



ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2014

PO Box 17, Minto, NSW 2566

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9th April 2014

Dear M.A.S. Members



Another year at MAS has slipped by. Our seventeenth.

Upon reflection, that's probably a ridiculous thing to say. With all that's gone on this past year, it has hardly "slipped" by. The hard work and dedication, as seen from all committee members, has resulted in a momentous year that harks of more great things to come over the next twelve months.

Importantly, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank a few academics. Thank you, our Patron, Prof. Bryan Gaensler, for your continuing support, and acknowledge the time and expertise you spend on M.A.S. Thank you Professor - our members very much appreciate what you do for us, and you are considered an esteemed colleague. I'd also like to thank Prof. Vaughan Macefield, Provost - Campbelltown Campus, UWS again this year. Professor Macefield, Krystal Upston and her events team, and our own management committee have further built upon a great relationship that sees our society maintain an allotted room for Forum nights throughout the next year, as well as provisioning several events throughout the year in celebration of UWS's commitment to the local community at large. His foresight and wonderful casual management style enabled us to participate as a key partner in UWS's 25th year celebrations this year, and there is still more to come. We look forward to an ever greater collaborative relationship this year with UWS. Our monthly Forum meetings are held in one of the best meeting rooms that any astronomical society around the country is fortunate to have access to. Dr Ragbir Bhathal helped us greatly in coordinating the resources required to pull off our first major public event at UWS - the visit from Prof Brian Schmidt, Nobel Laureate in Physics which coincided with this year's Magnitude exhibition. Thank you all.

Certainly the highlight of our year was the visit by Prof. Schmidt to MAS in February. We had three hundred and fifty-odd people turn up to what was a very successful Magnitude exhibition followed by a fabulous delivery by Prof. Schmidt - essentially modelled on his Nobel speech. I really think that this day put us on the map in these parts, and if you weren't fortunate enough to see it we may be able to see it all over again as TVS were there recording the entire event. Stay tuned and we'll let you know how to view this event if and when it becomes available.

I'm not comfortable with singling people out, because it is truly a team effort, but I feel that I must, yet again, when it comes to Tony Law. As a society we owe him a great deal again this year. Instigated last year, our committee structure changed and is a little different to that of preceding years. We've all worked to take on several hats each and this new arrangement has worked extremely well. Rather than society news and views being President-centric, all committee members share the load equally. Tony has served simultaneously as Vice President, trip organiser, Secretary, Observatory Committee member, UWS liaison and much, much more. To Tony, I personally thank you. You have been our glue this year and without you we could not have achieved anywhere near what I believe we have. Tony single-handedly arranged our first, and very successful international field trip to Hawaii to visit a number of facilities located on that Mt Mecca of science, Mauna Kea. A truly monumental organisational effort spanning many months, this is

certainly a highlight in our now long history. In addition to this Tony has played the lead role in establishing our now regular Bunnings sausage sizzle fundraiser events that have done very well for us each and every time.

I'd like to personally thank the rest of our hard working team. On the committee, I've had the pleasure of serving with Barry Moore as Treasurer, Stewart Grainger as our intrepid Merchandise Officer, Jack Goralewski as Secretary, Penny Reid and Henry Swierk as general committee members. Everyone had lots to contribute this year, and we knitted well as a team. Although we lose two of you this next year - Penny and Barry, it's been great working with you and we all thank you for those fine contributions.

To those outside our core committee who have also made this Society what it is. Roger Powell - lead member and chief proposal draughtsman on our Observatory Committee along with Tony Law and Michael Jupe. Thank you all, our observatory project is in wonderful hands, even though the hoops we are having to jump through sometimes seem to shrink. To ex-President John Rombi, without whom we'd be sitting there every month listening to me rather than the plethora of brilliant speakers he manages to convince to speak to us. John has orchestrated our guest speaker list for several years now, and as a result of his very hard work we've been fortunate to witness a slew of top-notch speakers throughout the year, with more to come. I know that our guest list is the envy of every astronomical society in Australia. Now, with a real live astronaut scheduled to speak to us in June, that is truer than ever. Another ex President - Noel Sharp, is our Stargard Liaison Officer. We thank you as well as you interact with the Wollondilly Council on our behalf to ensure that we have constant access to Stargard, our home observation field at The Oaks. Ned Pastor, who has always done us a great service in liaising with International House at Sydney University to provide an open cabin for us on our Forest nights has moved on from that role for the moment. Ned - we will always appreciate your tireless efforts in maintaining a great facility for our members when we're down there on new moon weekends. I'd also sincerely like to thank Penny Reid, who again stepped into the breach for us as Refreshments Officer, so that we might enjoy a cuppa and bickie after our forum nights.

