
The
Astronomical Society of Edinburgh

REPORT BY THE COUNCIL
AND ACCOUNTS

For the Year ended 31st December, 1968

Council (to 31st March, 1969)

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Assistant : C. G. R. WOOD, F.R.A.S.

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Variable Star Section: *Director*—J. SHEPHERD, F.R.A.S.

Instrument Section: *Director*—C. G. R. WOOD, F.R.A.S.

Librarian: W. MERSON, Esq.

Curator of Slides: A. J. SPROTT, M.A.

ANNUAL REPORT

The Council have pleasure in presenting a brief Report and the Accounts for the year ending 31st December 1968.

Membership. Membership remains around ninety.

Finance. A Statement of Accounts for the year is appended.

Observatory. This is the centre of the Society's activities and most time is given to the general public. Some 3,300 visitors spent an hour or more at the Observatory during the year. Most of these were adults but about 600 senior schoolchildren were among the visitors. Whenever possible visitors are shown interesting celestial objects through the 6-inch McEwan refractor or if cloud prevents observation visitors are shown instruments and astronomical displays and given a short lecture. Classes in Astronomy were held as usual in conjunction with the Department of Adult Education of the University of Edinburgh and Edinburgh Corporation. On a simple level some training was given to Scouts and Guides. Members of the Society are given facilities for observing mainly on Fridays but also on some other evenings and the Fellowship of Junior Astronomers meet regularly at the Observatory for observing and discussion. This group now produces a quarterly magazine.

Telescopes were in use on 89 nights during the period when evening observation was possible. The Variable Star section has carried out a regular programme and Mr J. E. Isles, who is a very active observer with binoculars, has founded the Binocular Sky Society. The Photoelectric Photometry group have been improving their equipment and gaining practical experience. The mirrors of the 13-inch telescope have been illuminised and Mr R. G. Fenoulhet has carried out improvements to the mounting. The activities of the other observing sections have diminished and this is partly due to the remarkable discoveries of space research. Yet the Earth-based observer can still contribute to planetary studies and to a lesser degree to lunar investigation. However, the Radioastronomy section has continued to develop. Experiments have been carried out with a wide band aerial on 136 MHz and an equatorial mounting is being constructed. A continuous recording of the Dounreay beacon at 70 MHz monitors auroral effects in the atmosphere, and the group has been invited to extend this work.

The new Toilet Building was completed in September and we are grateful to Edinburgh Corporation for this improvement. In the Main Building the McEwan Dome interior has been repainted and the Junior's room has been redecorated. Work on the new 12-inch Newtonian Reflector has again been held up by uncertainty about erection of the new Building. Some improvements to the heating of the Main Building have been carried out.

Commemoration. On 25th April a Ceremony was held in the Lecture Hall of the Observatory to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Scientific Observatory on Calton Hill by the Astronomical Institution of Edinburgh. The Lord Provost of Edinburgh Mr Herbert Brechin, Sir Edmund Hirst and Dr V. C. Reddish, representing the Astronomer Royal for Scotland (who was abroad at the time), took part and there was a good attendance of members. Afterwards those present went to the Main Building where many of the original instruments were on display. By good fortune it was a fine sunny day. The Main Building was floodlit that evening and the next through the good offices of the Corporation Lighting Department. Prior to the Commemoration Ceremony a Lunch was held at the Carlton Hotel.

Lectures. At the formal meetings of the Society the following lectures were given:

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|---|----------------------------------|
| ' An Astronomical Expedition to
the High Andes ' | D. Clarke, M.Sc., Ph.D., F.G.S. |
| ' Geology of the Moon ' | E. L. G. Bowell, B.Sc., F.R.A.S. |
| ' Infrared Astronomy ' | M. J. Smyth, M.A., Ph.D. |
| ' The Problem of Extra-Terrestrial
Life ' | A. E. Roy, B.Sc., Ph.D. |
| ' An Astronomical Pilgrimage
Overseas ' | H. E. Dall, Esq. |

Following the Annual General Meeting a film, "The Radio Sky", was shown. Informal monthly meetings were held during the summer when various astronomical papers were given and discussed.

Publication and Display. The monthly star maps and astronomical notes continue to be available to members and to visitors at the Observatory. Assistance has been given to schools and current information has been on display outside the Register House.

Library. Good use has been made of the Library this year.

Astronomical Slides. It is satisfactory to report that more members have been using the slides. A complete numerical list of the R.A.S. slides has been compiled by the Curator, Mr A. J. Sprott.

Acknowledgments. We record our thanks to all who have assisted the Society in its work during the year. Grateful acknowledgment is made of the gift of a small lathe by Mr R. G. Fenoulhet, and of the loan of apparatus by the Astronomer Royal for Scotland.

In name of the Council,

J. A. HUNTER, *President*
N. G. MATTHEW, *Secretary*
J. GIBSON KERR, *Treasurer*

The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

For Year to 31st December, 1968

RECEIPTS		PAYMENTS	
<i>Add</i> Subscriptions and Donations	£81 0 0	Library - - - - -	£54 13 2
Astronomical Society of Edinburgh Trustees—		Lectures - - - - -	70 14 6
Income Payments- - -	329 3 0	Transport - - - - -	14 0 0
Edinburgh Corporation Grant for Observatory - - -	850 0 0	Observatory, Calton Hill—	
Deposit Receipt Interest - - -	21 6 1	Rates, Cleaning, Repairs, Heating, Lighting, etc.	-£230 13 0
Commemoration Luncheon - - -	21 0 0	Capital Expenditure -	194 17 0
Star Maps - - - - -	9 0 0	Insurance Premiums -	16 13 3
	£1,311 9 1	Director - - - - -	250 0 0
		Assistants - - - - -	75 0 0
		Treasurer - - - - -	42 0 0
		Auditor (for 1967)	10 10 0
			819 13 3
		Honorarium to Secretary (for 1967)	100 0 0
		Treasurer's Remuneration -	26 5 0
		Printing, Stationery & Postages	114 1 4
		Audit Fee (for 1967)- - -	10 10 0
		Council Meetings - - - - -	4 7 6
		Summer Meetings - - - - -	7 7 0
		Commemoration Luncheon -	51 9 0
			£1,273 0 9
		Balance at 31st December, 1968—	
		In Bank - - - - -	-£198 18 7
		On Deposit Receipt	400 0 0
		In Hands of Treasurer - - - - -	2 10 10
			601 9 5
Balance from 1967 - - - - -	563 1 1		
	£1,874 10 2		£1,874 10 2

EDINBURGH, 4th January, 1969—I have examined the Accounts of the Astronomical Society of Edinburgh for the year to 31st December, 1968, and am of the opinion that the foregoing Abstract is correctly stated and sufficiently vouched. I have seen the Bankers' Certificate for the Balance in the Bank at 31st December, 1968.

R. N. OSWALD, C.A., Auditor.