

DRAFT – SUBJECT TO FORMAL APPROVAL AT 2019 AGM



CARDIFF ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 26th APRIL 2018 AT CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairman, Philip Wallace, welcomed members to the meeting and advised that only one letter of apology had been received.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE AGM HELD ON 13th APRIL 2017

The Chairman reminded those present that the 2017 AGM had not been a normal AGM since CAS had become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in October 2016 which required the presentation of financial information over a different time period, and so financial reports had been omitted at the meeting. However, minutes had been taken and were available to members of the Society for inspection.

The Chairman then asked for approval of those minutes by a show of hands. The minutes were approved and accepted by the majority of members, with three abstentions.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 2017 AGM MINUTES

The Chairman asked the members if there were any matters arising out of those minutes. There was no matter forthcoming from the members.

4. ELECTION OF TELLERS

The Chairman asked for two volunteers to act as tellers. David Levi and Stephen Webber were unanimously elected.

5. PRESENTATION AND APPROVAL OF THE 2016/2017 TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT AND STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Chairman highlighted the number of current members as 335 at 31st December 2017. He then went on to speak about the number of Trustee/Committee meetings that had been held during that period i.e. the Trustees had met five times and the Committee had met on seven occasions.

A total of 24 lectures had been given between September and July 2016/2017 with a wealth of eminent speakers, especially from the School of Physics and Astronomy at Cardiff University, the highlight being the talk given by Professor Jim Al-Khalili on 15th September 2017.

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The Chairman brought to the attention of the meeting the number of public events that the Society had held throughout the year.

- BBC Stargazing at Dyffryn Gardens
- Solar viewing at Brecon Beacons National Park Visitor Centre, 30th July, in spite of the periodic downpour during the event
- Another stargazing event took place at Dyffryn Gardens on 28th October with a packed house. The Observatory had been open for tours of the facility and its equipment, along with an array of telescopes outside for the public to view
- St Fagans National Museum of History drew in some 200 visitors for a special stargazing event in their recently rebuilt venue. CAS worked alongside other organisations to make this a very successful event.

The Chairman then spoke about the Society's own Observatory (with a state of the art 11" computer-driven telescope), the regular stargazing events and star parties that take place, including of course, weather permitting, solar viewing.

In all of these events the numbers were more than expected and it is hoped that this trend will continue.

The Chairman then spoke about the CAS Library and the availability of astronomical books for loan to our members and gave thanks to Katrin Raynor-Evans, our Librarian, for the excellent choice of books and other items available.

The Chairman spoke briefly about the website and the changes that had been made by our webmaster, Peter Crabb.

The Chairman referred to the financial section of the Trustees' annual report and intimated that Roy Blunt, our Treasurer, would be presenting this part of the report.

The Chairman then asked for the approval of the Trustees' Annual report and Statement of Accounts. Kath Compton proposed "Acceptance", seconded by Nick Pollock, the proposal was put to the members and accepted with no abstentions.

6. COMMITTEE OFFICERS' REPORTS

Public Events Organiser's Report: Theresa Cooper

- Theresa commenced her report by highlighting the ten public events that the Society had been involved in during the past year, ranging from Local Brownies groups meeting at Techniquest in Cardiff Bay to:
 - The National Museum of Wales
 - Brecon Beacons National Park Visitor Centre
 - Dyffryn Gardens
 - St Fagans National Museum of History
- In the report Theresa intimated that putting the two largest events together, about six thousand members of the public had the opportunity to talk to our members about astronomy.
- In her report, Theresa brought to the attention of the members her concerns about the decreasing band of regular helpers, with one event [the Telescope Workshop at the NMW] having to be cancelled due to lack of sufficient experienced volunteers. On the positive side, we still have the opportunity to work with other organisations, and also be invited to chargeable events at the NMW, Cardiff & NMW, St Fagans with the responsibly of providing value for money.
- Theresa spoke about the monthly star parties which seem to be run by the same members who run the public events. Whilst the attendances are sometimes low, this

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is offset by the fact that some of our members are invited out to give talks to Scout & Brownie Groups.

- Finally, Theresa stated that based upon currently available resources our future capacity for public events is limited. Theresa then went on to thank all who had given their time and expertise towards this aspect of the work of CAS.
- The Chairman asked if there were any questions, and then sought approval of the report, which was accepted by all members.

Observatory Manager's Report

- The Chairman explained that due to the absence and resignation of Alan Stephens, Alan was unable to present a report, but he stressed that Alan had, at its 19th April 2018 meeting, given an up-to-date report to the Committee. The Chairman went on to give his thanks to Alan for all the work and time he had given to the Society.

Chairman's Report (including Trustee and Committee Membership Arrangements): Philip Wallace

- The Chairman referred to the present organisational structure, drawing attention, firstly, to the present number of Trustees which stands at eight, and advising that Theresa Cooper would be standing down as a Trustee, but confirming that all other current Trustees were willing to be re-elected.
- The Chairman also brought to the attention of the meeting the present number of Committee members, advising that both Alan Stephens and Bob Sutton had stepped down recently from the Committee, which left two vacancies to be filled. The Chairman asked if there were any willing volunteers who were prepared to stand for appointment as Ordinary Members of the Committee. He pointed out that there was one person offering to join the Committee but would like another volunteer to join.
- The Chairman then offered his recommendations to the members for the appointment of the Committee, which was proposed by Ian McLean and seconded by Theresa Cooper; following a show of hands by the members, the recommendations were approved and accepted.

