

The Open University Astronomy Club

MINUTES OF THE 2008 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 4 MARCH 2008

The AGM of the OU Astronomy Club was held at 9.30 p.m. in the Physics Seminar Room on the OU Walton Hall Campus. 16 Members were present.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None was received.

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 was the end of his first year in the post. He said the club enjoyed another successful year albeit with falling membership numbers. The quality of speakers was very good, with several talks coming from in-house. He thanked Peter Hudson for his interesting and entertaining Sky Notes and hoped Tim Walker would return soon for Astronomy News. He also thanked John and Sheridan for their hard work as club Treasurer and Secretary.

He also reported on the state of the observatory, noting that there were severe structural problems. It was disappointing that the club had not been able to make use of the observatory of late, and said that he would make sure that greater availability was made this coming year.

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 £665 (£887) and finished the year with £545 (£665). We took £160 (£142) in membership which was slightly up from the previous year. We also spent nothing (£131) on equipment, £75 (£159) on speakers' expenses and £41 (£39) on our BAA subscription. Last year's figures are in brackets.

The treasurer pointed out that we have not applied for any grants this year.

6. SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Secretary reported that there were 33 people on the Yahoo mailing list despite there being only 18 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 consensus was that they should be left there.

The secretary confirmed that we are listed on the BAA website as an affiliated club/society, and will also send details to Astronomy Now's club/society pages. Diana suggested also notifying the club pages of Sky at Night magazine.

Action: Sheridan

The secretary has created a temporary web site (<http://ouastro.co.uk>) because the OU's web site had been out of action for some time. It was discussed how members could book observatory use without a web site booking form.

Action: Jonti Horner

The secretary said he needed ideas for topics and/or speakers for next year (Sept 2008 to June 2009), 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.

7. REPORT BY THE OBSERVATORY WORKING GROUP

Jonti pointed out that they were having considerable difficulty focussing the telescope and wondered whether there was a problem with the mirror lock. Also the corrector plate is very dirty and needs cleaning again.

The Observatory Working Group hopes to re-commence opening the Observatory on alternate Wednesday evenings.

8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The following were elected:

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

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Peter Hudson suggested that the club might like to purchase a superior webcam and will investigate the options.

Action: Peter Hudson

There was no other business and the meeting was closed at 10:15pm.

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

Chairman _____

Date 3 March 2009