



The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh

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

Annual Report 2017

Trustees' annual report for the period 1 January to 31 December 2017

Constitution and management of the Society

- Charity name: The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh
- Registered charity number: SC022968
- Principal address: c/o Horst Meyerderks, 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 30 June	Council
2	Mr Jonathan Watson	Vice-President	from 2 June	AGM
3	Dr Horst Meyerderks	Secretary	whole year	AGM
4	Mr Alan Ellis	Treasurer	whole year	AGM
5	Dr Geraldine Dennis		from 2 June	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

Names of all other charity trustees during the period.

	trustee name	office (if any)	dates acted	appointed by
	Mr Seán Wixted	President	to 2 June	AGM
	Mr Seán Wixted	Vice-President	2 to 30 June	AGM
	Mr Jonathan Watson		to 2 June	AGM
	Dr Geraldine Dennis	Vice-President	to 2 June	AGM
	Ms Rachel Thomas	Vice-President	to 2 June	AGM
	Mr John Wood		to 2 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 2017, the membership of the Society was 87 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 2017, 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 2017

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 joining our Imaging Group and producing interesting images to show at our meetings and through our Flickr group.

Meetings

The Council of the Society met on 10 February, 28 April, 5 May, 30 June and 1 September; we thank the Royal Observatory Edinburgh for offering a meeting room for Council meetings. The Annual General Meeting was held on 2 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 November meeting was without guest speaker and instead several members gave shorter talks. The approximate attendance at monthly meetings was: Jan 40,

Feb 57, Mar 48, Apr 49, May 38, Jun (AGM) 29, Jul 18, Sep 43, Oct 38, Nov 38, Dec (no data), total ~440.

Meetings and events.

- Jan 6th Nagaraja Bezawada – Royal Observatory Edinburgh
Detectors in astronomy: Human eye to modern electronic sensors
- Jan 11th *Imaging Group*
- Feb 3rd David Woods
The Saturn V launch vehicle
- Feb 8th *Imaging Group*
- Mar 3rd Lyn Smith – BAA Solar Section
Moons
- Mar 8th *Imaging Group*
- Apr 7th Dr Nick Rowell – Royal Observatory Edinburgh
The Gaia space telescope: mapping the Milky Way in six dimensions
- Apr 12th *Imaging Group*
- May 5th Dr Stewart McKechnie
Star image appearance in large ground-based astronomical telescopes
- Jun 2nd *Annual General Meeting*
Followed by *Presidential Address* by Seán Wixted
- Jul 7th Dr Horst Meyerdirks – Astronomical Society of Edinburgh
Cassegrain – who was he?
- Sep 8th Prof Martin McCoustra – Heriot-Watt University
Stars 'r' Us!
- Sep 13th *Imaging Group*
- Sep 23rd *Stall and telescopes*
at the Royal Observatory Edinburgh Doors Open Day
- Sep 24th *Stall and telescopes*
at the Royal Observatory Edinburgh Doors Open Day
- Oct 6th Dr Peredur Williams – Royal Observatory Edinburgh
Ralph Copeland, the first Astronomer Royal on Blackford Hill
- Oct 11th *Imaging Group*
- Nov 3rd *Members' Night*
Several shorter talks prepared by members of the Society
- Nov 8th *Imaging Group*
- Nov 19th *Astronomy Weekend at the Museum of Flight*
- Nov 18th *Astronomy Weekend at the Museum of Flight*
- Dec 1st Dr David Gavine – Astronomical Society of Edinburgh
The Herschels – A family of astronomers
- Dec 6th *Imaging Group*

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/>. 1805 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 1981 followers at the end of the year.

Since April 2016, the Society has a Facebook presence, at the end of the year with 169 "likes".

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

Outreach

On 23 and 24 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. 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 more than 3300 people came through the gates of the Observatory.

Jointly with the National Museum of Flight at East Fortune, for the fourth year running, the Society organised an astronomy event on 18 and 19 November. Previously this was a one-day Saturday event, but in 2017 this was extended into a two-day weekend, held in the main hangar under Concorde, with observing and water bottle rockets outside. This was themed on the anniversaries of the first artificial satellite, Sputnik, flown in 1957, and of the first flight of Apollo and Saturn V in 1967.

