
The
Astronomical Society of Edinburgh



REPORT BY THE COUNCIL
AND ACCOUNTS

For the Year ended 31st December, 1978

COUNCIL (to 31st March 1979)

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(1/4/78 to 31/7/78)

G. TAYLOR, B.Sc.,

(1/8/78 to 31/3/79)

In 1978, as in previous years, the Observatory was the centre of the Society's activities. As usual, groups from schools and elsewhere made evening visits, mainly in January to April, when they were shown round the buildings, and the history and the function of the Observatory and its instruments were described. This was followed by a session of observing with the six-inch telescope, or by a show of slides and/or 16mm film of astronomical interest when the weather was bad. The Director is pleased to remark that correspondence he has received shows that these visits are much appreciated.

Use of the McEwan telescope by members has been largely on Fridays, but the thirteen-inch Cox telescope is normally available at any time, and was often used by younger members in 1978.

The Fellowship of Junior Astronomers met once a month at the Observatory during the year. Council thanks Miss Edith McLean for her work in connection with these meetings.

During the year, several observers' meetings were arranged by Mr. T.I.R. Neil who is our Observing Co-ordinator. Although the response was somewhat disappointing it is hoped that there will be an improvement in attendance during 1979.

Thanks are due to Mr. D.A. Pickup for his efforts in producing the "Monthly Bulletin" which helps keep members informed about celestial movements and also about activities at the Observatory.

On nine days during the Festival, A.S.T.R.A. (the Association in Scotland to Research into Astronautics) together with the Astronomical Society of Edinburgh, organised an exhibition that dealt with astronomy and spaceflight. This venture attracted at least 800 visitors and included talks by Duncan Lunan, the writer on astronomy.

On Saturday, 6th May, the Society was host to a meeting of the Scottish Astronomers' Group that was held at Calton Hill. At this meeting a talk was given by the distinguished satellite observer Russell Eberst. Dr Simmons of Glasgow University spoke to the meeting on the subjects of Noctilucent clouds, and observing with H alpha filters.

On 7th October, the Junior Astronomical Society, an important national organisation, held an exhibition at Calton Hill at which the well-known writers and broadcasters Ian Ridpath and Robin Scagell lectured.

The Edinburgh and District Amateur Radio Club, which uses facilities at Calton Hill at least once a week, arranged an exhibition of radio equipment that was also well attended by the general public.

Permission was given for the City of Edinburgh Brass Band to use the lecture hall for practice on Wednesday evenings.

The District Council has shown considerable interest in maintaining the building here, and at the present time of writing this report, the electrical system in the large lecture hall is being overhauled and modernised, an improvement that will be much appreciated. The Observatory was also visited this summer by the District Council's Finance Committee with a view to assessing what further improvements to the building might be made.

At the end of the year the Society had 85 members, about the same as last year.

The formal lectures that were given to the Society during 1978 were:

Jan: "Recent Developments in Megalithic Astronomy"	Dr. A. Thom (University of Edinburgh)
Feb: "Spaceflight to the year 2000 and beyond"	Mr. P.J. Parker, A.F.B.I.S.
Oct. "The Colourful Universe"	Mr. R. Scagell (Vice-President J.A.S.)
Nov. "Cold Nights and Hot Clouds in Wisconsin"	Dr. P. Brand (University of Edinburgh)
Dec: "The Origin of Gravity"	Dr. S.V. Clube (Royal Observatory, Edinburgh)

The informal lectures given to the Society in the summer were:

Apr: "Let's Observe"	Mr. T.I.R. Neil
May: "The Venus Tablets"	Mr. J.D. Weir
June: "Time and Space"	Mr. T. Melvin
July: "Forth Dimension"	Dr. A.J. Rostron
Aug: "The Outer Solar System"	Mr. D.A. Pickup
Sept: "Ball, Gun and Pips"	Mr. R.G. Veitch

The Society again received grants from both the District and the Regional Councils; but though the state of our accounts would appear to be very healthy, it must be remembered that the Society will incur substantial expenses in the coming year, in particular through increased rates and the cost of continuing work on the new dome.

A legacy was received from the estate of Miss Helen Fairgrieve.

Council wishes to thank Mr Wood, who resigned as Director of the Observatory at the end of July, for the work he has done for the Society for many years. Mr. Gerald Taylor was appointed as the new Director.

In the name of the Council

I.R. CUNNINGHAM, *President*
R.G. FENOULHET, *Secretary*
A.J. ROSTRON, *Treasurer*

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

For Year to 31st December, 1978

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
Balance from 1977:		Lectures and Meetings	£ 94.55
Cash	£1.01	Printing and Duplicating	83.61
Bank	<u>1556.76</u>	Honoraria:	
	£1557.77	Secretary (1977)	£ 70.00
Subscriptions	242.00	Treasurer (1977)	<u>41.67</u>
Grants:			
Edinburgh District Council	330.00	Secretary's and Treasurer's Expenses	111.67
Lothian Regional Council	880.00	Library	46.25
A.S.E. Trustees	<u>200.00</u>	Insurance	43.00
	1410.00	Audit fee (1977)	39.50
Interest:		Observatory:	20.00
Bank	85.28	Director and Assistant	£ 293.75
O'Neil Legacy	77.50	Rates:	
Gall Inglis Legacy	<u>72.66</u>	£77.90 for 1977-78	
	235.44	£464.88 for 1978-79	
Legacy:		(8 of 10 instalments)	542.78
Miss Helen Fairgrieve	100.00	Electricity and gas	228.39
Donation:		Cleaning	122.53
Mr. J. Dickson	10.00	Equipment	37.62
		Treasurer	75.00
		Director's and Treasurer's Expenses	56.76
		Library	92.02
		Insurance	54.07
		Audit fee	20.00
		Bank charges	<u>5.00</u>
			1527.92
		Balance carried forward:	
		Cash	£ 0.26
		Bank	<u>1588.45</u>
			<u>1588.71</u>
	<u>£3555.21</u>		<u>£3555.21</u>

Investments: These remain unchanged, consisting of £1000 7¼% Treasury Stock 1985/88 (O'Neil Legacy), cost £962.56 and £570 12¼% Treasury Stock 1995 (Gall Inglis Legacy), cost £497.15.

EDINBURGH, 31st January, 1979. We have examined the Accounts of the Astronomical Society of Edinburgh for the year to 31st December, 1978 and are of the opinion that the foregoing Abstract is correctly stated and sufficiently vouched.
SCOTT, OSWALD & CO. C.A., Auditors.