

**MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE
ABERGAVENNY ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY held on the
24TH MARCH 2014 at 7pm at the KINGS ARMS, ABERGAVENNY**

PRESENT:

Mike Skidmore, Keith Young, Stuart Keenor, Diane Hewitt, Kevin Houston,
Gavin Creyke, John Mallet, Nick Busby, Tim Von Pokorny, Carol Murdoch,
Simon Watson.

APOLOGIES RECEIVED:

Tim Walker, Robert Gladstone, Sid Fewster and Rollo Lewis.

MINUTES OF AGM 2013

As previously circulated were accepted.

Proposed by: Stuart Kenner

Seconded by: John Mallet

Action

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

Nick welcomed members to the AGM and outlined the events held over the last 12 months, copy previously circulated.

Arising from the list, Gavin said there were a few Cosmology meetings missing. These comments accepted.

Prof. Chandra Wickramasinghe "Evidence for our cosmic Ancestry" best talk attended.

Prof. Mike Edmunds "When will we discover other life in the Universe" very good.

John Mallet "Those wonderful images of the Orion Nebula" was considered Best of the year together with Dr Chris North on "Planck".

Outreach:

Supported Crickhowell Walking Festival at Peterstone Court and Hay on Wye Festival. Nick reported good feedback from both events.

Arising from the Hay Festival comments, Gavin complained that he did not receive notification of the event. It was pointed out that it was mentioned in meetings. John said that anything we support will be "posted" on web site, John to be notified.

The Way Forward

Nick had circulated points/comments on where as members we want the Society to be: Considerable discussion on the points were made:

Membership, seems to be falling off and few take-ups, where as Usk has been growing Chairman wonders why? What can be done to improve membership.

NICK

It was the general opinion that we need to reach more people perhaps with by holding street observing events.

Publicise ourselves better in the local press and publications and information centres.

Subscription rate was at the appropriate level.

Better use and more updates on events to be placed on web site.

More organised observing events and sessions.

TREASURERS REPORT

The Treasurer reported:

Membership at 2013 AGM was 41.

Funds in Bank: £811.

Membership at 2014 AGM is 38 paid up members

Funds in Bank: + £457 = £1268. (Approaching £1300)

£30 was paid out for Expenses for External Speakers Travel 3 x £10.

Gavin commented on what was the point of accumulating money if we have no objectives regarding the spend and does not want to raise further money by putting up fees and subscription i.e. £1 for meetings for members, non members £2 and Subs £5. Gavin was of the opinion to keep fees the same.

However, it was decided to Fund Raise wherever possible i.e. Waitrose scheme Gavin to organise and bring to the membership attention. Carol agreed to help. GAVIN

Mike asked about fees for speakers: was informed that we pay a small amount for Expenses that come out of the meeting subs. Paying between £10-£20. Three Guest speakers in the year where we paid expenses.

Christmas event: Small profit was made on the Christmas Social £20. It was Recommended to continue with the Social.

Gavin gave thanks to Carol for assistance given in organising the event/raffle.

Gavin brought up about "Cosmology group money" and being available for them only to spend. Nick pointed out the over-lap between the two groups. It was unanimously agreed to keep the money together as one amount for the Club and any significant spend it was agreed to put before the Committee i.e: Annual Subscription for the Web, New equipment etc.

Proposed: J Mallet

Seconded: Carol Murdoch

RECEIVE REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS

Booking, Publicity and Archive

Carol repeated the list of circulated meetings and mentioned the next speaker on 24 April – Rhodri Evans and Mt Wilson observatory.

Several articles were written by Nick and submitted to the local press.

Archive – no comment.

Observing

Stuart commented that nothing has really been organised as a group because of the bad weather conditions. Stuart suggested:

Members were welcome to visit him and Nick on observing sessions.

More solar observing and where possible street observing.

Set dates for night observing and visiting Usk observatory.
Also perhaps after meetings observing sessions could be arranged it was generally AGREED that this was a good way forward. Stuart to organise.

STUART

Outreach

John and Nick regularly contribute to Outreach programmes.
Nick tried to encourage more people to be interested and of the rewards of doing such work but also mentioned the commitment involved. Organised with Usk.
John Mallet mentioned that he had lots of information Key Stages 1,2 & 3 available should it be required.
Out reach events were as previously circulated together with one which was omitted when assisting at the University of Mid Glamorgan.

Web Master

John outlined the forthcoming web cost of £123.90 in July and the benefits involved.
The greatly improved security of the site.
The number of hits since September 2013 – 3619
Max hits in day 14 March – 374

Arising out of Johns comments it was agreed that all paid up members will be put automatically on the List, if they did not want to receive emails/updates then they can Unsubscribe.

It was AGREED that there needed to be control over the subject matter placed on the web site. Members wishing to place information on the site will need to refer to the Web Master or Nick.

Gavin asked who looks at the web site. It was confirmed that most of the members Attending the AGM looked at the site on a regular basis.

It was agreed that Nick and Gavin 1-2 weeks before meetings would place information on site re. events/forthcoming meetings, thus preventing the necessity to sent out emails. However, it was agreed that the emails still be sent out before meetings as a reminder.

Cosmology Group

Gavin – reported Meetings done in blocks of 3
The listed of people who contributed to the meetings (already circulated)
Started: Nick – Relativity
Tony Pearce – Uncertainty Principle
Kevin – Looking for answers in the Heavens

Kevin – Discoveries since '65
Nick – Sub Atomic Particles
Keith/Kevin – Origins of life in Cosmos

John – What is it – A wave – A Particle
Gavin – Attacama

Thanks to all the people who have contributed.
Gavin looks forward to having discussions on the way forward for the group and members views on Cosmology group.
Attempts to draw from the experience and expertise of the members.

April – Robert Gladstone to contribute.
Kevin to see if he can obtain a “wave”.

Proposed: Tim Von Pokorny

Seconded: Stuart Keenor

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Unanimously voted by members present to keep the existing committee:

CHAIRMAN: Nick Busby

TREASURER: Gavin Creyke

SECRETARY: Carol Murdoch

Publicity & Archive

Proposed: Mike Sidmore Nominated by Nick and Seconded by: John

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Way forward:

To have more observing and practical sessions – Use of Telescope etc.

Alternating:

Lecture/practical and to advertise session on web site.

Ideas: Outings

GAVIN

Knighton – Explore bus trip

Bath – bus trip

Jodrell Bank – trip

Move meeting time

General opinion was to move meeting from 7 to 7.30p.m. to aid members.

Proposed: Mike

Seconded: Keith

Proposed Event

Nick was thinking of organising an event in October either in Usk or at Usk Reservoir as just attended Hay and thought we could do a better/or as good a job of organising and would be a good opportunity for fundraising.

We have the contacts,
Equipment,
Expertise,
Speaker contacts

Nick to look into and come up with proposals/ideas

NICK

Membership

Nick and Gavin felt that old members should be contacted to find out:

Why they no longer attend meetings and what can be done to improve.

Fund Raising

Should be actively taken up i.e. Waitrose

GAVIN/
CAROL

Advertising

Obtain Pop ups – 3 societies on it / to be used on Outreach work.

CAROL/
NICK

Suggested sites for advertising:

Hospitals
Pubs
Community Centres
Libraries
Tourist Information Centre

Advertising leaflet to be made up as hand-outs at Outreach events.
Mike to look into

MIKE

Face Book

An idea was put forward by Tim to have a face book page.
After discussion it was AGREED that we did not have enough support/
manpower/information to keep a page going/or alive. Therefore it was
generally AGREED best not to get involved at the present time. Can be reviewed
again.

MEETING CLOSED AT 9.35pm