Financially, we are in a healthy state. Our Treasurer, Barry Moore, will highlight our position in his own report. Our current reserves are working hard to earn us interest, in an effort to be able to one day realise many of our dreams and provide our membership with a top-flight observatory facility close to home. We acknowledge that our goal is long term, but planning is well underway. We will endeavour to keep you all posted on developments as they happen.

Our website has changed, and our Facebook presence has grown this year. We enjoy very good general communications with each other via these two portals and will continue to rely on them to disseminate information on behalf of M.A.S. along with email. Our Facebook site now has 246 members (up over 100 from last year), and many more visit it regularly - particularly people who are finding out what we are about and have an opportunity to ask questions of us prior to joining. Both our website and Facebook offer our members a way of staying in tune with what our society is doing and has planned. Our brand new website is nearing completion, and I ask that you wait patiently for it to be finished. An all-new design, it will allow us to do many different and exciting things with it this year.

Last year our committee decided to install an exiting new programme to benefit everyone who is a financial member of M.A.S. Each and every one of you has access to one free

weekend at The Forest. You will receive new membership cards at the AGM that feature a small star printed in the bottom right hand corner. Bring this membership card with you when you decide to come along on a new moon weekend, and this star will be punched, signifying that you've taken your allocated weekend. The Forest is a fabulous weekend away - even if the weather isn't wonderful the whole time. There's a friendly atmosphere and many stories (both true and untrue!) are told by the fire in winter - as well as valuable things learned. Bring your equipment and observe or photograph our Forest sky which really has to be seen to be believed on a clear night. Clear nights have been a bit of a rarity lately, but the weather is completely out of our control, as always. Sometimes it seems as if it will never perform for us, but patience will fix that.

We have many more public outreach nights planned for this coming year, so please do your part and volunteer to help with as many as you can.

In closing, I'd like to re-iterate what I've written, and thank the current and up-coming committees, and other members who have worked tirelessly to provide us with a vibrant and fun place to be. Thank you too, members, for supporting us and making M.A.S. what it is - one of the most, if not most, active astronomical societies in the country. I am very honoured to have been able to serve as President for the past twelve months and look forward to serving again in whatever capacity I may.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Malikoff', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Chris Malikoff
President M.A.S. 2013-2014



PO Box 17 MINTO NSW
2566

**MACARTHUR ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY
MINUTES FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Held at UWS Campbelltown
Building 30, Main Lecture Theatre
Monday 15 Apr 2013 at 7.36pm

1. OPENING OF MEETING, WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Annual General Meeting opened at 7.36 pm. Present were all members noted in the attendance register. The retiring President, Chris Malikoff, chaired the meeting and the Retiring Acting Secretary, Tony Law, was appointed to take the minutes.

Apologies were received from the following members: Graeme Bellamy, Noel Sharpe, George Cruikshank, Jenny Rombi and Peter Scott.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 18th APRIL 2011

The minutes were read by Tony Law.

A Motion: *"That the minutes be accepted as an accurate record of the 2011 Annual General Meeting,"* was moved Chris Malikoff, seconded Roger Powell, carried unanimously.

The President ordered that the minutes be filed in the Secretary's formal records.

3. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

There was no business arising.

4. PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL REPORTS FOR 2011-2012

The 2012 Annual Report was distributed to the members prior to the meeting. Chris Malikoff read the President's Annual Report. He thanked the Committee and other members who had contributed during the year, our Auditor Graeme Bellamy and the members who had attended meetings, observing sessions, fundraising events and assisted with public outreach.

