



PO Box 17 Minto, NSW 2566

## MACARTHUR ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

### MINUTES

### MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Online conference meeting  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7.00 pm

#### 1 OPENING OF MEETING

The Zoom meeting was opened at 7.02 pm by John Rombi. Also present: Noel Sharpe (NS); Greg Bradford (GB); Phil Kidd (PK); Roger Powell (RP).

Apologies were received from Andy Milton (AM).

#### 2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

##### 2.1 ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Motion: That the Minutes dated 7<sup>th</sup> August 2023, as circulated and posted, be accepted.

Moved: JR Seconded GB, Motion carried.

##### 2.2 BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

No business arising.

#### 3 REGULAR BUSINESS

##### 3.1 FINANCIAL REPORT

###### 3.1.1 Monthly Treasurer's Report for July & August

###### 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 Account Status

|                                 |              |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Commonwealth Bank: Account 1    | \$13,756.11  |
| Commonwealth Bank: Account 2    | \$3.64       |
| Commonwealth Bank: Term Deposit | \$25,021.74  |
| PayPal account                  | \$tbc        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                    | <b>\$tbc</b> |

###### July Main Account Transactions

|                             |           |                                  |           |
|-----------------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| 4/7 PayPal transfer.        | \$1162.00 | 25/7 T. Law Wooglemai            | \$30.00   |
| 4/7 Arif Shaikh membership. | \$46.00   | 25/7 Cash A. Aicheikh Membership | \$75.00   |
| 14/7 Tomra                  | \$123.30  | 25/7 Cash ? Wooglemai            | \$30.00   |
| 16/7 Ben Gibbons membership | \$53.67   | 25/7 Cash ? Wooglemai            | \$30.00   |
| 23/7 A. Williams Wooglemai  | \$30.00   | 28/7 Tfr payment Wooglemai       | -\$150.00 |
| 23/7 N. Sharpe Wooglemai    | \$30.00   | 28/7 Tfr. payment Wooglemai      | -\$90.00  |

### July PayPal Transactions

|                               |            |           |          |
|-------------------------------|------------|-----------|----------|
| 3/7 Tfr. to Main bank account | -\$1162.00 | 18/7 Zoom | -\$24.63 |
|-------------------------------|------------|-----------|----------|

### 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 Account Status

|                                 |                    |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Commonwealth Bank: Account 1    | \$13,841.84        |
| Commonwealth Bank: Account 2    | \$33.65            |
| Commonwealth Bank: Term Deposit | \$25,021.74        |
| PayPal account                  | \$379.22           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                    | <b>\$39,276.45</b> |

### August Main Account Transactions

|                               |         |                          |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|--------------------------|---------|
| 18/8 Nathan Loudon membership | \$50.83 | 22/8 N. Sharpe Wooglemai | \$30.00 |
| 22/8 Tomra                    | \$4.90  |                          |         |

### August Second Account Transactions

|                       |         |               |        |
|-----------------------|---------|---------------|--------|
| 23/8 T. Law Wooglemai | \$30.00 | 23/8 interest | \$0.01 |
|-----------------------|---------|---------------|--------|

### August PayPal transactions

|           |          |   |          |
|-----------|----------|---|----------|
| 18/8 Zoom | \$ 24.83 | 30/8 G. Bradford zoom equipment for Forum etc | \$581.28 |
|-----------|----------|---|----------|

Motion: *That the Treasurer's Reports for July and August 2023, as circulated, be accepted.*

Moved: JR Seconded RP, Motion carried.

### 3.1.2 Bank Account Access

Dave Manning (MO) access to bank details. Ongoing.

### 3.2 MEMBERSHIP

There have been 4 new membership approvals by e-mail since the previous meeting:

|                   |                       |                                 |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Nathan Loudon     | Individual membership | 20 <sup>th</sup> August 2023    |
| Dean Murphy       | Family membership     | 7 <sup>th</sup> September 2023  |
| Daniel Shearer    | Family membership     | 7 <sup>th</sup> September 2023  |
| Lindsay Skeetbeet | Individual membership | 10 <sup>th</sup> September 2023 |

The Membership register submitted by Dave Manning (MO) indicates a current membership of 147.

### 3.3 CORRESPONDENCE

RP: E-mail (circulated) from National Australian Convention of Amateur Astronomers advising details of NACAA 2024 to be held in Parkes over the four days of Easter, March 29 to April 1, at various venues in Parkes and at the nearby CSIRO Parkes Radio Observatory. Noted.

