

Cleveland and Darlington Astronomical Society
Minutes of Committee Meeting held on Sunday, January 20th, 2012 at 15:00.
Venue: 48 Linden Road, West Cornforth, Ferryhill, DL17 9NR

Present: Jürgen Schmoll in the Chair (JS), Rod Cuff (RC), Peter Hanna (PH), Julia Goudge (JG), Keith Johnson (KJ).

Apologies: Neil Haggath (NH), Sue Barnes (SB), Dave Lewis (DL), Ed Restall (ER).

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks and matters arising of the last meeting of 2012 October 11

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 15:15.
The minutes of the last committee meeting on 2012 October 11 have been read out and accepted.

2. Treasurers report

According to emails sent out by Sue Barnes before the meeting, the account had been audited by Barry Hetherington. The end of year closing balance is £2302.71 including a profit of £276.62.

Sue also suggested charging first-time visitors as there is no active control over who is a first time visitor,. The current system relies on honesty and is hard to police.

The committee discussed this point and agrees that there should be a fee for all attendants. York AS for example charges £2 to everybody, and the small fee should not prevent potential new members from turning up. £2 per session (£1.50 for concessions) has been voted for unanimously.

3. Planetarium and public observing, CaDAS observing

Ed Restall will not be able to attend the February AGM for personal reasons. PH will receive some basic training next week, as he had been asked by Ed Restall to assist. KJ expressed interest to help out as well, and mentioned that John and George Gargett may be interested.

Action KJ: Get in touch with ER to get trained as well, and to check if John and George Gargett may be able to assist.

4. State of observatory

The observatory is open for public observing sessions now. There are some key holders so the instrument may also be used outside of the public observing hours.

5. AGM preparation (Feb 09, 2013)

Nobody of the committee members present intends any change of their role.

PH mentions that it is a struggle to get a quorum for decisions during committee meetings. Together with the fact that the member numbers increase, it should be reasonable to put more "floor committee members" into action. CaDAS should clarify that everybody is welcome to join the committee.

Action JS: Mentioning this at the AGM, promoting committee membership.

Action KJ: Promote committee membership at the AGM.

KJ also mentions that there is not much interaction between CaDAS members as they appear for a talk just to disperse at the end again. Sunderland AS for example has informal get-togethers with enough time outside of any presentations, where members can discuss astronomy-related issues. Having something in place like a beginner's course or the astrophotography workshop could help here.

The venue charge is to be clarified – how much the planetarium venue costs, or how much Ed costs to be there. There is also the possibility to use CaDAS money to subsidize such events.

Apart from the charge for 1st time members, there is no change of membership fees this year.

6. Member's night presentations

Stephen Goudge: Eclipse pictures, will not turn up in person. Will send disk to JS.

KJ: Short contribution TBD.

JS: Short contribution TBD.

John Crowther: Said will get in touch with Neil Haggath.

Neil Haggath: Australia eclipse images and talk – 20 min.

7. Communications and information secretary / TRANSIT editor vacancy

Nobody else seems to volunteer, and RC does not want to leave CaDAS in despair. Comms and Info secretary is a bit of a "strange post", being involved with quick communications a new comets in the sky etc. Individual replies for example to beginners can take quite long. RC still enjoys to edit TRANSIT but is running out of time for long individual replies.

JS suggests to put kind of an FAQ document together dealing with how to get started in practical astronomy. Either for the website or as a document to be sent to interested parties.

RC stresses the point that he is still happy as an information secretary for inside CaDAS but not dealing with outreach-related communications any more.

Another problem with TRANSIT is that the influx dries out. Apart from KJ there is not much input in terms of astronomical images etc. RC still aims for a monthly issue, but he may have to reduce the size depending on capacity and influx. Andy Fleming may be interested to assist. RC does not tend to "pinch" lots from the internet as everybody can find it there anyhow.

JG suggested to publish museum reviews written by the members.

Action JS: Put a document together that can be handed out to interested parties or put to the website.

Action JS: Appeal at AGM for authors to come forward to write for TRANSIT.

8. CaDAS trip to Kielder Observatory

A booking took place for March 09. While two members cannot make this date, there are four more interested friends or partners queueing on a waiting list for the 17 places. Next time, the number of trip attendants should be written down on the list. Furthermore contact details should be included to ease the communication for arranging the trip.

RC suggests to provide more information about the structure of the evening. JS will announce that Kielder Starfest happens on the same Saturday, maybe worthwhile to visit the events at Kielder Castle.

9. Astrophotography workshop

The cost of the planetarium as a venue has to be clarified.

KJ is an SBC employee, so maybe this helps to open the planetarium without ER necessarily to be present. A maximum charge for workshop members should be agreed on and the possibility of subsidizing this by CaDAS funds should be checked (about the same amount as the profit at maximum?).

Action (PH): Clarify planetarium venue situation.

Action (KJ, JS): Get together to clarify the format of the workshop.

10. Any Other Business

- JS: How to get TRANSIT postage reimbursed ?

JG: Has to check with SB, then a cheque has to be posted.

Action JS: Organise with SB to get a cheque given at the AGM.

- Ordinary meeting minutes should be sent out in TRANSIT.
- Committee meeting minutes, after being cross-read and corrected, could be put into Transit as well.
- JG cannot take AGM minutes as she cannot make the date. JS will do it.
- KJ: Speaker contacts still have to be sorted. Also a backup program should be in place, like another talk or a planetarium show.

Next committee meeting

Ed Restall pointed out that the DOODLE poll system is not working well for him as he has to keep several dates free in advance instead of one. In this light, the committee tries to set the date for the next committee meeting at the end of the current one.

The next committee meeting date has been set to Thursday April 11, 2013 at 19:30 at West Cornforth. This is one day before the April CaDAS meeting.

End of meeting: 16:55 BST.

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