The Annual Financial Reports by the Treasurer and Auditor were taken as read. Graeme Bellamy's audit report showed that the Society is in good shape with total assets of \$19943.90, compared with \$18,270.05 twelve months ago. Membership for the year peaked at 100, (an increase of 7 on last year) including three honorary members.

A Motion: *"That the Annual Reports presented by the President, Treasurer and Auditor be accepted,"* was moved Chris Malikoff, seconded Barry Moore, carried unanimously.

There was no business arising from the reports. The President ordered that the 2012 Annual Report be filed in the Secretary's formal records. The Annual Report will also form part of these minutes.

5. PRESENTATION OF MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

Chris Malikoff presented the following membership awards:

A Special Award, a Certificate of Appreciation was presented to Lloyd Wright for his 10 years service on the Committee.

Ten year badge: Henry Swierk (held from last year!)

Five year certificates: Wayne Harrison (post), Eddy Bagnall (post), Michael Clark (presented), Jessica Clark, (presented), Dana Clark (presented), Mohammed Baddah (post), Jennifer Rombi (collected by JR), Trevor Rhodes (post), Carol McVeigh (post), Anne Rhodes (post)

Fifteen year certificate: John Rombi, (George Cruikshank and Ursula Braatz not present and will be held for next General Meeting).

6. APPOINTMENT OF RETURNING OFFICER

John Rombi was endorsed by the meeting as Returning Officer and Chris Malikoff vacated the chair.

7. ELECTION OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FOR 2012-2013

John Rombi advised that nominations closed on 2nd April and only one nomination was received for each position. Accordingly, the following were each duly declared elected and the meeting endorsed each by acclamation:

President: Chris Malikoff; Vice-President: Tony Law; Secretary: Jack Goralewski; Treasurer: Barry Moore; Committee Members: Penny Reid, Stewart Grainger and Henry Swierk.

On behalf of the members, John Rombi congratulated the new committee and wished them well for the coming year. He then vacated the chair for the incoming President, Chris Malikoff.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Mention was made that a new report was included in the Annual reports, the Dharawal Observatory Project, by Roger Powell. This gives an update of the current situation.

Carol McVeigh and John Rombi are liaising with Vaughan Macefield, provost of UWS on a special 25 Birthday Celebration for UWS

9. CLOSE OF MEETING

Chris Malikoff took the chair and thanked the members for their confidence in him. He congratulated the new committee and assured the members that the new committee will continue with their best efforts on behalf of the Society. He thanked the members for attending. The Annual General Meeting closed at 8.06 pm.

Members reconvened as a General Monthly Meeting, with a talk by Dr Jonti Horner (UNSW) on the "Rocks from Space".

*Tony Law
Acting Secretary*

17th April 2013

MAS Treasurer's Annual Report 28 February 2014

I would like to thank all committee members for their assistance during the year, the members who assisted with our fund raising efforts and Graeme Bellamy for his speedy audit of the accounts. It has been my pleasure to act as Treasurer and I thank Tony Law as VP membership for his assistance and help in handling membership payments, Stewart Grainger in collection of the numerous sales and Penny in collecting the "tea club money". I have enjoyed the challenges and activity as treasurer but will not be seeking re-election in 2014-15.

Our 2013/14 year has been a very busy year and has seen our total assets increase to \$23,464 from \$19,944. This was due to our sausage sizzle at Bunnings, public donations at our meetings, University of Western Sydney open nights (\$1000 donation) and of course interest from our term deposit which is now at \$14,000.

After much negotiation, thanks to Chris and Tony, we still have our venue at UWS for free and the costs for the Belanglo Forest Cabin are still a very reasonable \$130/month for the two nights – a slight increase of \$10. The committee has decided to continue to offer one free weekend to members on presentation of their membership card (for punching) as an incentive to see this excellent venue increase in patronage. Standard Fees are \$15.00/night for up to two nights; the third night would be free.

