

MINUTES FROM A COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15TH SEPTEMBER AT 7.15 P.M. AT THE YOUNG EDUCATIONS SERVICES OFFICES, GREENWICH

1. PRESENT: Lin Potter (Chair), Mike Dryland (Vice Chair), Peter Kitcherside, Deborah McGarvey, David Waugh, Grey Lipley and Jane Bendall

2. APOLOGIES: Roger Geeson and Mike Dear.

Lin began the meeting by welcoming Grey Lipley and thanking him for coming. He is putting his name forward to become a committee member.

3. MATTERS ARISING: There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting on 9th March 2010.

4. SOLAR VIEWING: Mike reminded the meeting that the Hydrogen Alpha telescope belonged to the museum and was not our private property and said that the museum is now planning to use it more extensively particularly with groups. Once the Volunteer Observing Assistants had been appointed this might be part of their role.

Grey Lipley tabled his signs for Flamsteed H-A viewing sessions. It was agreed that we would in due course ask the Members office to fund three large posters for the railings near the Peter Harrison cone, but we would not pursue the smaller signs for the time being. One reason is finance (see AOB) secondly we would be very unlikely to be allowed to put small signs around the site. Grey to reword the content as agreed. Lin thanked both Grey and David for all their hard work and effort – the posters are magnificent, eye catching and very reasonably priced at £50 and will give a professional feeling to our efforts. Sadly until a new Membership Manager is appointed we cannot ask for the funding – this will therefore take some time.

John Griffiths – £250 was collected at the FAS meeting from members who wished to donate to an astronomical project in John's name. We decided to buy the HEQ5 mount for £200 and explore attaching a small plaque; Lin to announce at the meeting on Monday 20th September.

A list of wants/must haves was tabled by David. It was agreed to approach Rob Edwards to discuss – modified heavy duty flight cases, trolley, table and children's stickers.

5. ROLE OF OBSERVING COORDINATOR: It was agreed that it is more appropriate to discuss committee roles after the AGM when new people may have volunteered. Deborah agreed to write a detailed and comprehensive "job description" of the duties of a solar viewing coordinator. It was unnecessary to have an overseeing Viewing Coordinator as Pat has agreed to continue with Romney, Jane with Hazelwood, David with Cudham and Blackheath.

6. PREPARATIONS FOR AGM AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR 20TH SEPTEMBER:

Grey is joining Mike (who is taking Jerry Stone round the observatory first) and Jane at supper at the Trafalgar Tavern at 5.30.

Deborah volunteered to arrange tea and coffee and Peter the wine at the meeting. There will be no help from the Membership office as Tori is on leave. Jane will bring a sign-in attendance sheet and there will be no badges.

The museum has given permission for Jerry Stone to sell his book.

The AGM: Elections are unnecessary – indeed co-options are probably unnecessary too, because we are now part of the museum our constitution is basically obsolete. All papers have been circulated and it was agreed that in future a financial accounting will not be circulated (see AOB below).

7. PROGRAMMING INCLUDING VISITS:

- Christmas party at the ROG: Jane and Marek to discuss shortly.
- Viewing with the 28" telescope will continue to be on Tuesdays when the ROG is already open for courses, the stewards are on duty and the shuttle bus will be running. If the weather is unsuitable Tony has agreed to run a Sky Tonight planetarium show instead, meaning the event will not have to be called off at the last moment as in previous viewing evenings.
- EWTS: FAS input will now probably be arranged by the new Volunteer Observing Assistants.
- Possible visit to the Munday-Sayer Observatory – Lin is to find out how far away this private observatory is from Greenwich – it may be that small groups might like to go by car one weekend, but we shall not arrange a coach because if the weather is bad there are no alternative activities.
- Beginner's telescope workshop: It was agreed that we should run this ourselves as we have the necessary expertise. Jane to arrange two dates after Christmas and Mike to co-ordinate.
- Repeat tours of the Altazimuth Building: Agreed that members would enjoy another opportunity to join Mike's tour and he will sort out a suitable date. The meeting thanked Mike for the excellent and informative tours he had conducted earlier in the month.

8. INSURANCE ISSUES AND LATEST UPDATES: Jane (with Pat and Martin's help) had sent in a risk assessment for Romney which has been accepted. We have been told to continue to plan outings as long we follow the correct procedures. It is not necessary to complete a risk assessment for our Hare and Billet evenings.

9. CHANGE OF STAFF AT THE NMM: Rebecca Bristow Membership Manager and Kate Topham Visitor Services have already left the museum and Sarah Roots Director of the ROG is leaving shortly. All three were efficient, supportive and good friends to the FAS and we shall certainly miss them.

Rob Edwards and Nick Babbs had suggested an evening after-work drink with new members of staff and the committee and Jane will remind them of this excellent idea.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- a) Volunteer Observing Assistants: there are quite a few applicants, some from the FAS. We feel we can help with our experience and therefore we need to be prepared to coordinate and liaise with the new appointees in areas such as the small telescope teams, solar viewing, family evenings etc.
- b) Finance and Accounts. The accounts and particularly the surplus reserves shown in our end of year financial report do not reflect the real situation. Now we are Members of the museum the money is not FAS money at all but part of the Members' overall budget. On the other hand it is useful to have some sort of accounting to ensure that FAS expenditure is reasonable, also if we wish to fund any items (see H-A signs above) the museum is more likely to listen to our representations favourably, in that our prudence gives us a little moral leverage. It was agreed that we would not publish the end of year accounts again as it is confusing to our members.
- c) A member, Brian Evans, had asked us to re-instate Hare and Billet evenings. Now that H&S and risk assessment issues have been resolved it was agreed to go ahead. It is necessary to have a coordinator to settle on and announce dates in advance and also to act as an anchor person that evening. If the coordinator cannot come they should ensure that someone else is there as their replacement.
- d) Membership numbers are stable at present around the 200 mark although autumn is the main recruitment period so this could change.

Lin wound up the meeting by thanking everyone on the committee for all their hard work and efforts during the past year.

Date of next meeting: Not decided but should be this autumn after the AGM