

The Open University Astronomy Club

MINUTES OF THE 2007 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 6 MARCH 2007

The AGM of the OU Astronomy Club was held at 7.30 p.m. in the Systems Seminar Room on the OU Walton Hall Campus. 14 Members were present.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Received from Jonti Horner.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

These were circulated previously and posted on the website and approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING

No matters arising.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman reported that this would be his last AGM as chairman, and thanked all members for making it an interesting job. He said the club enjoyed another very successful year with a number of club activities and excellent range of monthly speakers including old favourites. He thanked Peter Hudson and Tim Walker for their interesting and entertaining Sky Notes and Astronomy News. He also thanked John and Sheridan for their hard work as club Treasurer and Secretary.

It was particularly pleasing to see the continued use of the observatory and although he will be retiring as chairman, he looked forward to his new role as *Director* of the observatory. He reported that the observatory is not only used by the club, but also on outreach events and teaching, training and research purposes.

Barrie Jones proposed a vote of thanks to Andy for his chairmanship over the many years.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer presented the annual accounts. The Treasurer recommended that the membership fees remain unchanged at £8 for OU Staff and £10 for non-OU Staff. Subscriptions are now due.

He reported that we started the year with a balance of £887 and finished the year with £647. We took £142 in membership which was down somewhat from the previous year. However, considering that we have spent £131 on

equipment, £159 on speakers' expenses, £39 on a BAA subscription is not bad at all.

Barrie Jones asked why there was showing £0 for OU Club grants, the treasurer reported that no application was made this year. The chairman said it would be good to put in an application for our own digital projector. The chairman also said that we should apply for a grant to help with the Milton Keynes Science Festival in July.

Peter Hudson asked if the accounts needed to be audited, the chairman said that we have to submit our accounts to the overall OU Club which acts as an auditing process.

6. SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Secretary reported that this was his first report and although there were 32 people on the Yahoo mailing list there are only 17 paid-up members. He asked if it was the views of the members that non paid-up members should be removed from the list. The chairman said we should remind them that they haven't paid and will be removed in say 2 months failing payment. The treasurer agreed with this policy.

The secretary pointed out that in the previous year we had 28 members as opposed to only 17 now, and asked if we should advertise in various places. Local paper and the MK Community Information Network were suggested. Diana asked if we were listed on the Leighton Buzzard Advisory list, no-one knew the answer to this. The secretary reported that he had made sure that we were listed on the BAA website as an affiliated club/society, and had corrected a few errors on the page. Alan Cooper asked if we could find out why members were leaving. Diana asked if there was a charge to put a notice in Astronomy Now, the secretary agreed to check.

Action: Sheridan

The secretary asked the chairman if he could change the Observatory web site to remove John Tanner as the point of contact and also replace the chairman's details.

Action: Andy Norton

The secretary said he still needed speakers for May and June, and asked for ideas for next year.

Action: All members

The Yahoo Group communication facility was proving very useful to members to enable them to exchange information and this was particularly well used to debate issue surrounding the use of the Laser Beam at Central Milton Keynes. The speaker programme had continued to be varied and it was particularly pleasing to note that one monthly meeting was jointly with the Institute of Physics.

There was a further discussion about increasing local awareness of the AstroGroup and making links to the BAA site as a member organisation. This would be undertaken by the new Club Secretary.

7. REPORT BY THE OBSERVATORY WORKING GROUP

Sheridan asked if there was any news on the possible new telescope. However a Solarmax 90 had been ordered, together with mounting kit and counterweight, this would ride piggy-back on the main scope. This will not be delivered before May.

Alan Cooper asked if there was any more news about moving the observatory. The chairman replied that he had heard nothing more from "estates".

The Observatory Working Group continues to open the Observatory on suitable evenings.

8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The following were elected:

Chairman: Dr Jonti Horner
Treasurer: Mr John Walters
Secretary: Mr Sheridan Williams

Barrie Jones said a few words about Jonti Horner and showed a picture of him skiing. Jonti joined Barrie Jones in October 2006 working on Exo-planetary systems, prior to that he was at Berne in Switzerland for 2 years. He has a terrific enthusiasm for outreach and public understanding projects. He is enthusiastic and energetic and will make an excellent chairman. Andy Norton reported that he has been a member of the West Yorkshire Astronomical Society since a schoolboy.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business and the meeting was closed at 9:15pm.

I certify that this is a true record of the meeting as approved by the membership...

Chairman _____

Date 7 March 2008