

MINUTES OF THE
ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA - HALIFAX CENTRE

April 21, 1995

Present: Ian Anderson, Jodi Asbell-Clarke, Paul Gray, Tom Harp, Pat Kelly, Dave Lane, Blair MacDonald, Shawn Mitchell, Clint Shannon, David Turner, Mary Lou Whitehorne

The meeting convened at 19h10 at the residence of Mary Lou Whitehorne.

1) Approval of the Agenda

Approval of the agenda was moved by TH/BM.....Motion carried.

2) Approval of the Minutes of the March Meeting

Minutes to be amended, in item (11) spelling error (Sidney van den Bergh).

Approval of the March minutes was moved by DT/BM.....Motion carried.

3) Business Arising from the Minutes of the March Meeting

None.

4) Reports from Members of the Executive

a) President (DL) No report.

b) First Vice-President (BM)

The letter regarding the School-based Astronomy Program was sent to three Halifax High Schools. Three observing sessions have been conducted. Volunteers to assist in conducting future sessions would be appreciated. (TH)

c) Second Vice-President (SM)

Twenty extra copies of The Observer's Handbook were sent on consignment to the Nova Scotia Government Bookstore. There was a mixup in paperwork by the store regarding consignment vs purchasing which needs to be straightened out.

d) Secretary (TH) No report.

e) Treasurer (IA)

The Centre's cash balance is \$ 1907.22.

f) NOVA NOTES Editor (DL)

Nova Notes will be ready for the meeting on April 25.

g) National Council Representative (PK) No Report.

h) Librarian (CS)

A hard copy index and disk of the Centre's library has been received from SM. A full physical inventory of all library materials will be taken. When this is completed, recommendations on the disposition of the materials will be made. Plans are in work to acquire some new books.

i) Observing Chairman (PG)

Motion: That the Centre's membership in the International Dark Sky Association be transferred from MLW to the Observing Chairman.

Moved by MLW/BM.....Motion carried.

5) Agenda for the next Meeting (DL)

BM will give the Handbook talk. TH will be the meeting reporter.

6) "Hands on Universe" (J A-C)

Jodi Asbell-Clarke made a presentation to the Executive Council regarding Hands-on-Universe (HOU). The presentation offered a complete description of the program, its proposed implementation in Atlantic Canada and a demonstration of the image processing software which the program uses.

She requested an endorsement from the Centre. Given that the program's purpose is to encourage the learning of science, mathematics and technology, the Centre offers its enthusiastic support for HOU.

7) Nova East (DL)

The status quo will be maintained for Nova East this year to allow an evaluation of the support for the event.

The fee structure for the use of the Fundy National Park will change next year.

Astro Atlantic, sponsored by the Hampton Astronomy Club et al, will be held June 23-26.

The issue of where Nova East might be held in the future was discussed at length. Several alternatives to Fundy National Park were discussed. In the end however it was decided to hold further discussion in abeyance until the support for Nova East could be evaluated.

8) Observatory Land Search Committee Report

(a) Centre Incorporation (DL)

A reply has been received to the Centre's enhanced submission to the government. It seems that an affidavit sworn before a Barrister will be required. DL and JY will meet with a lawyer to assess any possible adverse effects. If no legal problems are identified DL will submit the requested affidavit.

(b) Lease Report (DL)

A meeting has been scheduled for 27 April with Gary Armsworthy (NSPAC legal advisor) to review the terms of the proposed lease for the St. Croix site.

9) Centre Representation at the General Assembly

A proposal was put forward to have Paul Gray act as the Centre's National Representative at the General Assembly to facilitate his presentation (with DL) at the G.A. (Pat Kelly will be present in his capacity as Bulletin Editor.) In addition it was proposed that the Centre cover up to \$250 in G.A. travel expenses not covered by the National Association.

Motion on the proposal BM/CS..... Motion Carried.

10) Changes to Meeting Format (DT)

A lengthy discussion was held to discuss ways in which the Centre meetings might be made more "friendly" to encourage more members to join, attend and participate in meetings.

DT explained the meeting format successfully used in Sudbury. The format consisted of several short presentations (10 minutes each) including such topics as "What's New" and "The Sky This Month" followed by the main speaker for the evening. The importance of having something for everyone was key in the meetings.

The possibility of having a talk on a constellation every month was discussed. Burnham's provides lots of information.

Increased use of visual material was considered to be appropriate to focus audience attention and assist the speaker.

The possibility of trying one new idea per month was discussed.

It was resolved that the topic of changes to the meeting format is important enough to merit regular discussion at the Executive Council meetings.

A membership survey (including ex-members) will be conducted in the Fall.

11) Youth Membership Fee

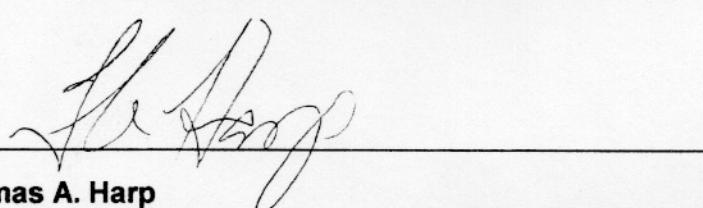
Motion: That a Youth Membership Fee of fifteen dollars (\$15) be established next year.

Moved by BM/MLW..... Motion Carried.

12) Other Business (DL)

It was noted that SM will be setting up and maintaining a site on the World Wide Web for the Centre.

The meeting was adjourned at 22h22 on a motion by BM.


Thomas A. Harp
Secretary