



The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh

<http://www.astronomyedinburgh.org/>
Registered Scottish Charity SC022968

Annual Report 2015

Trustees' annual report for the period 1 January to 31 December 2015

Constitution and management of the Society

- Charity name: The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh
- Registered charity number: SC022968
- Principal address: c/o Horst Meyerdierts, Secretary of the Astronomical Society of Edinburgh, 71 Cameron Toll Gardens, Edinburgh, EH16 4TF

Names of the charity trustees on date of approval of the trustees' annual report.

	trustee name	office (if any)	dates acted	appointed by
1	Mr Seán Wixted	President	from 19 June	Council
2	Dr Horst Meyerdierts	Secretary	whole year	AGM
3	Mr Alan Ellis	Treasurer	whole year	AGM
4	Dr Geraldine Dennis	Vice-President	from 5 June	AGM
5	Ms Rachel Thomas	Vice-President	from 5 June	AGM
6	Mr Andrew Farrow		from 5 June	AGM
7	Mr Andrew Mackie		from 19 June	Council
8	Mr Peter Mulholland		whole year	AGM
9	Mr Jim Nisbet		from 5 June	AGM
10	Mr Scott Provan		from 5 June	AGM
11	Mr John Wood		whole year	AGM

Names of all other charity trustees during the period.

	trustee name	office (if any)	dates acted	appointed by
	Mr Kenneth Thomas	President	to 5 June	AGM
	Mr Alan Pickup	Vice-President	to 5 June	AGM
	Mr Scott Provan	Vice-President	to 5 June	AGM
	Dr Geraldine Dennis		to 5 June	AGM
	Dr Duncan Hale-Sutton		to 6 February	AGM
	Ms Rachel Thomas		to 5 June	AGM
	Mr Seán Wixted		5 to 19 June	AGM

The Society is an unincorporated association founded (as the Edinburgh Astronomical Association) in 1924 and is governed by a Constitution most recently modified on 30 March 2012. The Constitution may be referred to on the Society's web site at <http://www.astronomyedinburgh.org/about/constitution.html>.

Clause 1 of the Constitution is:

The name of the Society shall be **The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh** and its objects shall be to advance the education of the public about the science of Astronomy and to promote astronomical research chiefly in Edinburgh and its neighbourhood.

In furtherance thereof:

- (a) to circulate information on astronomical matters by the publication of articles, books etc;
- (b) to encourage astronomical study and observation; and
- (c) to increase popular interest in astronomy.

The Management of the Society is vested in a Council, elected from the Ordinary Membership of the Society at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). In the event of any vacancy arising in the Council, the Council has power to co-opt a Member of the Society to fill such a vacancy.

On 31 December 2015, the membership of the Society was 86 of which six were honorary members. Honorary members are Dr H. Ford, Dr D. Gavine, Dr N. Grubb, and Prof D. Heggie. The Honorary Presidents are Prof Andrew Lawrence (Regius Professor of Astronomy at the University of Edinburgh) and Prof John Brown (Astronomer Royal for Scotland).

The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh Trustees

A former Vice-President of the Society, Mr John Henry Lorimer, left a substantial bequest to the Society when he died in 1936. This bequest has been assigned to "The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh Trustees" and is managed by them under conditions set forth in a Deed of Trust granted in favour of Rev Dr James Patrick and others, dated 10 December 1937.

Astronomical Society of Edinburgh Trust is registered Scottish Charity SC013921. As of 31 December 2015, the following are the trustees in terms of that deed:

- Mr Jim Nisbet (secretary and treasurer)
- Mr Alan Ellis
- Mr Raymond Fenoulhet
- Dr David Gavine
- Mr Alan Pickup
- Dr John Rostron

In early 2015, Mr Pickup handed over as secretary and treasurer of the trustees to Mr Nisbet. All of the above trustees are past Presidents and Members of the Society; Mr Ellis is also Treasurer of the Society; Mr Nisbet is also on the Council of the Society.

Activities during 2015

The Society continues to hold meetings throughout the year with educational talks on different aspects of astronomy. The Council wishes to thank Alan Pickup and Horst Meyerdieks for kindly presenting the "Monthly Sky" talk to the Society.

Practical observing has always been encouraged by the Society with some members contributing to nationally coordinated observing programmes (through the British Astronomical Association), some producing interesting images to show at our meetings and through our Flickr group.

