



ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

Incorporated in the ACT

Minutes of the 28th Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday July 13 1994 at the Copeland Lecture Theatre, Australian National University

The Meeting was opened at 1:36 pm with the President in the Chair.

1. Apologies

K.B. Fenton, D. Allen, L.R. Allen, R. Sood

2. Minutes of the 27th Annual General Meeting

Motion that the minutes of the 27th Annual General Meeting be accepted as presented.

**Page/Miller
Carried**

3. Business arising from the Minutes

None.

4. President's Report

A written report was distributed to members before the meeting. The President presented an overview of the contents of that report.

The President began by reporting that the Society was assisting with the Discipline Review of Astronomy. An important consideration for that review was the offer for membership of ESO. The President showed the submission to the government concerning ESO membership, whose production had been sponsored in part by the Society. Copies were available to members at the meeting. The Director General of ESO, Professor Riccardo Giacconi, had visited Australia to discuss the offer and visited a wide range of Australian institutions.

Bob Duncan, Editor of the Society's Newsletter, had recently retired, but agreed to continue his editorial duties. The President acknowledged the difficulties of producing the Newsletter and thanked Bob for his efforts.

As part of an effort to extend communication with the membership beyond the biannual Newsletter, the Society had increased its use of electronic mail. Minutes of the Large Telescope Working Party and the Antarctic Astronomy Working Party were both distributed by email.

The Society established an Education Subcommittee during the year, with David Allen as chair initially, and subsequently John Dawe. The subcommittee requested permission to co-opt non-members to assist its efforts since amateurs and other educators play an important role in astronomy education. The importance of people who currently do not satisfy the requirements for membership has led to a discussion about revising the grades of membership. A new grade for astronomy educators in particular is under consideration. Council will report to the Society on this matter next year.

Closer cooperation between the professional and amateur communities was the theme of the National Australian Convention for Amateur Astronomers (NACAA) at Mount Stromlo Observatory which was attended by several Society members. The President acknowledged the

useful work done by amateurs and, in particular, by Paul Camilleri who was awarded the Berenice Page medal for his discoveries of novae and Mira variables.

The 1994 Bok Prize was awarded to Arthur Street of Sydney University. Arthur was presented with his prize several weeks before the meeting since he left for his PhD study at Cal. Tech. before the General Meeting. Other distinctions awarded by the Society were Honorary Life Membership to Professor Don Mathewson, a former President and Ellery Lecturer, and the Harley Wood Lectureship to Professor Jeremy Mould from Mount Stromlo Observatory.

The President announced a new program for the support of students attending overseas conferences. Guidelines were announced, with a closing date for the first round of applications at the end of September. Another new initiative was an offer to student members of the society to nominate representatives to attend Council meetings as observers.

The President reported that the Society had entered into a 2 year contract with CSIRO Information Services for the publication of the Proceedings and the first issue (Vol.11 No.1) had recently appeared. He asked for feedback from the membership on the results of this change as part of a more general plea to keep the Council informed of the needs and wishes of the Society membership.

The President informed the meeting of new By-Laws adopted by the Council concerned with the role of the Editorial Board.

The President's report concluded with a personal comment about the contributions of the Immediate Past President, David Allen, who was very ill.

Motion that the President's report be accepted.

**Duldig/Caswell
Carried**

5. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer gave a summary of the written report and balance sheet which had been distributed to the meeting. The report covered a 15 month period instead of the usual 12 to allow for the change in the financial year required by Incorporation of the Society. Membership of the Society was listed as 312 at the close of the financial year, although it had risen to around 330 by the time of the meeting as a result of an influx of student members. 56 members were reported as unfinancial. Unfinancial members do not receive Society publications.

