

---

The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh

---

REPORT BY THE COUNCIL  
AND  
ACCOUNTS

For the Year ended 31st December 1957

---

**Council (to 31st March 1958)**

**President**

A. C. STEPHEN, D.SC., F.R.S.E.

**Vice-Presidents**

J. C. JOHNSTON, F.R.A.S.

B. O'NEILL, Esq.

**Secretaries**

J. GIBSON KERR, W.S., F.R.A.S., F.R.S.E.

N. G. MATTHEW, F.R.A.S., F.R.S.E., 126 West Savile Terrace, Edin., 9.

**Treasurer**

J. GIBSON KERR, W.S., F.R.A.S., F.R.S.E., 51 Castle Street, Edinburgh, 2.

**Councillors**

M. A. ELLISON, B.A., M.SC., SC.D.

B. MCINNES, B.SC.

J. A. FORSYTH, M.A., LL.B., B.SC.

T. I. R. NEIL, Esq.

E. L. HIRST, M.A., D.SC., LL.D., F.R.S.

R. W. PLENDERLEITH, B.SC., F.R.S.E.

**Observatory**

*Director*—N. G. MATTHEW, F.R.A.S., F.R.S.E.

*Assistant*—B. O'NEILL, Esq.

**Instrument Section:** *Director*—J. BLAIK, Esq.

**Lunar Section:** *Director*—The Director of  
Observatory.

**Photographic Section:** *Director*—J. R. LIDDELL, Esq.

**Planetary Section:** *Director*—B. O'NEILL, Esq.

**Transit and Time Section:** *Director*—J. H. WATT, Esq.

# ANNUAL REPORT

The Council have pleasure in presenting a brief Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st December 1957.

## **Membership**

The total membership has remained fairly constant at about 130, new members making up for losses during the year.

## **Finance**

A Statement of Accounts for the year is appended.

## **Observatory**

The Observatory on Calton Hill has been open throughout the year. Astronomy Classes, at several levels, have been conducted and have included some practical work and observation with the telescopes. Classes for adults have been held in conjunction with the Department of Extra-Mural Studies of the University of Edinburgh.

Over 3900 visitors have been received during the year, including groups of senior school pupils from a wide area. During the summer visitors from many countries were welcomed. Visitors were shown astronomical objects through the telescopes whenever conditions permitted and when observation was impossible the main instruments were demonstrated and explained and an illustrated lecture was given.

Members have made good use of the facilities available at the Observatory. Telescopes were in use on 113 nights, mainly during the winter period. This was less than usual owing to very bad observing conditions during January and in the latter part of the year. Work has been continued by the various Observing Sections of the Society, the Photographic and the Planetary Sections having been particularly active. The Instruments Section has also been busy, mainly with repairs. Directors of Sections have helped and advised members, and small telescopes have been loaned to members taking an active part in observational work.

The use of the Observatory has been granted for meetings of a new organisation, the Fellowship of Junior Astronomers, instituted by the Observatory Director to encourage juniors interested in astronomy.

Permanent repairs to the damaged roof of the Cox Building have not yet been carried out by the City, nor has any work yet been done on the Dome of the Crawford Building. In consequence no use of the instruments normally housed in the Crawford Dome has been possible, and planned programmes of work have been held up.

Maintenance of the instruments has been carried out by the Society and the Library Room has been re-decorated.

## Lectures

Lectures were delivered at formal meetings of the Society during the winter period, as follows:—

“ Star Clusters ” (V. C. REDDISH, B.SC., PH.D.).

“ Exploring the Galaxy ” (T. R. TANNAHILL, M.A., B.SC., PH.D.).

“ Earth and Sun ” (A. C. STEPHEN, D.SC., F.R.S.E.).

“ Astronomy and Artificial Satellites ” (M. W. OVENDEN, M.A., B.SC., PH.D.).

At the Annual General Meeting in March a Soviet film “ The Great Universe ” was shown. In October, after the launching of the first Earth satellite, a programme was arranged for the next meeting at which a number of speakers discussed different aspects of the satellite. At the December meeting films were shown in place of the arranged programme owing to the sudden illness of our lecturer.

From April to September monthly informal meetings were held at which members gave papers on a variety of astronomical topics.

## Publication

The issue of the monthly Notes and Star Maps has been continued. This has been appreciated by members and by visitors to the Observatory.

## Library

Astronomical periodicals have been available in the Library and new books have been purchased from time to time. Fair use has been made of the Library during the year.

## Lantern Slides

The Society's collection of astronomical slides has been available to members who are thus encouraged to give lectures on astronomy.

## Display

The public display of current astronomical and meteorological information at the Register House has been continued. The work is done voluntarily.

## Acknowledgments

The Council wish to thank all who have helped in the work of the Society during the year. Grateful acknowledgment is made of the gift of apparatus by Mr R. E. Cameron, Mr B. O'Neill and Mr R. L. Waland, of books by Mr D. M. Henderson and Mr R. W. Wrigley, and the loan of apparatus by the Royal Scottish Museum.

In name of the Council,

A. C. STEPHEN, *President.*

J. GIBSON KERR, }  
N. G. MATTHEW, } *Secretaries.*