The Society displayed telescopes, astrophotography, posters about astronomy and space missions; a highlight were models of Sputnik (full size) and Saturn V (at 1:144 to fit it in the hangar), courtesy of Andrew Farrow. Prof John Brown, Astronomer Royal for Scotland and one of our Honorary Presidents, presented his talk and magic show *Black holes, black magic and interstellar travel* on both days.

Cosmos Planetarium were again a major contributor with planetarium shows, a NASA dress-up astronaut suit and virtual reality demonstrations. Viking Optics returned with a display of telescopes and binoculars, and the Royal Observatory Edinburgh offered meteorite handling and Mars and Moon rock demonstrations. Further activities and comet making demonstrations were laid on by the Museum.

The weather was quite favourable, and we were able to provide solar viewing during the day and make use of clear dark skies on the Saturday night. The attendance was 1100 during the two days; the evening observing sessions were booked to capacity of 200.

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 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>).

Equipment

No purchases were made during the year.

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 absence of the grant in 2017, the deficit of £616 is entirely expected; the bank balance remains healthy.

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, 4 May 2018.

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

Receipts and payments accounts

Statement of balances

	Notes	2017		2016	
		£	£	£	£
Bank balances at start of year					
Current Account		7,838		7,323	
Total balance at start			7,838		7,323
Plus receipts		1,647		2,218	
Less payments		-2,263		-1,703	
Total balance at end			7,222		7,838
Bank balances at end of year					
Current Account		7,222		7,838	
Total balance at end			7,222		7,838
Assets and liabilities at end of year			0		0

Income and expenditure report

	Notes	2017		2016	
		£	£	£	£
Income					
Donations					
ASE annual subscriptions		1,405		1,346	
Other donations		6		8	
Gift Aid		236		234	
Donations total			1,647		1,588
Grants					
ASE Trust	1	0		0	
Grants total			0		0
Bank interest					
Current Account		0		0	
Bank interest total			0		0
Other charitable activities					
Other charitable activities total			0		0
Asset sales					
Books		0		630	
Asset sales total			0		630
Income total			1,647		2,218

Expenditure			
Charitable activities			
Meeting expenses	2	1,149	1,026
Memberships and affiliations	3	30	30
Astrocalendars		106	106
Stamps		8	101
Stationery		0	12
Public liability insurance	4	28	28
Member expenses	5	271	0
ASE Internet domain	6	112	0
ASE events	7	159	0
Charitable activities total		<u>1,863</u>	<u>1,303</u>
Governance costs			
Independent examination		<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Governance costs total		100	100
Asset purchase and upkeep			
Equipment		0	0
Repairs and maintenance		0	0
Storage rental	8	<u>300</u>	<u>300</u>
Asset purchase and upkeep total		<u>300</u>	<u>300</u>
Expenditure total		<u>2,263</u>	<u>1,703</u>
Income minus expenditure		-616	+515

Assets

	Notes	2017		2016	
		£	£	£	£
Library	9	7,700		7,700	
High-value books for disposal	9	11,000		11,000	
Low/medium-value books for disposal	9	12,000		12,000	
Artwork	10	520		520	
Telescopes etc., historic		2,300		2,300	
Telescopes etc., current		7,300		7,300	
IT equipment	11	300		300	
Educational equipment	12	5,200		5,200	
Assets total		<u>46,320</u>		<u>46,320</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 2017.
- 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:
 - Seán Wixted and Jonathan Watson: £271.00 for accommodation and travel cost, visiting Highland Astronomical Society, on ASE business. Cf. specific note #5.
- Transactions with trustees: None.

Specific notes referenced above:

1. Lorimer Trust income from investment income on financial assets management by the ASE Trust. No grant was requested in 2017.
2. Meeting expenses comprise of:
 - o £908 room hire at the Augustine United Church;
 - o £50 for Imaging Group room hire;
 - o £92 meeting refreshments;
 - o £99 speakers' travel.
3. Federation of Astronomical Societies annual membership.
4. Public Liability Insurance is with the Federation of Astronomical Societies.
5. Part-reimbursement of accommodation and travel expenses for two Council members, on ASE business, visiting Highland Astronomical Society in Inverness.
6. Renewal of the ASE Internet domain subscription for 8 years.
7. Reimbursement of cost of materials to Andrew Farrow, for construction of model of Sputnik 1, displayed at the Museum of Flight event.
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. 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 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.
12. 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, 4 May 2018.

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 2017 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:	25th May 2018
Name:	Helen Bourquin Associate Member ACIE		
Address:	67 Station Road, Roslin EH25 9LP		