

# ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

## MINUTES of the THIRTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held in the Hayden Allen Theatre, Australian

National University, Canberra on 8 May 1979

The meeting began at 1350 with the President in the Chair.

1. Apologies

Prof. R.H. Brown, Drs Waterworth, McCulloch and McGee

2. Minutes

On the motion of Little/Tango the Minutes of the Twelfth Annual General Meeting were confirmed and accepted.

3. Business arising from the Minutes

The President announced that the Berenice-Page medal was not awarded this year.

4. Report of Council

Copies of the report were distributed to members before the meeting:

The twenty-fourth meeting of the Council was held on 16 May 1978 at Coonabarabran. A meeting of the Council executive was held on 15 November 1978. Apart from this, Council business was conducted by telephone or mail.

There are now 251 members, of whom 206 are Full members, one a Life Member, 39 are Students or Retired members and 5 are Corporate members.

A postal ballot was held during the year to change Article 6 of the Constitution to allow the election of Australians to Honorary Membership of the Society. 68 votes were received, 61 approved the change, 6 were opposed and one was too late.

A winter school was arranged at Mount Stromlo Observatory to be held immediately following the 1979 AGM. The Society provided \$500 towards the expenses of this meeting and the Donovan Trust offered a further \$350 for the same purpose. The Australian National University organized the School and provided many facilities. About 21 interstate students and 20 ANU students are to attend this School.

The Director of the Mount Stromlo Observatory has expressed his willingness to organize a second "Beach Meeting", this time on the shores of the Cotter River, in January 1980 if there is sufficient interest amongst members.

The Society assisted with publicity for the IAU Regional meeting held in New Zealand in December 1978. The Proceedings of this Conference have not yet been published.

The cost of the Proceedings of the ASA has increased sharply and it was decided to increase the price of the Proceedings for non-members from \$6 to \$10 per copy. In order to encourage financial membership of those who regularly attend meetings, while remaining non-members, it was decided that non-members can in future deliver only one paper at ASA meetings.

On a brighter note we can report a gift of \$500 towards the present AGM from Digital Equipment (Australia) Pty Limited. We are grateful to the Company and its Canberra Manager, Mr Blunden Butt, for this very welcome donation.

The Twelfth Annual General Meeting was held in Coonabarabran during 16-19 May 1978. The attendance exceeded 120. At the meeting, which was generally agreed to be one of the best ever held, eight invited papers and 46 other papers were given. One public evening lecture was given and a half-day visit to Siding Spring Observatory was attended by most participants. The Society is most grateful to the large number of people who organized this most successful meeting.

On the motion of Goss/Gascoigne the report of the Twelfth Council was accepted unanimously.

The President then referred to the recent death of two members of the Society, Dr S.F. Smerd and Dr L.J. Gleeson. Members stood in silence for a few moments in memory of their late colleagues and friends.

#### 5. Reports of the Auditor and Treasurer

Copies of the Reports were distributed to Members before the Meeting.

Speaking on the reports the Treasurer noted that the reports covered the first complete financial year (1/1/78 - 31/12/78) since the Society's financial year was changed to a calendar year. The substantial deficit in the 1976/77 period has been offset by the surplus obtained this year (\$4917.59) yielding a nett surplus of \$1554.72.

By far the greatest expense is the publication of the Proceedings. This year the cost was \$4444.75 (including postage) after taking into account the Commonwealth "book subsidy" and the contribution from CSIRO for their special colour pages. The 1978 AGM account had a surplus of income over expenditure of \$384.56 after making a substantial donation to the Saint Lawrence School, for the use of the buildings.

The financial state of the Society at 31 December 1978 was a balance of \$8001.88. In addition the Society holds a number of back issues of the Proceedings with a face value of \$9006. It is unlikely that these would realize more than a few hundred dollars and it is proposed to sell off sets of back issues for the small charge of \$20 per set.

The increase in Society subscription charges introduced this year is likely to yield a surplus of income over the cost of producing the Proceedings of about \$2000; there seems no necessity to increase fees again until 1981.

The Treasurer concluded by thanking the Auditor, Mr J. Clark, and the Subscription Manager and Treasurer's Helper for their efforts.

On the motion of McAdam/Robertson the Treasurer's and Auditor's reports were accepted unanimously.

## 6. Editor's Report

Dr Whiteoak reported on behalf of the Editor. He reminded members that figures should be submitted ready for direct publication, and of exactly the size at which they are to be printed. Manuscripts for the Proceedings must be submitted by the end of May.