The committee agreed that membership fees would increase across all categories by \$5. The \$45 for membership is a bargain compared to a lot of other clubs and societies. The quality of the forum speakers and equipment we now own is also first class. Tony will report on our increase in membership. Once again there has been a last minute rush on Membership payments and so those membership payments appear in the March monthly statements. I would like to ask all members to pay the fees by the Feb 28th as the "books" close for audit and this would help to see the real growth. Could all members using PAYPAL include the extra cost of the transaction as we are losing almost \$2 per transactions if not included when you pay by PAYPAL.

We have paid our Public Liability insurance, the hire of the Dudley Chesham field, our Domain name registration and our PO BOX lease. Current assets include the Mallicam digital camera, monitor and battery and mounting (foam) board for the large collection of professional images for public forums (the magnitude displays) and of course our Mac Dob telescope. We also purchased software for our website development this year.

The clubs trip to Hawaii was a great success thanks to Tony's careful planning. It was great to help out with the numerous trips to the bank to make payments on behalf of those going on the trip – I only wish I could have joined you.

The audited accounts follow.

Barry Moore, Hon. Treasurer, Macarthur Astronomical Society Inc

MACARTHUR ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY
Financial Statement
Year ended 28th February, 2014

BALANCE SHEET

	2014	2013
Accumulated Funds		
Funds at beginning of year	\$ 19,943.90	\$ 18,270.05
Asset Replacement Reserve	\$ -	\$ -
Profit/(Loss) for the year	\$ 3,520.18	\$ 1,673.85
	\$ 23,464.08	\$ 19,943.90
Represented by:		
Current Assets (Stock)	\$ 1,123.58	\$ 1,484.52
Cash at bank (trading account)	\$ 5,163.17	\$ 3,767.65
Fixed Term Deposit	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
Pre Paid Insurance	\$ 762.93	\$ 754.13
Petty Cash Advances	\$ 140.00	\$ 77.60
Pay Pal Account	\$ 39.97	\$ -
Hawaii Deposit Account	\$ 3.55	\$ 1,646.70
Interest Receivable	\$ 460.83	\$ -
	\$ 21,694.03	\$ 19,730.60
Non - Current Assets		
Plant & Equipment (Cost) *see note 2	\$ 6,016.23	\$ 5,659.23
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	-\$ 4,242.63	-\$ 3,799.23
	\$ 1,773.60	\$ 1,860.00
Current Liabilities		
Members deposit account Hawaii	-\$ 3.55	-\$ 1,646.70
Total Assets (net members equity)	\$ 23,464.08	\$ 19,943.90

Independent Audit Report

I have audited the financial statements, being the statement of financial position and statement of financial performance. The Astronomical Society Committee is responsible for the financial statements. The Audit has been conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. My procedures including examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial statements and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with accounting standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements so as to present a view which is consistent with my understanding of the Astronomical Society's financial position and the results of its operation. The Audit opinion expressed has been formed on the above basis.

Note 1 - Accounting principles and methods adopted in accounts

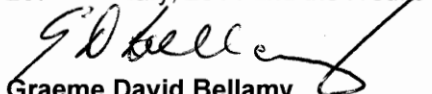
The accounts have been prepared on the accruals basis, and in accordance with applicable statements of accounting concepts and accounting standards issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB). They have also been prepared on the basis of historical costs. The accounting policies have been consistently applied unless otherwise stated.

Note 2 - Non-Current Assets

Non-Current assets are included at cost or at independent valuation. All non-current assets are depreciated over their estimated useful life commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statement of Macarthur Astronomical Society present fairly in accordance with applicable accounting standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements to reflect the financial position of Macarthur Astronomical Society as at the 28th February, 2014 and the results of its operations for the year then ended.


