

**Notes from a Committee Meeting of the Flamsteed Astronomy Society
held on Thursday September 15th 2011 at the offices of Young Education Services**

Present: Lin Potter (Chair), Mike Dryland (Vice Chair), Rachel Harrison, Deborah McGarvey, Rob Edwards, Peter Kitcherside, David Waugh and Mike Meynell.

1. **Apologies** were received from Jane Bendall who was indisposed, Grey Liple, Pat Wainwright and Roger Geeson.
 - The Chair welcomed Rachel Harrison (Membership Manager) and Rob Edwards (Head of Science Education) to the meeting. They will now be the Museum representatives on the Committee.
 - The Meeting noted that Mike Dear had resigned from the Committee because the Dears have moved house to the west of London. Jane had written to Mike and Gaby thanking them both for the work they had put in to the Society and the Committee added its thanks.

2. **Matters Arising** from the minutes of the meeting on March 3rd 2011
 - Mike M reported that he was deferring his approaches to the Museum and the Park about after-hours access for observing until after the 2012 Olympics
 - The meeting thanked and congratulated Mike M for his work on the Flamsteed twitter account and SMS messaging. Flamsteed now has 140 followers on twitter and has twitted 500 times.
 - Rachel reported that she was so far unable to find lockable storage near the lecture theatre for our tea, coffee, and wine supplies. We agreed to raise the request at a suitable moment with Rosemary Gilbert and Chris Styles.

3. **Flamsteed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)**
 - Mike D reported on the status of development of the new MoU between the Society and the Museum. We had received a proposed MoU from Rosemary Gilbert on August 8th. The sub-group set up at the last meeting had met to discuss the proposal and replied with a revised draft on September 9th.
 - There was a discussion about some open issues in the draft
 - The meeting felt that 9 elected members for the new Committee was the right number. Together with 2 Museum appointees and the appointed Programme Secretary, there would be 12 committee members plus any co-opted.
 - It was agreed that the Museum appointees would be non-voting.
 - The next step is to meet Rosemary Gilbert and other Museum representatives for a discussion about the draft and the sub-group proposed dates of October 6th or 7th for this.

4. **Planning for the AGM – Monday October 10th**
 - One new nomination has so far been received to stand for election to the Committee. Nominations close 48 hours before the AGM.
 - All committee members present were willing to offer themselves for re-election. Peter was also willing to stand down and be considered for co-opting. The absent committee members will be asked about their intentions to stand or not.
 - Lin would prepare a Report from the Chair for circulation ahead of the AGM and presentation in summary at the AGM.

5. Flamsteed Budget Preparation

- Mike D reported that the Flamsteed accounts just received from the Museum for 2010/11 were not correct. Kerri Richards in Accounting had already reviewed and revised the income figure. The expenditure figures also needed to be reviewed. Mike D and Jane would arrange to meet with Rachel and Kerri to discuss how best to track the account going forward. We would need to understand the effect of VAT.
- It was agreed that the Society would submit a budget for 2012/13 to Rachel by the end of November. Jane and Mike D will lead the budget development.

6. Solar Observing Update

- Mike M and Rob gave the meeting a status report on the development of new ROG Volunteer Job Specs for the roles of coordinators and assistants at solar observing sessions. Grey has been working with Rob, Nick Babbs, and others to develop the drafts.
- Rob explained that the specs are intended initially to formalise the work already being done by the existing group who are mainly Flamsteed members. This would enable the work to be properly recognised and considered for funding where equipment etc was necessary.
- David asked about plans to transfer the present coordination work (eg the Google Group distribution list) to the ROG. Rob replied that there was no intention to alter the present arrangements.
- David, Mike M and others will meet with Grey to clarify plans for the Google Group distribution list, and also discuss the role job titles (felt to be rather confusing).
- The Chair noted with thanks the work put in by Grey and the group to develop the specs and push the solar observing programme forward.

7. Programming 2011/12

- The Committee noted its thanks to Jane for planning another excellent season
- **Visit to the GEO Observatory** -- Lin ran through her slide show about the proposed trip to Kathy Griffiths' Observatory in El Bosque Spain. Lin is proposing a 3-night trip at February half-term, or Easter 2012 for 15-20 observers. Lin has cleared the trip in principle with the Museum and she will present the proposal to members at the lecture meeting on September 29th.
- **Telescope workshop plans** – Rob reported that there will be a programme of adult astronomy classes at the ROG starting in the autumn including a course on practical observing for beginners. The committee felt that this course would nicely meet the needs of members and it therefore wouldn't be necessary for the Flamsteed to stage a workshop. Rob will send Mike D details of the courses for distribution to Flamsteed members.
- **Flamsteed 28-in sessions** -- Rob will ask Nick Babbs to sort out a list of possible dates for Tuesday Flamsteed sessions with the ROG 28-in telescope.
- **Access to Neptune Court** for Flamsteed lecture evenings. Rachel reported —
 - Access for pedestrians would now be via King William Walk and the Sammy Ofer Wing entrance.
 - Access for drivers will be via the staff car park as now, but then walking down the Park side of the site to the SOW entrance.
 - Access for disabled drivers, and to deliver refreshments, would continue to be via the staff car park, driving down the Romney Road side of the site to the 'old' entrance, and using the glass door near the propeller. We will need to ask the G.A.s to unlock the glass door. Disabled drivers will be able to leave their car near the

glass door, but the Museum would prefer the refreshment coordinators to return to park in the staff car park after delivering. The Society will respect the Museum's wishes.

8. **Flamsteed website calendar** -- Mike M kindly offered to take on the maintenance of the website Google calendar with details of future events, observing meetings, and general items of astronomical interest.
9. **Planning for the London Olympics 2012** -- Rob and Rachel reported that details are just beginning to emerge on how and when access to the ROG and NMM will be affected by the Olympics. There will be restrictions on access especially to the ROG. They will pass on details as soon as available. Jane has not planned any lectures for June, July, or August.

10. Any Other Business

- Rachel reported that she was developing a publicity flyer for the Flamsteed. She will send the draft to Mike D for circulation to the Committee for review and comment.
- Deborah will be absent on vacation for the lecture on September 29th. David very kindly offered to take charge of the tea and coffee service in her absence and he will arrange to get the equipment and supplies before she departs. The meeting expressed the hope that Deborah has a truly exceptional vacation.
- Mike D reported that as at August 10th 2011 the Flamsteed membership roll stood at 227 people – 200 active, 27 lapsed*. The total is composed of 98 single memberships, 31 joint (each 2 people), 62 concessionary, and 5 honorary. We will continue to monitor the number attending lectures – the capacity of the lecture theatre is 120. (*Members whose subscriptions have lapsed have three months' grace before being dropped from the Society roll).
- The date for the next Committee meeting will be set after the AGM.

The meeting thanked Lin for her customary splendid hospitality. There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9pm.

In Jane Bendall's absence,
Mike Dryland
Acting Committee Secretary