

Astronomical Society of Edinburgh – Annual General Meeting

Annual General Meeting Announcement

The Annual General Meeting of the Astronomical Society of Edinburgh will be held at the City Observatory at 8pm on Friday 21st March 2008. The Agenda will be:

- Apologies
- Adoption of the Minutes of the AGM held on 16th March 2007
- Presentation of the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2007
- Election of Office Bearers and Council

Nominations for the following have been received and as there are no more nominations than vacancies these members will be declared to have been elected:

- President: Iain McEachran
- Vice-Presidents:
Daniel Gallacher, Kenneth Thomas
- Secretary: Graham Rule
- Treasurer: Alan Ellis
- Councillors:
Des Loughney, Horst Meyerdierks,
David Small

There are three vacancies on the Council and the newly elected Council will look to co-opt interested members.

- AOB

Please note that only members who have paid their subscription for the 2007-08 session are eligible to take part in this meeting.

Graham Rule, Secretary

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 16th March 2007

Opening

The meeting was opened by the President, Des Loughney, at 8:15pm.

Des circulated details about the BAA Variable Star Section Meeting to be held in May at the Royal Observatory.

Apologies

Apologies had been received from Horst Meyerdierks who was at the Association of Falkirk Astronomers' Glen Lyon weekend.

Minutes of the AGM of 17th March 2006

These, having been circulated, were approved on a motion proposed by Iain McEachran and seconded by Alan Pickup.

Presentation of Annual Report and Accounts

The Annual Report and Accounts from the Council of the Society for the year 2006 had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Officers of the Society were available to speak to the formal report.

Alan Ellis outlined key financial matters in the report. Ray Fenouhlet suggested that we might benefit from taking out a Skipton Building Society Bond as that could provide a higher rate of interest than currently available with our Bank of Scotland Investment Account. He also noted that there was some £ 3000 available from the Trust's income.

Des noted that we could benefit from an increase in the number of members of the Society and urged members to encourage friends who had an interest in astronomy to join. Ken Thomas noted that the poor facilities at the Observatory made it difficult to make the site appear welcoming. He suggested that we should capitalise on astronomical events where we were able to invite visitors to the Observatory.

Alan noted that there were difficulties with getting donations from Radio Groups and the Beltane Society.

The meeting thanked Alan for the work he had done with the City in order to get the Rates Relief that has reduced the Society's expenditure.

Graham Rule reported on discussions with the City Council and the recently established "stakeholders' group". He noted that there were many good intentions in the City but that many of those who had to get work done were often woefully underfunded. Public pressure on the City to allocate more resources to the Observatory was needed and Professor John Brown (Astronomer Royal for Scotland and one of our Honorary Presidents) helped to raise our profile. There has been a consultation exercise regarding the use of the hill, with particular emphasis on the site as a public park, taking place recently. This has involved a small display at McDonald Road Library and there would be an event held in the Observatory itself between noon and 4pm tomorrow.

Graham also noted that next year's accounts will have a few differences because of a change in the regulations for Scottish Charities. He also noted that regulations were expected to be introduced which would allow Charities, such as the Society, to become incorporated bodies with limited liability under the Charities legislation (rather than the Companies Acts). Des said that he was a member of a society which was examining options for incorporation and that he would let us know how things went.

Des made four recommendations for the Society's Council to pursue in the next session:

- Open Nights – we should hold more of these and allow families to book slots so that they don't have to wait in a long queue. Such events should be well advertised in advance.
- Opposition of Mars in December – this is an opportunity for open days and an updated exhibition.
- Basic Astrophotography projects could be publicised by the Society. (Des has given some help to some Stevenson College students on this topic.) Graham suggested that such things could be written up in the Society's Journal and publicised on the website.
- Primary School teachers are encouraging pupils to do projects on astronomical topics. Des suggested that we could support such activities and maybe invite school pupils to give reports to our Society or to have members take part in after-school activities.

Election of Officers and Council for 2007-2008 session

There being no need for an election of Officers and Council those who had been nominated were declared elected.

- President: Iain McEachran
- Vice President: Daniel Gallacher
- Secretary: Graham Rule
- Treasurer: Alan Ellis
- Council Members:
Maurice Frank, Des Loughney,
Pete Macdonald, David Small,
Adelaide Webster, Kenneth Thomas

Maurice Frank asked the meeting to note that he expected that all enquiries made to officers of the Society be treated with respect. Des agreed that this should be expected.

Ken Thomas suggested that Council Members should have badges so that newcomers and visitors would know who to speak to if they were interested in knowing more about the Society.

The Meeting thanked Alastair Mackie for the work he has done on the Council as he is stepping down.

AOB

There being no further business, the President was thanked for the work he has done in his two years in office, and the AGM was closed.