Treasurer's Report: Roy Blunt

- Roy Blunt opened his report stating that he had been the third Treasurer to take on this role within a short period of time, the other two Treasurers were Phil Wallace and Peter Crabb.
- Coming back to his report, Roy described the very good financial position that the Society found itself in. This, he said, had come about as a result of the high level of subscriptions from members and also from re-imburements from outside bodies, including a contribution from Cardiff University of £66.56 towards covering our expenses for the visit of Professor Jim Al-Khalili.
- Roy also highlighted some of the more expensive outgoings i.e. speakers' expenses, the high cost of our insurance cover, especially the cover for Public Liability, the maintenance of the Observatory and its equipment. Overall, the Society remains in a good financial position to meet all its demands over this next year.

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- Roy then referred to the accounts for the period 31/10/2016 – 31/12/2017 and confirmed that these accounts had been independently inspected and signed off in preparation for the AGM by Phillip Smith on the 31/03/2018 in compliance with the requirements of the Charity Commission and the Society's status as a CIO. A full report of the accounts had been sent out to members attached to the notice of, and agenda for, this meeting.
- The Chairman then asked if there were any questions in regard to the accounts for Roy, after which he asked members to accept the accounts. The motion was proposed by Dr Jane Clark and seconded by Ian McLean, and it was carried, with one abstention.

Secretary's Report: Michael Foley

- The Secretary outlined the varying tasks that he had undertaken during the course of his duties to the Committee and the Society, liaising with other members of the Committee in regard to emails, enquiries, and the day-to-day running of his responsibilities. He then drew attention to the current programme of speakers, contacting and confirming their commitment to come to us, meeting them at the station if they came by rail, providing them with a meal before their presentation, seeing to their accommodation if they had to stay overnight, then followed the next day by an email of thanks from the Society.
- The Secretary then went on to draw attention to the compiling of the programme of the 2018/2019 season of talks. He was pleased to confirm that the programme was complete, with just some minor details to be filled in, before sending to the printers in preparation for distribution to our members.
- Edward Cooper pointed out that the current programme had been compiled by Theresa Cooper and Kath Compton and that an acknowledgement of thanks should be expressed. The Secretary pointed out that he had acknowledged this fact in one of his first set of announcements prior to a fortnightly talk and he had asked for the members present at that meeting to acknowledge the same.
- The Chairman then asked if there were any questions, after which he moved for acceptance of the report, which was carried.

7. ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

- The Chairman had asked if there were any nominations for a new member to join the Trustees. It was noted that none had been received and nobody came forward from the meeting to offer their services.
- The Chairman then asked Ian McLean, (Vice Chairman), if he would step forward to conduct the re-election of the seven remaining Trustees.
- Ian McLean proposed by a show of hands for the approval for the election of the current Trustee members, in taking the count of those entitled to vote sixteen members voted in favour of the motion, with no abstentions. With the overwhelming support of the members it was not necessary to use the tellers for this election.

8. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

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The Chairman asked the members present if there were any issues or points of interest that they would like to bring to the floor for open discussion. This opened the floodgates to a host of questions and suggestions:

- Peter Crabb suggested that there should be something else at the AGM to attract more members to attend.
- Philip Wallace suggested a quiz before the meeting which might go down well with members.
- Kath Compton thought that something more interactive involving our members would be good.
- Jim Hennessy proposed to ask certain individual members to give a 10-minute talk on what they are involved with in astronomy.
- Owen Cornelius suggested set up of focus groups, with some social activities and online promotion of astronomy projects reaching out to younger members.
- Ann Bennett expressed her full agreement with Owen's suggestions.
- Katrin Gaynor-Evans suggested that during the summer break we could run events to show people how to use a telescope.
- Lots of different ideas and suggestions were floated with no final decision or agreement on how to proceed to implement any of these ideas, the matter would be left open for future discussion.
- The Chairman summed it up by saying that whilst he agreed with most of the comments and suggestions, at the end of the day, in spite of all our efforts, will it bring in more confirmed and committed members to the Society?
- Finally, under this topic, Ann Bennett confirmed her position as Merchandise Officer, and stated that she had a lot of old books on astronomy that she would like to dispose of either through reducing the price but also by advertising them on our web site.

9. PRESENTATION OF THE BILL SUTHERLAND AWARD

- The Chairman outlined the history of the award and stated it was presented to a member of the Society (excluding a Committee member) who had shown outstanding enthusiasm for astronomy and the Society over the past year
- A number of nominations for this award had been received by the Committee, and the Chairman was pleased to announce that Dr Feras Tuma would be the recipient of this year's award. With the absence of the recipient, the Chairman stated that he would seek an early opportunity to present the award to Dr Tuma

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman asked if there was any other business or items for discussion before his intention of bring this meeting to a close. In the absence of any response coming from the members, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions, and forthwith closed the meeting at approximately 8.40pm.

Draft Minutes of AGM compiled by M Foley, Trustee.