Graeme David Bellamy
 138 Ashford Avenue, Milperra, 2214
 Dated this 22nd March, 2014

MACARTHUR ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY
Statement of Financial Performance
Year ended 28th February, 2014

	2014	2013
Income		
Membership Fees	\$ 4,184.63	\$ 3,018.88
Donations and Prime Focus	\$ 1,106.27	\$ 452.16
Interest	\$ 694.51	\$ 459.90
Sale of Merchandise	\$ 1,399.95	\$ 2,386.25
Dinners (Members contribution)	\$ 125.40	\$ 961.61
Grounds (Bellangalo Forest)	\$ 975.00	\$ 1,115.00
Tea & Coffee	\$ 308.70	\$ 143.70
Stock Donation	\$ 860.00	\$ -
Bunnings Fund Raiser	\$ 1,627.00	\$ 1,481.00
Canberra Trip Surplus	\$ 45.00	\$ -
	<u>\$ 11,326.46</u>	<u>\$ 10,018.50</u>
Expenditure		
Filing Fees	\$ -	\$ 49.00
Insurance	\$ 754.13	\$ 745.88
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$ 100.00	\$ 261.71
Postage, Printing & Stationery	\$ 345.14	\$ 298.17
PO Box Rental	\$ 104.00	\$ 93.00
Purchase of Goods for Sale at cost	\$ 2,343.21	\$ 1,780.45
Domain Registration / Web	\$ 202.50	\$ 152.66
Belangalo/Starguard	\$ 1,546.59	\$ 1,200.00
Guest Speakers Gifts	\$ 443.90	\$ 322.67
Dinners (Members and Speakers)	\$ 480.76	\$ 1,465.99
Bunnings Expenses	\$ 793.63	\$ 867.66
Prime Focus Expense	\$ 249.02	\$ 1,107.46
Depreciation	\$ 443.40	\$ -
	<u>\$ 7,806.28</u>	<u>\$ 8,344.65</u>
 Operating Profit/(Loss) for year	 <u>\$ 3,520.18</u>	 <u>\$ 1,673.85</u>

Macarthur Astronomical Society
Stock Reconciliation
For year ended 28th February, 2014

Opening Stock at 1 st March, 2013	\$1,484.52
Add: Purchases	<u>\$2,343.21</u>
	\$3,827.43
Less: Closing Stock	<u>\$1,123.58</u>
Cost of Goods Sold	\$2,703.85
Consignment Stock	<u>(\$ 860.00)</u>
Net Cost of Sales	<u>\$1,843.85</u>

Sales	\$1,399.59
Less: Cost of sales	<u>\$1,843.85</u>
Loss on Sales	(\$ <u>443.90</u>) Speakers Gifts

Bank Reconciliation
As at 28th February, 2014

Balance as per Statement 28 th February, 2014	\$5,163.17 Cr
Add: Outstanding Deposits	\$ <u>Nil</u>
Balance as per Cash Book 28 th February, 2014	<u>\$5,163.17 Cr</u>

Letter of Recommendation

The Committee
Macarthur Astronomical Society

Re: Financial Accounts for the year ended 28th February 2014.

Please find enclosed Statement of Financial Performance and the Financial Statement.

Note Items:

1. Consignment Stock of \$875.00 last year for compendiums were excluded from stock balance as no liability was occurred. I have been informed that the balance of \$860.00 has been donated this year and is included as income and as there is still no liability they have been excluded from the Balance Sheet. Any future sale will be pure profit.
2. It is noted that give aways to Guest Speakers of \$443.90 and reflected as a separate expense. This balances with the cost of sales and in total in the Stock Reconciliation reflects a break even.
3. I have been informed that copies of Prime Focus are written off to Nil value and have been expensed (\$249.02) and any future sale will be pure profit. Value is not included in Stock Balance Valuation (as was last year) for Balance sheet purposes.
4. I notice that no fee is recorded for lodgement of last year's accounts to the Department of Fair Trading, have they been lodged?
5. I have brought to account an accrual of \$460.88 interest receivable for the \$14,000.00 fixed term deposit for a period of ten months (due April 2014).
6. I have applied Depreciation charges at the rate of 20% (five year life span) for a Mallincam TV and display boards.
7. The Treasurer has done an excellent job, however some additional information needs adding to the monthly income and expenditure sheets:-

April 2013 – deposit made 9/4/2013 \$842.95 (details as follows)

Membership	add	\$687.95
Forest	add	\$ 75.00
Donations	add	\$ 10.00
Other	add	\$ 70.00
Expense	add	\$ 10.00
Transfer	add	\$100.00 (Merchandise Float)

January 2014 – deposit made 24/1/2014 \$125.20 (details as follows)

Membership	add	\$125.20
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These columns cannot be left blank as the totals will not balance across.

