggen, a Foundation Council member from 1966, Vice-President in 1969-70, and president of the Society from May 1971 to May 1973.

Motion that the President's report be accepted.

Milne/C. Smith
Carried

5. Treasurer's Report

Doug Milne, presented a summary of his final written report and balance sheet as Treasurer. Membership of the Society was listed as 376, 5 higher than at the same time in 1998. This number consisted of 72 Fellows, 223 members, 66 Students, 9 Associates and 6 Corporate members. 81 members were reported as unfinancial at the end March 1998, the end of the Society's 1997/98 financial year. This was a considerably higher number than at the corresponding time in the previous year although most of these were expected to eventually pay. Late payment results in a

temporary shortfall of funds which prompted the introduction in 1998 of an option to automatically pay fees each year. 25 members took this option, but all were prompt payers and not the people the plan was designed to attract. Council had decided to discontinue this option.

The 1998-99 financial year showed a deficit of \$11,538, much greater than the loss projected for the year. Much of this was due to payments for two PASA volumes in the one year, but this was partially balanced by unexpected returns of over \$6500 from two previous Scientific Meetings. A generous surplus was projected for the year 1999-2000, with membership fees remaining the same:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Annual Cost</u>
Honorary Fellows	no cost
Fellows	\$110
Full members	\$90
Student, Associate or Retired members	\$40
Associate Societies	\$80
Corporate members	\$300

Discounts \$5, with an additional ~10% discount if also a member of the AIP, if paid by 28/2/99.

The Treasurer acknowledged the special support the Society had received from Betty Siegman in assisting him over the last 12 years. The meeting expressed its thanks to Betty with applause.

Motion that the Treasurer's Report be accepted.

**Humble/Burton
Carried**

The President thanked Doug Milne for his many years of service as Treasurer and presented him with a gift of appreciation from the Society.

6. Election of Auditor

The Treasurer recommended that the Auditor of the South Australian Branch of the Australian Institute of Physics be appointed as Auditor, as a result of the new Treasurer's location in Adelaide.

**Dawson/Milne
Carried**

7. Editor's Report

The Editor, Michelle Storey, had circulated her report and summarised it for the meeting. She encouraged submission of papers from the Astronomy Education Meeting before the deadline of August 15. Members were also encouraged to respond to the survey seeking their views on PASA. She then thanked outgoing members of the Editorial Board, Dick Hunstead and Roger Clay, and welcomed Mike Bessell and Gordon Robertson in their place.

The Editor presented some statistics on the usage of electronic-PASA, indicating 220 hits per month on the home page, although this did not include links from the Astrophysics Data Service (ADS) which went straight to the paper requested.

Motion that the Editor's Report be accepted.

**Mould/Greenhill
Carried**

8. ASM/AGM and Harley Wood School for 2000

As noted in the President's report, it was announced that the 2000 Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) and Harley Wood School would be held in Tasmania. The ASM was expected to run from 2 to 6 July. John Humble and Marc Duldig were to be the main organisers.

9. Any other business

The President informed the meeting of the death of 20 astronomers and technicians at IRAM due to a gondola failure on the way to the observatory. The meeting agreed to the Council resolution to write a letter of condolence on behalf of the Society and its members.

The Society was near to completing the process for establishing the "Foundation for the Advancement of Astronomy" and had just been notified by the tax office that the Foundation had been granted tax exempt status and tax deductibility for donations. This meant that funds could soon be accepted for the David Allen Prize and the Ellery Lecture. The President expressed his hope that members would be generous in their financial support of these two activities.

It was suggested that a letter be sent to Ken Freeman congratulating him on his appointment as a Fellow of the Royal Society and his award of the American Astronomical Society Heineman Prize this year.

10. Election of the Council for 1999-2000

As usual, the outgoing Council had made nominations for each position on the Council for 1999-2000. Since there were no further nominations from the membership, no ballot was necessary. The new President, Professor Michael Bessell, took the chair. He thanked Roger Clay for his excellent job as President for the previous two years. He also expressed the Society's thanks to Heath Jones, who had acted as student representative on the Council.

The Council for 1999-2000 consisted of the following members:

President:	Prof. Michael Bessell
Vice President	Dr Richard Manchester
Treasurer	Dr Bruce Dawson
Secretaries	Dr Marc Duldig Dr John O'Byrne
Councillors	Dr Michael Burton Dr Bradley Carter Dr Jessica Chapman Dr John Lattanzio Dr Peter Cottrell

Dr Roger Clay was *ex-officio* member as Immediate Past President. Dr Roy Allen remained as Donovan Trust Representative and Dr Michelle Storey continued as Editor. Michelle Buxton was to be the new student representative on the Council.

The meeting was closed at 12:29 pm by the new President.