Meetings

The Council of the Society met on 16 January, 15 May, 19 June, 11 September, 2 October and 4 December; we thank the Royal Observatory Edinburgh for offering a meeting room for Council meetings. The Annual General Meeting was held on 5 June. The Imaging Group met 8 times during the winter months. 11 Ordinary Meetings with educational talks on different aspects of astronomy were held; the February and October meetings were without guest

speaker and instead dedicated to advice on telescopes and other observing aids. The approximate attendance at monthly meetings was: Jan 34, Feb 32, Mar 54, Apr 38, May 42, Jun 30 (AGM), Jul ~30, Sep 32, Oct 37, Nov 62, Dec 38, total ~430.

Meetings and events.

- Jan 19th Steven Owens - Dark Sky Diary
In defence of night: dark sky protection and astronomy tourism
- Jan 14th *Imaging Group*
- Feb 6th *Surgery on telescopes and other observing aids*
- Feb 11th *Imaging Group*
- Mar 6th Prof Dame Jocelyn Bell Burnell - University of Oxford
Bursts, bangs and things that go bump in the night - transient astronomy
- Mar 11th *Imaging Group*
- Mar 20th *Solar eclipse, at the Scottish Parliament*
- Mar 28th *Stall and telescopes*
at the event "Science and magic of light, the universe, and everything"
- Apr 10th Dr Giles Hammond - University of Glasgow
The International Year of Light 2015
- Apr 15th *Imaging Group*
- May 1st Angus Self - British and Irish Meteorite Society
Meteorites
- Jun 5th *Annual General Meeting*
Followed by a presentation by Dr David Gavine on *Noctilucent cloud*
and a Presidential Address on *The Great Debate*
- Jul 3rd Des Loughney - British Astronomical Association, Variable Star Section
Rho Cassiopeiae - Superstar
- Sep 11th Lori Anderson - Collective Gallery
Towards a City Observatory
- Sep 16th *Imaging Group*
- Sep 26th *Stall and telescopes*
at the Royal Observatory Edinburgh Doors Open Day
- Sep 27th *Stall and telescopes*
at the Royal Observatory Edinburgh Doors Open Day
- Oct 2nd *Surgery on telescopes and other observing aids*
- Oct 14th *Imaging Group*
- Nov 6th David Woods
How Apollo flew to the Moon
- Nov 11th *Imaging Group*
- Nov 14th *Astronomy Day at the Museum of Flight*
- Dec 4th Dr John Davies - Royal Observatory Edinburgh
New horizons in the solar system
- Dec 9th *Imaging Group*

Publications

The Society's Journal has resumed in the form of an on-line blog coordinated by Rachel Thomas. This is available to the public at <http://asedinburghjournal.wordpress.com/>. Well over 1000 email addresses have subscribed to notifications of Journal updates.

Similar to Alan Pickup's sky preview at monthly meetings, his monthly astronomy article for "The Scotsman" - with kind permission of the paper's publishers - is republished in the Society's Journal.

Members are issued with the latest edition of the Federation of Astronomical Societies' "Astrocalendar" on payment of their subscription to the Society.

There are three handouts – beginners' seasonal star charts, planisphere and sundial that have been uploaded to the Society's website and are available to the public. They are available under the Creative Commons by Attribution Licence, so that others can redistribute or amend and distribute these documents, requiring only that the Society be acknowledged.

Electronic communication

The Society's website may be found at <http://www.astronomyedinburgh.org/>.

Email contact addresses have also been set up for some Society Officers and the Journal coordinator:

- president @ astronomyedinburgh.org
- secretary @ astronomyedinburgh.org
- treasurer @ astronomyedinburgh.org
- journal @ astronomyedinburgh.org

To help members organise observing activities, an ASE observers' mailing list was created. At the end of the year, 22 members were subscribed to this list.

Full details of the Society's activities and information about how to join are on the website. Certain announcements are publicised through the Society's Twitter account at <http://twitter.com/ASEdinburgh>, which had just under 1600 followers at the end of the year.

The Council expresses its thanks to the Royal Observatory Edinburgh for continuing to provide web space and email forwarding.

Outreach

Horst Meyerdierks gave a talk on *Astrophotography* to an audience of about 50 at the Mid Calder Camera Club on 25 February.