Comment (con't Item 7)

There is still an active bank account left over from the Hawaii trip with a balance of \$3.55 credit. With upcoming excursions it would be prudent to utilise this account as a separate entity for reconciliation purposes. Therefore there should be separate deposits and withdrawals and keep it right away from the Society's normal spreadsheets and deposits. Transfers can become messy as has been demonstrated this year.

8. Contra's – as I have indicated before these should not be used under any circumstances. If a member of the Committee incurs an expense it should be reimbursed separately and not deducted from cash collected.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Graeme Bellamy', written in a cursive style.

Graeme Bellamy
22nd March, 2014

OBSERVATORY SUB-COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2014

AIMS AND ORIGINS

On 17th November 2011, the Management Committee agreed to pursue the new Dharawal National Park as a potential observatory site. A three member Sub-committee was set up and this currently consists of Tony Law, Michael Jupe and Roger Powell (Liaison).

FINANCE

No MAS money has been spent or committed in reaching the current situation but the Society will require considerable capital and ongoing financial resources – much more than it currently possesses - should it find itself in a position to proceed with the observatory.

NORTH CLIFF SITE

The North Cliff site was found to be the best site in the region for astronomy - and no other potential site was identified close to Campbelltown yet remote enough to avoid serious light pollution. It has a large clearing with excellent sky views and no nearby light sources. The land parcel is within the confines of the Dharawal National Park but is not yet part of it.

NSW Crown Land is the current site owner and BHP Billiton are the leaseholders. Mining operations on the site ceased over twenty years ago. Their new lease (only signed in 2012) expires in 2032.

We have also been aware that the Tharawal Land Council has an interest in the site and that the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service will probably seek to incorporate the land into the Dharawal National Park.

COMMUNITY & CORPORATE SUPPORT

We have received the active support of State MP Jai Rowell and despite some publicity, we have received no formal objections from any organisation.

We sought and obtained the support of two senior executives at BHP-Billiton and they offered support in preparing any proposal to the Government. They also suggested an approach to the Minister for Resources and they agreed to escort us on a night time inspection of the site. Following this we wrote to BHP-Billiton, formalising our approach to them.

THE GOVERNMENT POSITION

The positive support of BHP executives was soon to be dashed by a negative written response from the Deputy Premier, Andrew Stoner, Minister for Crown Lands from whom we had made representations through Jai Rowell MP (Wollondilly),

The official NSW Government's position on the site is that, as the Tharawal Lands Council has submitted a claim to the land, this will have prime consideration from the Government. If they are successful, MAS will have to negotiate a lease with the Lands Council. There is no time frame for this process, possibly because the BHP-Billiton lease will not expire for another eighteen years.

If the Lands Council loses its claim, the Government will at some later stage decide whether to incorporate the land into the surrounding Dharawal National Park. An MAS proposal competing with NPWS might be considered at this stage, which could be any time after the Aboriginal claim determination, unless the BHP-Billiton lease is further extended.

The message loud and clear is that there is a fixed process for the government to follow and it will not do a deal with any organisation without following the due process. It is also clear they are in no hurry and that if we continue to pursue this proposal, we may be waiting a very long time.

Ministerial support was always considered crucial to the success of our proposal and on this we have

regrettably fallen short.

CONCLUSION

Whilst the Committee's response to the Deputy Premier's letter has yet to be determined, my personal opinion is one of great disappointment because it seems clear to me that we have little chance of getting what we want and we have no realistic chance of getting it in a time frame acceptable to MAS.

I would like to thank my fellow Observatory Sub-Committee members, Tony Law and Michael Jupe for their very enthusiastic work in getting to this stage. Also I thank the Management Committee for their support of the Sub-committee's activities over the last two and a half years. We may not have achieved our much dreamed of observatory yet but one way or another I hope we can keep the dream alive.

Roger Powell
Observatory Project Liaison