

ASA93-94 Activity Report

The 62nd Meeting of the Council of the ASA

The 62nd Meeting of the Council was held at the University of New South Wales on 25 November 1993.

The Treasurer reported that the Society was running at a deficit for the year to date because of publication costs for volume 10 and up-front costs for volume 11. Nevertheless, the Society's finances remained healthy.

Council established a small sub-committee to examine the question of new membership classifications. In particular the grade of Fellow had been suggested as an addition likely to help members in promotion and appointment cases. As another benefit to members, the Society was investigating the cost of a discount for members on subscriptions to Annual Review of Astronomy and Astrophysics arranged through the Society.

The Past President reported on the joint scientific meeting in Christchurch with the RASNZ. The attendance had been higher than expected and the meeting was seen as very successful. The Harley Wood School in Canberra was also very successful, but the organisers suggested that guidelines be prepared for future organisers. Detailed guidelines were subsequently prepared for both the scientific meeting and the Harley Wood School.

The ASA's membership of FASTS continued to be a source of debate within the Council. The Council agreed to pay its dues for another year but expected better communication from FASTS in the future and would review the ASA's membership again in the next year.

The Council discussed the proposed Review of Astronomy and extensively debated the future of the AAO. The debate resulted in two motions supporting continued funding of the AAO at the current level. The Council also strongly supported the continuation of the France/Australia bilateral science agreement which had been reported to be under some threat.

Finally the Council agreed to award the 1994 Berenice Page medal to Paul Camilleri and congratulated David Allen on his Eureka prize.

The 63rd Meeting of the Council of the ASA

The 63rd Meeting of the Council was held at the University of New South Wales on 11 February 1994.

The Treasurer reported that the Bok fund had been returned from the Academy of Science and would be incorporated into the Society's general fund. The Page fund would also be transferred to the general account.

The Editor's report prompted discussion of a variety of issues related to the appearance of the journal as published by the CSIRO. The index issue for volumes 1 to 10 was being prepared and would be sent to all members and subscribers. Draft guidelines for members of the Editorial Board were considered and several changes made.

John Dawe was nominated as chair of the Education subcommittee and a mission statement for the subcommittee was approved. Further discussion centred on the target group for the subcommittee's activities and the need for resource materials.

The President reported on a recent meeting of the National Committee for Astronomy, including progress on the Review of Australian Astronomy and the re-establishment of the Large Telescope Working Group.

Other discussion related to the possibility of inviting a student member of the Society to Council meetings and the need for one Secretary to maintain the ASA email list.

The 64th Meeting of the Council of the ASA

The 64th Meeting of the Council was held at the Mount Stromlo Observatory on 11 July 1994, on the day before the start of Annual Scientific Meeting.

The President presented a report from John Dawe on the interim Australian standard on 'The Effects of Obtrusive Lighting'. The standard included reference to a list of designated observatories to be nominated by the ASA. This list had been drafted previously but was to be supplemented by nominations solicited from the amateur community using advertisements in the two local astronomy magazines.

The Council had previously discussed the possibility of a study of publication and citation indices of relevance to astronomy. The President reported that Paul Burke of ANU had done significant work in this area and Council approved an approach to him to undertake a study.

Other ongoing business included discussion of a brochure describing the benefits of ASA membership and an attempt to make information available on Honours and postgraduate courses in astronomy. Also, the guidelines for support of student attendance at overseas conferences were approved, as was an approach to students for a representative to attend Council meetings as an observer. As a further effort to improve services to members, Secretary John O'Byrne was asked to establish a World Wide Web home page at ATNF.

Council approved a contribution towards the cost of production of the proposal booklet 'Australian Membership of the European Southern Observatory' by the Large Telescope Working Group.

Discussion of revised membership classifications and the cost of making Annual Reviews of Astronomy and Astrophysics available to members at a discount continued but further information was requested by the Council. Other matters discussed included the new Editorial Board for the *Proceedings* and the search for a new Editor and the initial activities of the Education Subcommittee.

The 28th Annual General Meeting of the ASA

The 28th Annual Scientific Meeting of the ASA was held from 11 to 15 July 1994 at the Australian National University in Canberra. It was a return to a conventional gathering of Australian professional astronomers after the 1993 joint meeting with the RASNZ in Christchurch.

A total of 142 people registered and around 120 verbal and poster papers were presented. The best student presentations were rewarded with a free one year subscription to their choice of either of the local astronomy magazines, *Sky & Space* or *Southern Sky*. The prize for best talk went to Roy Duncan from the University of Queensland, while the poster prize was shared by Ann Burgess and David Mar, both from Sydney University. The Bok Prize for 1993 had been awarded several weeks before to Arthur Street of Sydney University.

The Harley Wood lecture was delivered by Professor Jeremy Mould from Mount Stromlo Observatory. His talk "High Resolution Imaging with the HST" was well received.

The Society's Annual General Meeting was held on July 13. Several printed reports were circulated to members. The President's report included a discussion of the Discipline Review of Astronomy and in particular the offer for Australian membership of ESO. Also mentioned was the ASA's newly established Education Subcommittee and a new program for the support of students attending overseas conferences. The President also reported that the Society had entered into a 2 year contract with CSIRO Information Services for the publication of the *Proceedings*. The President's report concluded with a personal comment about the contributions of the Immediate Past President, David Allen, who was very ill.

The Treasurer's 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. The 1993-94 financial year resulted in a modest loss as a result of publishing expenses deferred from 1992. However, estimates for the 1994-95 financial year predicted a modest profit and the Treasurer recommended that fees and discounts remain unchanged.

The Editor's report described the status of the next issues of the *Proceedings* and the Index of volumes 1 to 10. A new Editor and members for a new Editorial Board were being sought at the time of the meeting. Discussion centred on the content of the *Proceedings* and its low impact internationally. Finally a motion was presented to ask the new Editorial Board to consult widely and report within six months to Council on the workings and future of the *Proceedings*.

Other business included a discussion of the format and location of future ASA meetings and the increasing use of email and the World Wide Web by the ASA.

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

Dr David Allen continued as Immediate Past President and Dr Roy Allen was re-appointed as Donovan Trust Representative. Several weeks after the meeting Dr Jenny Nicholls was appointed as Editor.

The 1994 Harley Wood School was held from 8 to 11 July in the Snowy Mountains near Jindabyne. The School was organised by the Mount Stromlo Observatory with the theme of 'Dark Matter and Cosmology'. It was attended by 45 students who listened to a program 10 speakers from a range of Australian institutions. The use of 'resort-style' accomodation where all participants stay together for the duration of the meeting was again found to produce a very cohesive School, much preferred by all who attended.

Reported by John O'Byrne
May 1995