JR: Details from Quasar Publishing, dealt with in item 3.4.5

### 3.4 MACARTHUR ASTRONOMY FORUM

#### 3.4.1 Sound Equipment Purchase

GB purchased a modem, microphone, webcam & monthly internet plan to enable Zoom to be held in conjunction with live forums.

|                              |                 |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| 4GX Data 1 month             | \$20.00         |
| 4GX Internet Hotspot Modem   | \$144.00        |
| Microphone & Shipping        | \$126.99        |
| Boom Microphone Stand & Clip | \$39.50         |
| USB C to A adapter           | \$17.00         |
| USB A to C Adapter           | \$15.00         |
| USB 3m Extension             | \$14.95         |
| USB Webcam                   | \$79.00         |
| Camera Tripod                | \$29.00         |
| Tripod Rotator               | \$95.84         |
|                              | -----           |
| TOTAL (including GST)        | <b>\$581.28</b> |

The data plan is \$20/month for first year then \$25/month, currently paid through GB's Telstra account. Needs to be paid directly and automatically from MAS main account in the future. GB to liaise with AM.

The distorted sound experienced at the Forum with Matthew Bailes was due to a second microphone at the lectern being accidentally activated.

The potential acquisition of an MAS laptop was considered. JR to ask the membership if anyone could donate an old Windows 10 laptop.

#### 3.4.2 Forums at WSU

Three live Forums at WSU have been held since the last committee meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> August:

Prof Joss Bland-Hawthorn (USYD) addressed the first live Forum return on 14<sup>th</sup> August via Zoom. His talk was "*A Front Row Seat on the Daily Life of a Supermassive Black Hole*". Attendance was 39 (27 at WSU and 12 online).

Prof Matthew Bailes (Swinburne) appeared in person at an additional Forum on 4<sup>th</sup> September. His talk was "*Einstein's Universe*". Attendance was 40 (29 at WSU, Zoom 11).

Dr Doris Grosse spoke to the in-person Forum on 18<sup>th</sup> September via Zoom. Her address was called: "*Twinkle, Twinkle Little Junk – the increasing need for space debris management and its wider implications on space sustainability for life on Earth*". Attendance was 28 (17 at WSU and 11 on Zoom, not counting the guest speaker).

NS: Donations totaling \$42.00 were collected at the Forum and have already been banked.

### 3.4.3 Upcoming speakers

|                           |                        |     |                           |           |
|---------------------------|------------------------|-----|---------------------------|-----------|
| 16 <sup>th</sup> October  | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday | WSU | Prof Geraint Lewis (USYD) | In person |
| 20 <sup>th</sup> November | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday | WSU | Dr Luke Barnes (WSU)      | tbc       |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> December  | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday | WSU | Dr Lucyna Chudczer (AAL)  | In person |

### 3.4.4 Refreshments

Jenny Rombi took care of the refreshments on 4<sup>th</sup> Sept. Suzanne Adjians has taken over this work.

### 3.4.5 Merchandise

Frank Alvaro has put up his hand to be our new Merchandise Officer. JR will bring Frank up to date regarding his responsibilities.

JR: pricing for Astronomy 2024 remains the same as last year. Postage pricing may have risen.

## 3.5 STARGARD

### 3.5.1 Recent events since last committee meeting:

|                            |              |   |
|----------------------------|--------------|---|
| 12 <sup>th</sup> August    | 0 attendees  | Cancelled due to cloud cover.   |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> August    | 3 attendees  | Ces Cuadro, Mark Fischer and PK attended. It was quite windy, but rather pleasant when the wind stopped. Overall a quite good night of observing, imaging and just talking. |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> September  | 10 attendees | A great night, ten MAS members, six active astrophotographers on site, with members of Tony's photography group there as well.  |
| 16 <sup>th</sup> September | 4 attendees  | Clear all evening.  |

Next scheduled events: 7<sup>th</sup> Oct and 14<sup>th</sup> Oct.

15m length of orange flags on a rope has been stolen from Stargard. During dry period all items can be placed in storage.

### 3.5.2 Sports Ground Redevelopment

An in-house information session regarding the new Multi-Purpose Building was held at the Shire Hall in Picton on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September, attended by NS. It was also attended by representatives of netball, football and cricket. Council indicated that construction could commence this year and be completed in 2025.

## 3.6 BEGINNERS WORKSHOPS

GB: Next date: 21<sup>st</sup> October at Stargard. The back up date will be 18<sup>th</sup> November.

## 3.7 WOOGLEMAI

Recent events since last committee meeting:

|                         |   |  |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| 19 <sup>th</sup> August | 2 | NS & T. Law attended. Very windy and cold. Viewing cut short around 9pm. |
| 16 <sup>th</sup> Sept   | 3 | NS, T. Law & Barry Moore attended. Great viewing.                        |

Next scheduled event: 11<sup>th</sup> Nov

NS: September and November nights are stand-alone nights which means we will be there by ourselves, normal \$30 per MAS attendee and a hire fee of \$100.00 has been agreed upon, cancellation due to wet/clouded out weather applies with no fee payable. No other nights are booked.

