



Astronomical Society of South Australia **DRAFT** Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 4 December 2024
The Braggs Lecture Theatre, University of Adelaide
and by Zoom link.

The meeting was opened at 8:00 pm by the President, Gerhard Velaitis. A total of 65 were in attendance in the Braggs Lecture Theatre.

1. WELCOME

Gerhard commenced the meeting by acknowledging and paying the Society's respects to the Kaurna people. He then extended a warm welcome to members and visitors attending in-person and online.

Next, Gerhard introduced the guest speaker, Dr Francis Bennet, Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics, ANU.

2. GUEST SPEAKER AND AWARDS

Dr Bennet spoke to the topic: *Doing more with amateur telescopes: communications, turbulence profiling, and quantum communications*. The presentation was live-streamed, recorded and made available on YouTube.

Following the presentation by Dr Bennet, Gerhard presented ASSA Awards to those recipients who were absent from the ASSA Annual Dinner. Awards were received by Jarrod Koh, Paul Montague and Ajneet Singh.

3. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

3.1 OPENING

The formal Annual General Meeting part of the evening was opened by the President at 9:25 pm. It was determined that requirements for a quorum of ASSA members had been satisfied, with approximately 55 members present.

3.2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF 2023 AGM

A copy of the Draft AGM 2023 Minutes had been made available as paper handouts to attendees. In addition, members had been previously advised via email on how to access an electronic copy of the 2023 Minutes.

The President invited members, in-person and online, to comment on the Minutes. No comments or questions were received. The Minutes were confirmed as a correct record. Moved: Hans Gnodtke. Seconded: Ken Grant. Carried.

With Lisa Lavan concluding her time as Secretary and member of Council, the President presented a gift to Lisa expressing his appreciation for her services. The President especially recognised her contribution in 2024 when Lisa had agreed to continue for a whole year in an Acting capacity in the absence of a replacement Secretary.

3.3 SECRETARY'S REPORT

Lisa Lavan, Acting Secretary, advised the following:

- Meetings: Council meets 12 times each year. During 2024 Council approved approx. 25 motions on:
 - Copyright issues affecting the Bulletin, YouTube recordings and presentations,
 - Outreach Events, including public and school viewing nights and educational sessions, Science Alive! and National Science Week,
 - Constitution and Rules: Updating in general and review of membership categories.
- Emails: During 2024 the Secretary sent approx. 1,400 emails to members and the public on Council business, external enquiries requesting viewing opportunities, and requests for information/assistance. Lisa was surprised on one occasion to be asked if ASSA could supply a weather balloon!

3.4 MEMBERSHIP OFFICER'S REPORT

Nicola Hughes, Membership Officer, advised the following:

- The total membership up to 30 November 2024 is 759. Unfortunately, this is down from last year's total of 810. During this year 6 members have resigned, and ASSA was notified of 3 deaths. Most members who do not wish to continue as members simply do not renew their membership.
- From December 2023 to November 2024 a total of 145 new members joined ASSA. This includes 63 individual members, 27 family households and an additional 55 family members.
- One institution joined ASSA: the Willunga Waldorf School. The school is represented by a teacher.
- On the last Saturday of July (27th) an evening for new members was held at Stockport. 8 new members attended and had an enjoyable and educational evening. Thank you to the volunteers who attended and helped to make it a memorable evening for our new members.

3.5 TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer, Stephen White, joined the meeting via Zoom from Kangaroo Island. He acknowledged the previous Treasurer, Matthew Linder, who had undertaken most of the work on financial reports. Stephen advised the following:

- Revenues increased from \$58k for 22/23 to \$61k for 23/24 largely attributable to sales of equipment
- Expenses fell from \$42k for 22/23 to \$39k for 23/24 due to lower merchandise purchases
- Surplus for 23/24 rose to \$22k from \$17k
- Liquid funds rose from \$126k at 30/9/23 to \$148k at 30/9/24
- There was only a small increase in Fixed Asset values bringing overall Asset Values to \$504k from \$481k
- Stockport Land and Buildings may have appreciated further since the last revaluation and an update should be sought
- There were no liabilities beyond day to day running costs
- Total Equity stands at \$504k.

3.6 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Gerhard Velaitis presented the 2024 President's Report. Gerhard had provided a full report in the December Bulletin of ASSA.

Personal Highlights of 2024 were:

- Members doing great work: Imaging, Radioastronomy, Variable Stars, Occultations, and active member nights and dark sky camps
- Outreach: Public events: our General Meetings, Stockport PSPs, Cambrai PSP, Science Week
- Appeals for help to members: Copyright and Adamson Telescope.

Challenges for 2025 are:

- Website / Member database: review/rebuild/upgrade
- Video streaming / downloads: public outreach vs cost, and copyright
- Facilities: Stockport: bird infestation, and long-term future (incr. LP)
- Volunteerism: key Council positions remain unfilled!

Members formally accepted the Officer reports as presented. Moved: Ken Grant. Seconded: Lyn Grida. Carried.

4. INCOMING COUNCIL FOR 2025

Council nominations closed on 1 October 2024 with nominations received for all Council positions except for Secretary, Young Astronomers Officer and Astronomy Education Officer. There were no contested positions and therefore no requirements for an election.

Gerhard continues in the role of President in 2025. He announced the remaining members of Council for 2025:

- Vice President, Scott Gregory
- Website Officer, Scott Gregory
- Secretary Vacant
- Membership Officer, Nicola Hughes
- Treasurer, Stephen White
- Communications Officer, Alexia Hall
- Digital Services Officer, David Rowlands
- Outreach Officer, Ian Somerville
- Facilities and Observing Sites Officer, Lyn Grida
- Bulletin Officer, Marie Wills
- Astronomy Education Officer, Vacant
- Young Astronomers Officer, Vacant
- Councillor, Ian Furness - Assistant Secretary
- Councillor, Ken Grant
- Councillor, Bryan Kirchner
- Public Officer, Paul Haese

5. CLOSURE

Gerhard advised that the next Council Meeting would take place on 11 December to carry out 2025 Calendar Planning.

Special thanks were given to the outgoing Council from 2024, all attendees at the AGM, and ASSA's sponsors: Adelaide Optical and Bintel.

Gerhard closed the meeting by extending greetings of the season to all.

The Annual General Meeting closed at 9:45 pm.