



The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh

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

Annual Report 2016

Trustees' annual report for the period 1 January to 31 December 2016

Constitution and management of the Society

- Charity name: The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh
- Registered charity number: SC022968
- Principal address: c/o Horst Meyerdierks, 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	whole year	AGM
2	Dr Horst Meyerdierks	Secretary	whole year	AGM
3	Mr Alan Ellis	Treasurer	whole year	AGM
4	Dr Geraldine Dennis	Vice-President	whole year	AGM
5	Ms Rachel Thomas	Vice-President	whole year	AGM
6	Mr Andrew Farrow		whole year	AGM
7	Mr Andrew Mackie		whole year	AGM
8	Mr Jim Nisbet		whole year	AGM
9	Mr Scott Provan		whole year	AGM
10	Mr Jonathan Watson		from 3 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 Peter Mulholland		until 3 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 2016, the membership of the Society was 91 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 2016, 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

All of the above trustees are past Presidents of the Society; Mr Ellis is also Treasurer of the Society; Mr Nisbet is also on the Council of the Society.

Activities during 2016

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 Meyerdierks 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 6 May, 16 September and 9 December; we thank the Royal Observatory Edinburgh for offering a meeting room for Council meetings. The Annual General Meeting was held on 3 June. The Imaging Group met 7 times during the winter months. 11 Ordinary Meetings with educational talks on different aspects of astronomy were held; the October meeting was without guest speaker and instead dedicated to advice on telescopes and other observing aids. The approximate attendance at monthly meetings was: Jan 25, Feb 43, Mar 48, Apr 39, May ~35, Jun (AGM) 31, Jul 31, Sep 35, Oct 26, Nov 36, Dec 40, total ~390.

Meetings and events.

Jan	8th	Dr Horst Meyerdierks – Astronomical Society of Edinburgh <i>Astronomy</i>
Feb	5th	Prof Rosemary Wyse – Johns Hopkins University <i>The Milky Way as a galaxy</i>
Feb	10th	<i>Imaging Group</i>
Mar	4th	Prof James Dunlop – Royal Observatory Edinburgh <i>First light</i>
Mar	9th	<i>Imaging Group</i>
Apr	1st	Dr Peter Edwards – Durham University <i>Weaving the cosmic web</i>
Apr	13th	<i>Imaging Group</i>
May	6th	Dr Klaus Staubermann – National Museums of Scotland <i>Reconstructing historic astronomical practice</i>
May	9th	<i>Transit of Mercury</i> Public observing session on Calton Hill
Jun	3rd	<i>Annual General Meeting</i> Followed by a presentation by Scott Paddon on <i>Spectroscopy</i>
Jul	1st	Dr Bruce Vickery – Astronomical Society of Edinburgh <i>Charles Piazzi Smyth</i>
Sep	9th	Vanessa Smer-Barreto – Royal Observatory Edinburgh <i>Astronomy in pre-Columbian civilizations</i>
Sep	14th	<i>Imaging Group</i>
Sep	24th	<i>Stall and telescopes</i> at the Royal Observatory Edinburgh Doors Open Day
Sep	25th	<i>Stall and telescopes</i> at the Royal Observatory Edinburgh Doors Open Day
Oct	7th	<i>Surgery on telescopes and other observing aids</i>
Oct	12th	<i>Imaging Group</i>
Nov	4th	Prof Andrew Lawrence – Royal Observatory Edinburgh <i>Chasing Piazzi Smyth</i>
Nov	9th	<i>Imaging Group</i>
Nov	19th	<i>Astronomy Day at the Museum of Flight</i>
Dec	2nd	Dr Matthew Pitkin – University of Glasgow <i>Opening the gravitational wave window on the universe</i>
Dec	14th	<i>Imaging Group</i>

Publications

The Society's Journal continues in the form of an on-line blog coordinated by Rachel Thomas. This is available to the public at <http://asedinburghjournal.wordpress.com/>. 1691 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 been set up for some Society Officers and the Journal coordinator:

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

An ASE observers' email list was set up to help members organise observing activities. At the end of the year, 24 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 1812 followers at the end of the year.

Since April 2016, the Society has a Facebook presence, at the end of the year with 95 "likes".

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 Livingston Camera Club on 11 January, and to about 30 at the Midlothian Camera Club on 13 September.

Scott Provan assisted a scout group with the astronomy badge and also did some observing with the group.

The Society held an observing session of the Mercury transit on 9 May from outside the City Observatory. About half a dozen volunteers were joined by about 230 members of the public.

On 24 and 25 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 and also observed the Moon. Some of us joined a contingent from Tweeddale Astronomical Society on the ROE rooftop terrace. There was also 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 nearly 4000 people came through the gates of the Observatory.