Despite earlier discussions which did seem favourable, the Guntawang committee have decided not to go ahead with moving their working bee dates to our New Moon roster for 2024, however have confirmed we are welcome to join them on working bee dates in 2024. Later this year we will receive their working bee dates and will see where they land with our schedule.

### **3.8 MENTORING & PUBLIC OUTREACH EVENTS**

#### **3.8.1 Mentoring**

Ongoing.

#### **3.8.2 Broughton Anglican College 15<sup>th</sup> August**

Astronomy display afternoon at school's STEM 2023 event. Attended by GB, Tony Law, Dave Manning & Mike Nicholas. Good fun and lots of cake, coffee, lollipops and frisbees.

Awkward venue with poor driving access along a footpath.

#### **3.8.3 Campbelltown Guides: Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> August**

A private outreach event for 25 people. NS and PK attended. The weather was very poor, heavy cloud obscured what would have been great viewing of the ISS.

During Phil's presentation on women in astronomy, clouds cleared enough to allow viewing of the Jewel Box through NS's telescope, about a dozen guides got a quick look, was pretty good. Then we returned to Phil's talk as the whole sky clouded over again.

#### **3.8.4 Warragamba Public School:**

This private evening for students and parents originally scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> August was postponed to September due to the weather.

There were issues between MAS and the school because of 'over the top' requests for personal documentation. However, access to the site was good. Present for MAS were Dave Manning, Phil and Jennie Kidd, Suzanne Adijans, Mark Fischer, Frank Alvaro and NS

Bush-fire hazard reduction smoke reduced viewing. Attendance was 80+ students and parents. Dave displayed an astro-image slideshow on a screen. Donations totalling \$76.00 were collected and NS has banked this.

### **3.9 RETURN & EARN**

GB: Ongoing. Detailed statement is received quarterly. Money is trickling in.

### **3.10 LOAN TELESCOPES**

GB: all loan telescopes are available in storage for loan or for use at the Beginners Workshop. JR has cleaned the recently donated 8" Dobsonian and will take it to the storage facility.

### **3.11 ASSETS & STORAGE**

The annual fee for the storage facility is due in November.

### 3.12 NEW BANNERS

GB: Banners are approx 200 x 80cm. The better quality ones are about \$200. At least two needed, preferably three. He has circulated a proposal with five examples. The banner design is similar to the two previous banners which have been lost.

NS: we need to be careful about adding to budget outlays.

PK: has produced some laminated A3 paper signs which can be posted outside the Forum.

### 3.13 FACEBOOK: COPYRIGHT & PRIVACY of ZOOM MEETINGS

GB: raised the issue of photographs taken inside the auditorium being published on Facebook showing Zoom attendees in the privacy of their homes. The images are on a very large screen. JR will ask members not to publish images showing Zoom participants and will suggest to Zoom participants that they have the option of turning off their video if concerned.

### 3.14 WEBSITE

RP: Observing Planner document for 2024 has been posted on the website. Forum and Stargard dates are listed. Wooglemai dates to be added when available.

RP: appreciates the support of members posting images to the website galleries, both astro-images and those depicting MAS events. Please keep them coming. Website page visit statistics to 18<sup>th</sup> Sept:

Last 30 days: 5,205

Year to date: 40,195

### 3.15 MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

Tony Law proposed by email to the committee on 12<sup>th</sup> July that the committee consider a membership survey. It was agreed to consider such a survey. GB will advise on methodology. No discussion at this stage on how the questions might be formulated.

### 3.16 PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE

JR queried why MAS is sometimes asked to provide our insurance particulars prior to events. We do not have to comply. Any future requests for insurance details or personal details of individual members are to be referred to the committee for a decision.

## 4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

### 4.1 Barbecue

PK: suggested that we might schedule occasional barbecues at Wooglemai or Stargard to encourage more attendees. To be followed up.

## 5 CLOSE OF MEETING

Next meeting: Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> October. Meeting closed: 8.51 pm

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Minutes by: Roger Powell, Secretary  | Issued: 21 <sup>st</sup> September 2023 |
| <i>Note: The committee is in regular contact between meetings. As a consequence, certain reports to the committee and/or decisions made by the committee by e-mail or other means during the period may not be fully discussed at the next meeting. The minutes may include such items for the record and for context.</i> |   |

*For the record, RP was absent for part of the meeting due to Zoom communication failure but subsequently utilised the recording to complete the minutes.*