

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

MINUTES of the FOURTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of the ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

held in the Physics Department, University of Tasmania
on 14 May 1980 at 11.20am

1. Apologies A.R..Hyland, P.M. McCulloch, R.X. McGee, B.J. O Mara,
A.A. Page, A.J.R. Prentice
2. Minutes

After correcting the misprint on page 2, the minutes of the 13th AGM were adopted unanimously on the motion of Christiansen/Waterworth.
3. Business arising from the Minutes
 - (a) Travel funds for observing at National Facilities

The President referred to the resolution carried at the 13th AGM but noted that there were as yet no National Facilities. As the AAO was "bi-national" special arrangements will have to be made which will not complicate the present financial arrangements with the SRC. Council had endorsed the resolution of the AAC for adequate funding for observers using National Facilities. In the discussion that followed it was agreed that the Society should make its own submissions and that a detailed recommendation be prepared for the establishment of a funding authority for travel and subsistence for workers in all branches of science who were required to use national or international facilities.
 - (b) Winter School

The President reported the great success of the 1979 Winter School which had an attendance of 40 students and was a great contribution from the Society to young astronomers.
4. Report of Council
 - (a) The President congratulated the following members of the Society on the award of honours for distinguished contributions to astronomy:

Prof. W.N. Christiansen	Hon. D.Sc. Eng. University of Sydney
Dr Paul Wild	Hale Prize American Astronomical Society
Dr John Norris	Pawsey Medal Australian Institute of Physics
Dr John Bolton	Foreign Associate US National Academy of Sciences
 - (b) Council had deliberated for some time on various proposals to extend the scope and interest of the Proceedings. While the President was in favour of the introduction of Annual Reports from all astronomical research groups, other members of Council were satisfied with the present scope given to the Editor to include items other than papers given at the AGM. Council had resolved to endorse the Editor's

statement of compromise in which he would accept reports from institutions.

(c) Winter School

A Winter School in Astronomy would be held following the AGM. The President thanked the University of Tasmania for the invitation to hold the School in Hobart. The University of Tasmania, CSIRO Division of Radiophysics and the Australian National University, and the Society had each contributed \$500 towards the expenses of the Winter School.

(d) ATAC Delegates

Dr L.F. Smith has been appointed as the Society's delegate to ATAC and Professor K.N.R. Taylor as alternative delegate.

5. Report of the Treasurer and Auditor

A copy of the report was distributed to Members before the meeting. In commenting on the report the Treasurer referred to the stated loss for the last financial year which was caused by writing off the nominal value of the Society's stock of back issues of the Proceedings. In real terms the Society had an improved cash surplus (\$6267) this year, but will soon face substantial bills from the printer.

The Society donated \$500 to the Winter School this year and a sum of \$1000 has been allocated for the 1981 Winter School.

The membership has increased from 250 in 1979 to 263, but a substantial number are still reluctant to pay their subscriptions promptly when they fall due in January.

In order to maintain the healthy state of the Society's finances a motion (Milne/Allen) was put to the meeting

That the subscription fee to the Society be raised to \$25 for Members, \$10 for retired Members and Students, and \$15 for subscribers.

The motion was passed unanimously.

In proposing the acceptance of the Report the President expressed the thanks of the Society to the Treasurer (D.K. Milne) and the Subscription Manager (J. Jones) which was approved by acclamation.

6. Editor's Report

A copy of the report was distributed to Members before the meeting.

In his written Report the Editor noted the completion of Volume 5 of the Proceedings with the publication of 37 papers given at the 1979 AGM. Also included was the first of "Contributions to the History of Astronomy in Australia", which was an article on John Tebbutt and astronomy at the Windsor Observatory.

The Editor expressed his concern at the comments on the quality of published papers. The journal publishes the proceedings of the meeting of the Society, and has about 280 overseas subscribers.

On the motion of Bessell/Milne the Editor's report was accepted unanimously.

7. Election of Auditor

On the motion of Milne/Allen, J. Clarke was elected unanimously as Auditor for 1980.

8. General Business

(a) The Proceedings

Referring to the President's report, Giovanelli said that a good case had been made for the publication of annual reports, but the important point of speedy publication of papers and reports was not guaranteed with only one publication per year, and the tremendous amount of work involved. In reply to a question from Fenton, Morton said he had no objection to annual reports, but some reservations because of cost. Their inclusion would not alone increase overseas readership, whereas there were other items, e.g. review papers, instrumentation reports, etc. which could make the journal more attractive.

Christiansen emphasized that annual reports must be prepared properly. He was in favour of the retention of small national journals which published without page costs and gave opportunity to young astronomers. The President replied that annual reports could be prepared quickly and that young astronomers should face the question of publication realistically from the start.

Roberts spoke against the publication of abstracts, and raised the possibility of airmail distribution. Jones replied that the cost was too high.

Melrose stressed that the Proceedings catered for small research groups and young astronomers and should continue. He thought publication of papers read at meetings helped to maintain the standard. Whiteoak spoke against abstracts. As Assistant Editor he reminded Members of the unavoidable delays in preparing the journal, especially when papers were refereed to improve the quality. McAdam was against annual reports, as the work was covered by papers in the Proceedings. He supported occasional reports in periods of rapid developments. Jauncey and Freeman both spoke against abstracts and in favour of annual reports.

After further discussion the following motion was put to the meeting (Freeman/Giovanelli):

That the Society invites each institution which carries out astronomical research in Australia to provide an annual report for inclusion in the Proceedings

The motion was carried on a show of hands, with three dissenting votes.

After the vote the Vice-President (Morton) reiterated Council's wish to broaden the scope of the Proceedings and the President in proposing a vote of thanks to the Editor, stated that the discussion in no way was to be interpreted as a criticism of the present editorial policy.

(b) Annual General Meeting 1981

Because of a clash with ANZAAS the 1981 AGM would not be held in Brisbane. Instead the Council has accepted the invitation of the University of Wollongong and the Mayor of Wollongong to hold the 1981 AGM in Wollongong.

(c) Winter School 1981

This would be held in the University of Wollongong. Council has resolved to allocate \$1000 towards the expenses of the School.

In reply to a question from Wright as to the main topic of the 1981 School, the President said it was the policy to enquire of the students before making this decision.

(d) Post-Graduate Scholarships

In an earlier discussion on government support for scientific research in Australia, McAdam spoke of the inadequate financial situation of post-graduate scholarships, which were now below the accepted "poverty line". A motion was put to the meeting (McAdam/Bessell):

That the Society seeks an increase in the level of remuneration for Post-Graduate Scholars, but emphasises that such an increase should not lead to a reduction in the number of Post-Graduate awards. The motion was CARRIED unanimously

9. Election of 14th Council

The Scrutineers (Melrose and Waterworth) declared the result of the ballot held to elect the 14th Council as follows:

President	Professor D.S. Mathewson
Vice President	Dr D.C. Morton
Secretaries	Dr L.R. Allen Dr M.S. Bessell
Treasurer	Mr R.T. Stewart
Councillors	Dr J.L. Caswell D P M. McCulloch Dr B.J. O'Mara Dr A.J.R. Prentice Professor K.N.R. Taylor

The meeting closed at 12.55pm.

D S Mathewson