The Editor's report was accepted unanimously.

7. Election of Auditor

On the motion of Milne/Sheridan, Mr J. Clark was elected as Auditor unanimously.

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

## (a) Winter School

At the request of the President, Mr P. Quinn gave details of the Winter School to be held from 11 May for six days. Nine visiting lecturers plus staff from Mount Stromlo Observatory would be covering three main topics (i) Evolution of the Galaxy; (ii) Astronomical Techniques; and (iii) Uncondensed Matter. Fiftyone students will attend (21 from interstate). The format would be based on lectures followed by discussion and would be as interactive as possible. It was possible that transcript of the lectures would be produced.

Mathewson added that the idea of a School in Astronomy would die without enthusiastic support from the Universities and continued support from the Society. Allen stated that Council had resolved to continue support for the School by allocating an amount equal to the subscriptions of the Corporate Members. The President added that the Society should strive for more corporate members, but that some members of Council were opposed to any direct commercial involvement in the Winter School.

There then followed a lengthy and lively discussion on the pros and cons of commercial sponsorship of the School. The feeling of the meeting was that it was unrealistic to reject the idea of sponsorship, but it was essential to secure continued support for the School. The possibility of commercial sponsorship raised the question of the title of the School. The President stated that Council had resolved to name the school the Australian School of Astronomy. The title did not include the Society's name as the Society was not providing the major part of the cost of running the school in 1979.

Out of the discussion there emerged three motions:

(i) That the Society establish a separate fund to receive donations for the support of the School (Jauncey/Mathewson). The motion was passed unanimously.

(ii) That the Society approach commercial organizations for funds to support the School in the hope that this would be the major way of financing the School (Dopita/Robertson). The motion was passed on a majority vote.

(iii) That the School be named the Astronomical Society of Australia Winter School in Astronomy. The motion was passed with one dissenting vote.

(b) Cotter River "Beach Meeting"

Mathewson said he was willing to organize an informal meeting of the Society by the Cotter River; the suggested date was January 1980. After a show of hands revealed a lack of any great enthusiasm, the meeting agreed with the suggestion of the President to postpone the idea for a year.

(c) Any other business

(i) IAU General Assembly Montreal

Robinson asked for a list of names of members attending the IAU General Assembly in order to coordinate the Australian participation.

(ii) National Committee for Astronomy

Gascoigne explained the function of this standing committee of the Academy. In view of the large number of committees (which he listed on the blackboard) which already dealt with astronomical matters, he had some doubts about the Academy's wish to expand the role of the National Committee, but he invited suggestions from members.

9. Election of the Thirteenth Council

As there were no nominations for positions on the Council except those put forward by the Twelfth Council, the following were declared elected to the Thirteenth Council:

President	Prof. D.S. Mathewson	Australian National University
Vice President	Dr D.C. Morton	Anglo-Australian Observatory
Secretaries	Dr L.R. Allen Dr M.S. Bessell	University of Sydney Mount Stromlo Observatory
Treasurer	Dr D.K. Milne	CSIRO Division of Radiophysics
Councillors	Dr W.G. Elford Dr A.R. Hyland Dr P.M. McCulloch Dr B.J. O'Mara Dr A.J.R. Prentice	University of Adelaide Australian National Uni. University of Tasmania University of Queensland Monash University

The immediate past-president, Professor W.N. Christiansen and the Editor, Dr R.X. McGee are ex-officio members of the Council.

The meeting closed at  
1505

NOTE

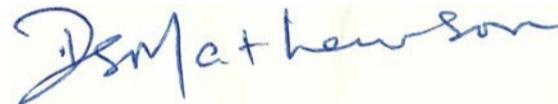
At the conclusion of the conference proceedings on 10 May, and in response to strong representations from some members of the Society, a meeting was held to discuss the problem of travel and subsistence funds.

Members of the Society who had been allocated observing time by the Time Allocation Committees of National Facilities had encountered severe difficulties in funding the necessary travel costs. One problem was concerned with the timing of applications to Grant Authorities and the decisions of the Time Allocation Committees.

At the end of the discussion the President (Professor Mathewson) proposed that representation be made to the Minister for Science and the Environment, for the automatic funding of the travel costs of astronomers who have been allocated observing time on a National Facility.

The proposal received the unanimous support of the meeting.

L.R. Allen  
Secretary

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "D. Mathewson", is written on a light yellow rectangular background.