The Society – mustering about 14 volunteers – and the Scottish Parliament organised an event of talks and observation of the partial solar eclipse on 20 March. Hundreds of school children and members of the public queued for a glimpse safely through our telescopes, which are constructed or adapted for viewing the Sun. The Parliament created a video of the event for their YouTube channel, which featured a brief interview with the President, Ken Thomas.

Prof John Brown, Lorna McCalman and Charlie Gleed organised another excellent programme of talks and portable planetarium shows entitled "Science and Magic of Light, the Universe and Everything" at the Teviot Row Student Union on 28 March. The Society had a stand with telescope, posters and handouts.

On 26 and 27 September, members of the Society turned out to support the annual Open Days at the Royal Observatory Edinburgh. For the past few years we have been invited to attend the Open Days to help promote astronomy to the general public, as well as to publicise the Society. We provided staff and telescopes safe to look at the Sun. The weather was favourable on the Sunday, albeit too hazy to try to observe Venus in daylight. In addition, there was a stall set up with various member-produced materials for the public to take away, including information about the Society. Over the course of the two days 3000 people came through the gates of the Observatory.

In association with the National Museum of Flight at East Fortune, for the second year running, the Society organised an astronomy day on 14 November. In the main hangar, under Concorde, exhibits and activities were provided by ASE, Strathclyde Students for the Exploration and Development of Space (StrathSEDS), Cosmos Planetarium and Pufferfish Displays; there were talks by Prof Richard Brown and Robin Hague. We were hoping to provide solar viewing during the day and make use of clear dark skies at night, but the weather was against us. The attendance was 425, which has to be compared to a regular museum attendance of perhaps 80 at that time of year.

Observing and Imaging Group

While there have been no centrally organised observing sessions for members, the observers' mailing list has helped arrange a few sessions at dark sites. The Imaging Group also carried out a site inspection at Harlaw Reservoir.

The Imaging Group is now well established and held eight meetings in Juniper Green village hall – monthly on Wednesdays during the winter months. There were discussions and demonstrations of a variety of hardware and software, as well as general discussions of astronomical topics. Meetings are open to any member of the Society and several new members have joined the group. Although imaging is the main focus, there is also a social aspect to the group and a general aim to encourage practical astronomy. The group shares images and comments on its Flickr page (<http://www.flickr.com/groups/aseimaginggroup>).

The partial solar eclipse on 20 March was observed by several individual members; Alan Pickup from Fairmilehead, Duncan Hale-Sutton at Roseburn; further afield were Angus Self near Aviemore and Horst Meyerdierks chasing blue skies near Alnwick.

The total lunar eclipse on the morning of 29 September occurred right after a busy weekend at the ROE Open Days, but was observed by several members individually or in small groups from different locations.

Equipment

Two major purchases have been made during the year, compensating somewhat for a lack of expenditure in previous years, when the income (grant) from the ASE Trust had led to a significant surplus in the accounts. The first is a single-shot colour CCD camera for just over £600. The second a Lunt H α telescope and dual-axis drive EQ3/2 mount for a total of about £1130. This adds to the very popular Coronado H α telescope (purchased in 2001) and EQ2 mount.

The inventory information collected during and since the move out of the City Observatory in 2009 has been collated in a systematic manner and is available to the Council of the Society in the new form. This has led to a few more valuations being included in the assets section of the Accounts.

Financial review

As with previous years we have again requested and received a payment of £2000 from the ASE Trust (SC013921). This money will keep the members' subscription fees at their current level and will enable us to continue to meet our constitutional objectives. In particular, the purchase of additional equipment for use by Society members and the funding of high quality speakers and events will continue to attract people who want to develop their interest in astronomy.

Declaration

The trustees' annual report presented on pages 1 to 5 was approved by the Council of The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh (the trustees of the charity).

Seán Wixted, President, 6 May 2016

For and on behalf of the Council of The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh.