In association with the National Museum of Flight at East Fortune, for the third year running, the Society organised an astronomy day on 19 November. In the main hangar, under Concorde, exhibits and activities were provided by ASE as well as other groups and organisations and companies. The weather was quite favourable, and we were able to provide solar viewing during the day and make use of clear dark skies at night. The attendance was 459 during the day, 91 had booked for the evening observing.

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 is now well established and held seven 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>).

Equipment

No purchases have been made during the year. The CCD camera purchased last year is in use by the Imaging Group, and one or two of its members have been inspired to purchase their own. The Lunt solar telescope was put to good use during public observing.

Financial review

The Society did not request a grant from the ASE Trust (SC013921) during the year. In the years since 2011, the annual grant from the Trust has led to a surplus each year, which explains the healthy bank balance in spite of member subscriptions not covering cost. In the event, thanks to a book sale, no equipment purchases, increased membership, and due to changes in the venue billing interval, did 2016 turn out a surplus instead of the expected deficit of about £500.

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).

Horst Meyerdierks, Secretary, 5 May 2017.

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

Receipts and payments accounts

Statement of balances

	Notes	2016		2015	
		£	£	£	£
Bank balances at start of year					
Current Account		7,323		7,324	
Total balance at start			7,323		7,324
Plus receipts		2,218		3,646	
Less payments		-1,703		-3,647	
Total balance at end			7,839		7,323
Bank balances at end of year					
Current Account		7,838		7,323	
Total balance at end			7,838		7,323
Assets and liabilities at end of year			0		0

Income and expenditure report

	Notes	2016		2015	
		£	£	£	£
Income					
Donations					
ASE annual subscriptions		1,346		1,273	
Other donations		8		0	
Gift Aid	1	234		373	
Donations total			1,588		1,646
Grants					
ASE Trust	2	0		2,000	
Grants total			0		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		630		0	
Asset sales total			630		0
Income total			2,218		3,646

Expenditure			
Charitable activities			
Meeting expenses	3	1,026	1,343
Memberships and affiliations	4	30	28
Astrocalendars		106	96
Stamps		101	12
Stationery		12	1
Public liability insurance	5	28	28
Member expenses		0	0
ASE events		0	0
Charitable activities total		<u>1,303</u>	<u>1,508</u>
Governance costs			
Independent examination		<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Governance costs total		100	100
Asset purchase and upkeep			
Equipment		0	1,739
Repairs and maintenance		0	0
Storage rental	6	<u>300</u>	<u>300</u>
Asset purchase and upkeep total		<u>300</u>	<u>2,039</u>
Expenditure total		<u>1,703</u>	<u>3,647</u>
Income minus expenditure		+515	-1

Assets

	Notes	2016		2015	
		£	£	£	£
Library	7	7,700		7,700	
High-value books for disposal	7	11,000		12,000	
Low/medium-value books for disposal	7	12,000		12,000	
Artwork	8	520		520	
Telescopes etc., historic		2,300		2,300	
Telescopes etc., current		7,300		7,300	
IT equipment	9	300		300	
Educational equipment	10	5,200		5,200	
Assets total	11		<u>46,000</u>		<u>47,000</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 2016.
- 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. The Gift Aid payments appears reduced from 2015, because the 2015 figure was the sum of two tax years (£176 for 2013/14, £197 for 2014/15).
2. Lorimer Trust income from investment income on financial assets management by the

ASE Trust. No grant was requested in 2016.

3. Meeting expenses comprise of:
 - o £704 room hire at the Augustine United Church; the billing interval changed during the year from monthly to annual so that the 2016 sum is for only eight instead of eleven meetings;
 - o £38 for Imaging Group room hire;
 - o £112 meeting refreshments;
 - o £93 speakers' travel;
 - o £80 speakers' accommodation.
4. Federation of Astronomical Societies annual membership.
5. Public Liability Insurance is with the Federation of Astronomical Societies.
6. Annual cost for storage at the Augustine United Church.
7. 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.
8. This figure estimates the value of the four remaining Lorimer Medals and of the President's Medal. 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.
9. The value is for the data projector purchased a number of years ago. While our main venue provides data projectors, this is used regularly at other venues.
10. This figure is a rough estimate of the value of three globes plus the 1990s valuation for a "starfinder" instrument by Sir William Peck.
11. This figure is rounded to two significant digits, in line with the dominant figures for books.

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).

Horst Meyerdierks, Secretary, 5 May 2017.

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 2016 which are set out on pages 6 to 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:	20/5/17
Name:	Helen Bourquin Associate Member ACIE		
Address:	67 Station Road, Roslin EH25 9LP		