



# Astronomical Society of South Australia Annual General Meeting – Minutes - **DRAFT**

**DATE:** Wednesday, 6 December 2023

**LOCATION:** The Braggs Lecture Theatre, University of Adelaide

The meeting was opened at 8:00pm by President, Hans Gnodtke. A total of 50 people were in attendance.

## **1 WELCOME:**

Hans commenced the meeting by acknowledging and paying the Society's respects to the Kurna people. He then extended a warm welcome to members and visitors attending in-person, as well as those watching online.

Next, Hans introduced the guest speaker Dr Manisha Caleb, DECRA Fellow / Lecturer, Sydney Institute for Astronomy School of Physics.

## **2 GUEST SPEAKER:**

Dr Manisha Caleb spoke to the topic: "A Tale of Mysterious Blips from the Cosmos". The presentation was live-streamed, recorded and made available on YouTube.

## **3.1 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES:**

It was determined that a quorum of ASSA members existed, with approx. 37 members present.

A copy of the AGM 2022 Minutes had been made available as paper-handouts to attendees. Members had previously been advised, via email, on how to access an electronic copy of the 2022 Minutes.

The President then invited members, in-person and online, to comment on the Minutes. No comments or questions were received and the Minutes were passed as approved.

## **3.2 SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Lisa Lavan, ASSA Secretary and Membership Officer, advised the following:

- membership has remained stable at around 800 members
- the total of new members for the prior 12mths was 241
- ASSA has re-instated free one-year membership for students enrolled in Astronomy 1 and Space Science & Astrophysics 1 at the University of Adelaide. This offer is only available to students in their first year of study.
- the breakup of memberships by type:
  - 48% are family and family-members
  - 26% are individual members
  - 22% are concession members
  - and 4% are student members.
- Responses to the Membership Exit and Family Member surveys have been positive:
  - reasons for non-renewal have been for external reasons such as health, family, work
  - those who have not renewed gave ASSA a satisfaction rating of 4 out of 5
  - family members strongly indicated that they were likely to renew
  - family members rated their learning opportunities as good or very helpful
  - there was a low knowledge of the ASSA Library, Facebook page, and the Astro-Imaging Group.



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### 3.3 TREASURER AND AUDITOR REPORTS

Matthew Lindner, ASSA Treasurer mentioned that he has:

- moved to mainly electronic billing to reduce fees
- made changes that have increased the interest earned on ASSA accounts
- improved the invoicing of services for outreach activities
- received a positive report from the Auditor who did not find any issues of concern or anomalies.

Matthew then presented the:

- Auditor's Report – 1 October 2022 to 30 September 2023
- Profit and Loss Statement for the year ending 30 September 2023.

Matthew drew attention to various items on the Profit and Loss Statement and Balance Sheet:

- the receipt of a grant for \$2,730 from Science Week
- the total of merchandise sold was \$8,502 which resulted in a net profit of \$1,600
- insurance paid was almost \$6,000
- some increases have been experienced in using MailChimp and fees for multi-media
- a total of \$33,000 has been received from membership payments
- subscriptions for printed and posted Bulletins amounted to \$2,080, however the cost of printing is \$2,904 and postage is \$1,804.
- at 30 September 2023 ASSA had a surplus of \$16,774.

### 3.4 PRESIDENT'S REVIEW OF 2023

Hans summarised his time as ASSA President and commented that:

- the Society is exceptional by international standards, and is made up of quiet achievers
- members have demonstrated a high degree of excellence in relation to astro-photography
- the support from Bintel, Adelaide Optical, and the Richardson family is very much appreciated
- Gerhard Velaitis has been innovative in managing meetings of the ASSA Astro-Imaging Group
- credit goes to the leaders of the Radio Astronomy Group and Variable Star Group for their high-quality work and research which is recognised internationally
- volunteers are instrumental in supporting the Society to reach out and connect with the public, and Lyn Grida and Ian Somerville are to be commended for their work
- he appreciated the support made over the year by Kathy Coombs, Michael Chartres, Lisa Lavan, and Kym Thalassoudis
- presentations at ASSA's monthly general-meetings were varied and provided a good scope of information and education to members and the public
- he appreciated the support of the Australian Institute of Physics by providing high quality presenters of very up-to-date and interesting topics
- appreciation goes to Paul Haese, Dean Davidson, and Gerhard Velaitis who volunteered to organise and manage the removal, transport, and refurbishment of the 30"NTT telescope
- the Telescope Loan Program is increasing in popularity thanks to the initiatives and organisation undertaken by Wayne McLuckie, as manager of the Program
- everyone on Council has been very helpful and supportive, and Hans acknowledged the assistance and advice provide to him by Kym Thalassoudis, Paul Haese, and Joe Grida
- suppers at the general meetings encourage members to mix and chat, and Hans thanked Bryan Kirchner for hosting these suppers over many years
- he appreciated the work done by all of the volunteers, approx. 50, who freely give their time to support the Society in many ways
- Gerhard Velaitis will be the ASSA President for 2024 and Hans is certain that the Society is in good hands.

Hans wished everyone well for the holiday season and handed the meeting to the incoming President.



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## 3.5 COUNCIL MEMBERS FOR 2024

The incoming President, Gerhard Velaitis, was elected by Council on 27 September 2023.

Council nominations closed on 1 October 2023 with nominations received for all Council positions except for the Young Astronomers Officer, Secretary, and Membership Officer. There were no contested positions and therefore no requirement for an election.

The vacancies for the Young Astronomers Officer, Secretary, and Membership Officer have been advertised.

The new Council for 2024 was announced and introduced by Gerhard:

Vice President	Scott Gregory
Secretary	Vacant
Treasurer	Matthew Lindner
Communications Officer	Alexia Hall
Website Officer	Scott Gregory
Bulletin Editor	Marie Wills
Membership Officer (provisional)	Nicola Hughes
Young Astronomers Officer	Vacant
Astronomy Outreach Officer	Ian Somerville
Facilities and Observing Sites Officer	Lyn Grida
Digital Services Officer	David Rowlands
Councillors (provisional)	Jarrod Rueff Ken Grant

## 3.6 OTHER BUSINESS:

Gerhard advised that a Council Planning meeting will be held on 13 December at which events and activities for 2024 will be discussed, as well as undertaking voting for provisional Council members.

Gerhard closed the meeting by thanking Manisha for her presentation, and wished everyone a happy and festive end to 2023.

The meeting closed at 9:45pm.