

## Minutes of a Committee Meeting of SAstroS held on

Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2022 at 6.00 pm

### At The Island Hall

Present: Anthony Beaumont (AB) (Chairman), Reg Guille (RG) (Secretary), Jo Birch (JB) (Treasurer) and invited, Annie Dachinger (AD).

#### 1. To approve the Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022.

Approved, after a correction to the spelling of Bower in Item 7 AOB, line 1 of b.

#### 2. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022.

The Starfest under Item 4 was declared to be a considerable success with thanks to Annie and Bob Bower. The weather was also kind on the two Observatory nights with Bob.

3. **Current Bank Balance.** JB said that the balance, as at 30 August 2022, was approximately £7000 but some expenses from the Starfest had yet to be presented. After some discussion it was felt prudent to work on a balance of £6000 for any future expenditure..

4. **Proposed New Telescope.** The Chairman (AB) reviewed his 'Options for the Telescope in Sark' paper, see below. The various options were discussed but at the end there was unanimous agreement that Option 3, to purchase a new 12-inch telescope with GO-TO technology be pursued.

AD said that she had purchased some industrial silica-gel, for use around the current and future telescope, and was donating it to the society.

AB said that Bob Bower had offered to buy our two redundant 10-inch Meade telescopes, should we proceed with purchasing a new telescope.

#### **Actions:**

- a. AB to write to the Observatory Guides to seek their approval.
  - b. AB to write to the Membership to seek their views.
  - c. AB to write to the telescope supplier to seek further information and to enquire about a suitable cover for the new telescope.
  - d. AB to contact Paul Fellows and Bob Bower to seek further views on the proposed new telescope.
5. AOB. None.

The meeting closed at 6.35 pm.



# Options for the telescope in Sark

The main optical telescope in the Observatory is between 20-25 years old and is showing signs of age.

Recently Bob Bowers visited us and was clearly struggling with the instrument. We are sort of used to it and can visually “find” objects in the night sky. Once found there is frequent adjustment required to keep the object in view. This interrupts the viewing process and can be rather prolonged. The “gears” of the mount also seem rough and are possibly worn.

We are virtually unable to find the “deep sky” objects that are quite interesting. Bob showed a star cluster – as he knew exactly where it was. We would not be able to easily find this again.

The GO-TO equipment does not work

The lenses and binocular view piece are good.

The skills and dedication of the current guides is to be commended (Bob’s words) to give the visitors a good experience.

## Options

1. Keep everything as is. Keep the viewing experience to visible stars.
  - a. Advantages – cheap. Cost – nil.
  - b. Disadvantages – we would not be able to develop and show other objects to visitors. The telescope may also fail if the gears are in poor condition
2. Ask Paul Fellows if he can repair the current GO TO kit so we have a chance of finding the “deep sky” objects. (he has offered to look and effect a repair if possible)
  - a. Advantages – cost may be reasonable. We should be able to find the “deep Sky objects. Easier for guides to use. Keeps “fixed” on chosen objects.
  - b. Disadvantages. We will be unable to utilise the latest technology. The Telescope will still be 25 years old and the repair may represent a “Sticking plaster”. We may simply be putting off the inevitable replacement in due course.

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3. Purchase a new telescope with GO-TO technology enabled to find 30,000 objects
  - a. Advantages. New and should have a reasonable life span. The ability to see “Deep Sky” objects will be enhanced. Will be bigger and hopefully better. All the current lens systems can be used. Easier for guides to use. Keeps “fixed” on chosen objects
  - b. Disadvantages. Cost – over £4000. Needs careful measuring to ensure it will fit in the observatory

We could spend the money we have in the account on a solar telescope – which would cost a similar amount. However we are a “Dark Sky” island and looking at the sun does not quite fit in with that claim.

Caveats to a new telescope:

Some more weather proofing of the observatory might be prudent

We need to carefully ascertain that the new telescope will fit into the observatory.

We need to keep some money in the bank.