Receipts and payments accounts

Statement of balances

	Notes	2015		2014	
		£	£	£	£
Bank balances at start of year					
Current Account		7,324		5,749	
Total balance at start			7,324		5,749
Plus receipts		3,646		3,408	
Less payments		-3,647		-1,833	
Total balance at end			7,323		7,324
Bank balances at end of year					
Current Account		7,323		7,324	
Total balance at end			7,323		7,324
Assets and liabilities at end of year	1		0		0

Income and expenditure report

	Notes	2015		2014	
		£	£	£	£
Income					
Donations					
ASE annual subscriptions		1,273		1,287	
Other donations		0		18	
Gift Aid	2	373		0	
Donations total			1,646		1,305
Grants					
ASE Trust	3	2,000		2,000	
Grants total			2,000		2,000
Bank interest					
Current Account		0		0	
Bank interest total			0		0
Other charitable activities					
Other charitable activities total			0		0
Asset sales					
Books		0		103	
Asset sales total			0		103
Income total			3,646		3,408
Expenditure					
Charitable activities					
Meeting expenses	4	1,343		1,155	
Memberships and affiliations	5	28		28	
Astrocalendars		96		85	
Stamps		12		70	
Stationery		1		32	
Public liability insurance	6	28		20	
Member expenses		0		5	

ASE events		0	38
Charitable activities total		<u>1,508</u>	<u>1,433</u>
Governance costs			
Independent examination		100	100
Governance costs total		<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Asset purchase and upkeep			
Equipment	7	1,739	0
Repairs and maintenance		0	0
Storage rental	8	300	300
Asset purchase and upkeep total		<u>2,039</u>	<u>300</u>
Expenditure total		<u>3,647</u>	<u>1,833</u>
Income minus expenditure		-1	+1,575

Assets

	Notes	2015		2014	
		£	£	£	£
Library	9	7,740		7,740	
High-value books for disposal	9	11,890		11,890	
Low/medium-value books for disposal	9	11,680		11,680	
Artwork	10	520		600	
Telescopes etc.	11	0		6,200	
Telescopes etc., historic	11	2,280		0	
Telescopes etc., current	11	7,265		0	
IT equipment	12	300		300	
Educational equipment	13	5,200		5,200	
Assets total			<u>46,875</u>		<u>43,610</u>

Notes to the accounts

General notes:

- All funds are unrestricted, i.e. available for any of the Society's purposes.
- No grants were made in 2015.
- No remuneration was paid to any trustee (Council member) of the Society, nor to any person connected to a trustee of the Society.
- Trustee expenses: None.
- Transactions with trustees: None.

Specific notes referenced above:

1. There were no uncleared cheques at the end of 2015.
2. The Gift Aid payments received from HMRC include both tax years 2013/14 (£176) and 2014/15 (£197) as the claim for the previous year was submitted late.
3. Lorimer Trust income from investment income on financial assets management by the ASE Trust.
4. Meeting expenses comprise of £948 room hire at the Augustine United Church, £100 for Imaging Group room hire, £140 meeting refreshments, £79 speakers' travel and £76 speakers' accommodation.
5. Federation of Astronomical Societies annual membership.
6. Public Liability Insurance is with the Federation of Astronomical Societies.
7. Equipment purchases: Opticstar CCD Camera (£608), Lunt Solar Telescope including EQ3-2 driven mount and zoom eyepiece (£1131).

8. Annual cost for storage at the Augustine United Church.
9. Values, for each book, are very rough estimates. They are cost of replacement, whereas revenue from disposal would yield only a fraction of these figures.
10. This figure estimates the value of the four remaining Lorimer Medals and of the President's Medal. The work on the inventory led to a more accurate value. Not included in the value are a number of large photographs, three science displays, and two 20th century water colour paintings of the City Observatory.
11. The work on the inventory led to more, and more accurate, figures. The current equipment for 2015 includes £1739 of new purchases.
12. The value is for the data projector purchased a few years ago. While our main venue provides data projectors, this is used regularly at other venues.
13. This figure is a rough estimate of the value of three globes plus the 1990s valuation for a "starfinder" instrument by Sir William Peck.

Declaration

The receipts and payments accounts presented on pages 6 to 8 were approved by the Council of The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh (the trustees of the charity).

Seán Wixted, President, 6 May 2016

For and on behalf of the Council of The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh.

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Report to the trustees/members of	The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh		
Registered charity number	SC022968		
On the accounts of the charity for the year ended	31st December 2015 which are set out on pages 6-8		
Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner	The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 ('the 2005 Act') and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) (the '2006 Regulations'). The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the 2005 Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.		
Basis of independent examiner's statement	My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the 2006 Regulations. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.		
Independent examiner's statement	<p>In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and ◦ to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting record and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, have not been met, or 2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached. 		
Signed:	Helen Bourquin	Date:	13/5/16
Name:	Helen Bourquin Associate Member ACIE		
Address:	67 Station Road, Roslin EH25 9LP		