Although the Society had a record income of \$32,000 in 1993, the 1993-94 year resulted in a loss of almost \$9,000. This was expected and resulted from publishing expenses, some deferred from 1992. However, estimates for the current financial year predict a modest growth of ~\$6,000. As a result, the Treasurer recommended that fees and discounts remain unchanged - i.e.:

Full members	\$80
Retired or Student members	\$35
Corporate members	\$300

The Treasurer acknowledged donations from John Bolton, Don Morton and John Luck, and also the continuing assistance of Betty Siegman. There was some discussion of points in the Treasurer's report, and also the question of tax deductible status for the society, which the President is to investigate further.

Motion that the Treasurer's Report be accepted, including his recommendations that fees and discounts remain unchanged for 1994-5.

**Humble/Crawford
Carried**

6. Election of Auditor

The Treasurer reported that the previous Auditor, Mr John Ewing, would not be available for the 1994-95 audit. He recommended that Mr John McCauley be appointed auditor.

Motion that Mr John McCauley being appointed as Auditor for 1994-95 at an honorarium of \$300.

**Hunstead/Siegman
Carried**

7. Editor's Report

In the absence of the Editor, the President gave a summary of the written report which had been distributed to the meeting. The report gave the status of the next issues of the Proceedings. Volume 11 No.1 was the first issue with a new look as a result of the CSIRO Information Services taking over publication. Volume 11 No.2 was distributed around the time of the meeting, together with an Index of volumes 1 to 10 compiled by Betty Siegman and Doug Milne.

The President thanked Ravi Sood for his service as Editor but noted that the Council was looking for a new Editor. Also, a new Editorial Board was to be installed, consisting of:

Roger Clay
Michael Dopita
Peter Fenton
Richard Hunstead
Don Melrose
John Storey
John Whiteoak

Ron Ekers commented on the content of the Proceedings and its low impact internationally. He suggested that, if it was to continue, it would be more appropriate as an unrefereed journal for Australian use. A variety of other speakers addressed the subject, with the discussion centring on the need for a review of the function and future of the Proceedings. Finally a motion was presented:

Motion to set up a working party consisting of the Editorial Board to consult widely among the membership and report within six months to Council on the workings and future of the Proceedings of the Astronomical Society of Australia.

**Wright/Crawford
Carried**

Motion that the Editor's Report be accepted.

**Greenhill/Caswell
Carried**

8. AGM and School of Astronomy 1995

The 1995 AGM was planned to be held in Sydney at Macquarie University from 3 to 7 July. The meeting will be organised by the joint efforts of Macquarie University, the Anglo-Australian Observatory (AAO) and the Australia Telescope National Facility (ATNF). The Harley Wood School of Astronomy will be held over the following weekend.

There was some discussion on the format of the meeting, indicating that many members do not like parallel sessions but do think that a session dedicated to poster presentations is useful.

9. Any other business

Alan Vaughan proposed the following motions:

Motion that the ASA endorse the holding of a one day symposium/workshop on issues relating to astronomical databases, data archives and electronic access to data.

**Vaughan/Wright
Carried**

Motion that this meeting be held at Macquarie University under the auspices of the Macquarie University Foundation for Astronomy and the ASA.

**Vaughan/Wright
Carried**

Jamie Biggs, recently appointed State Government Astronomer of Western Australia, pointed out that 1996 was the centenary of Perth Observatory. He questioned if the 1996 Annual Meeting could be moved to Perth to coincide with this centenary. As an alternative, it might be possible to sponsor some other event.

John O'Byrne pointed out the existence of the ASA email exploder list and asked for comment on the advisability of making it available on the ASA World Wide Web Home Page. Wide access may lead to members receiving unwanted email. The members present were unconcerned and felt that wide access should be permitted.

10. Election of the Council for 1994-95

As no further nominations for the 1994-95 Council had been received, the retiring Council's nominations for the 1994-95 Council were declared elected as follows:

President:	Prof. A R Hyland
Vice President	Dr E M Sadler
Treasurer	Dr D K Milne
Secretaries	Dr M L Duldig Dr J W O'Byrne
Councillors	Dr R W Clay Dr M A Dopita Dr R N Manchester Dr J E Norris Dr R L Webster

The meeting closed at 3:00 pm.