



PO Box 17 Minto, NSW 2566

MACARTHUR ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

MINUTES

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Online conference meeting
Wednesday 29th November
2023 at 7.00 pm

1 OPENING OF MEETING

The Zoom meeting was opened at 7.07 pm by John Rombi. Also present: Noel Sharpe (NS); Greg Bradford (GB); Roger Powell (RP).

Apologies: Andy Milton (AM); Phil Kidd (PK).

2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Motion: That the Minutes dated 17th October 2023, as circulated and posted, be accepted.

Moved: RP, 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 October

Account Status 31st October 2023

There was no Treasurer's report due to health issues.

JR provided the following information regarding recent payments that he was aware of: GB: \$429.91 for 4 banners and \$60.00 for 3 months Zoom. RP: \$257.93 for web hosting. PK for barbecue: \$99.02. Wooglemai: for November session \$400.

3.1.2 Bank Account Access

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

3.2 MEMBERSHIP

There have been no new membership approvals by e-mail since the previous meeting. The Membership register submitted by Dave Manning (MO) indicates a current membership of 147.

3.3 CORRESPONDENCE

None.

3.4 MACARTHUR ASTRONOMY FORUM

3.4.1 Speakers

JR: Dr Luke Barnes (WSU) was our guest speaker (in person) at the Forum on 20th November. His topic was: *"Is there life out there in the Universe?"*

Next week, 4th December, the speaker will be Dr Lucyna Chudczer (AAL), in person, whose topic will be *"Australian Astronomy in partnership with European Southern Observatory (ESO)"*

JR: Upcoming speakers are:

15 th January	3 rd Monday	Dr Ciaran O'Hare (USYD)	tbc
19 th February	3 rd Monday	Dr Stefania Barsanti (ANU)	In person
18 th March	3 rd Monday	Prof Ray Norris (WSU)	Zoom
15 th April	3 rd Monday	AGM	
20 th May	3 rd Monday	Dr Laura Driesson (USYD)	In person
15 th July	3 rd Monday	Dr Brad Tucker (ANU)	
19 th August	3 rd Monday	Prof Jonti Horner (USEQ)	Via Zoom
21 st October	3 rd Monday	Prof Richard de Grijs (Macquarie Uni)	
18 th November	3 rd Monday	Dr Tayyaba Zafar (Macq Uni)	
2 nd December	1 st Monday	Prof Geraint Lewis (USYD)	

RP: For Zoom viewers, there are sound quality variations when a speaker does not stand close to the microphone or moves around and sometimes faces away from the microphone. With a guest speaker who powerfully projects their voice, the quality variations were mostly minimal but were still detectable. We can expect quality issues with other guest speakers who do not remain within the optimal range of the microphone.

GB: advised that the only microphone being used is integrated with the webcam, two or three meters from the lectern. He will investigate if the microphone can be moved closer and we may also consider asking the speaker to remain at a constant close distance to it.

3.4.2 Venue booking for 2024

NS: Bookings will be open early December.

3.5 STARGARD

Events since last committee meeting and upcoming events:

4 th November	cancelled	due to poor weather conditions.
11 th November	cancelled	to encourage members to attend barbecue at Wooglemai.

Upcoming events:

2 nd December	upcoming	If held, will be at netball court but weather is looking doubtful.
9 th December	upcoming	~
16 th December	upcoming	~
6 th January	upcoming	~
13 th January	upcoming	~

NS: Sportsground redevelopment – no news.

3.6 BEGINNERS WORKSHOPS

GB: Last event was held on 21st October at Stargard. There were six attendees, with three mentors (GB, PK and T.Law).

Next event will be scheduled for 17th February (Third Quarter Moon). Alternate date will be 2nd March (First Quarter Moon).

3.7 WOOGLEMAI

3.7.1 Last Event

The last scheduled event for the year was held on 11th November and was combined with a members barbecue. PK organised the food. **There were ten attendees.** The hire fee was \$100 plus 10 x \$30 attendance fees brought the total amount payable to Guntawang to \$400. The barbecue expenses were \$99.02.

Unfortunately a lot of high cloud made for a poor sky and an approaching storm meant an early finish.

3.7.2 Schedule for 2024

For 2024 we are still invited to working bee nights (\$0 hire plus \$30 per member) but the dates are not compatible with astronomy. No costings have been discussed or agreed upon re stand-alone nights for 2024.

3.8 MENTORING & PUBLIC OUTREACH EVENTS

3.8.1 Mentoring

Ongoing.

3.8.2 Pubic Outreach

Nothing planned.

3.9 RETURN & EARN

GB: Financial reports received from Tomra:

Period	Description	Volume @10c	Receipt Amount	Payment Date
19 Jun - 20 Aug 2023	Drink containers refunds	1,726	\$172.60	Friday, 27th Oct
21 Aug - 22 Oct 2023	Drink containers refunds	1,971	\$197.10	Friday, 17th Nov

3.10 LOAN TELESCOPES

GB: all loan telescopes are available in storage for loan or for use at the Beginners Workshop.

3.11 ASSETS & STORAGE

The annual fee for the storage facility, due each November, has been paid. The fee paid this year was \$1,710.00. JR has moved the new GSO 8" Dobsonian to the storage facility.

3.12 NEW BANNERS

GB: Banners are approx 200 x 80cm. Three were purchased and have arrived and will be rolled out next Monday. All up cost \$429.91. We also got a free fourth banner because the comet tail wasn't reproduced as per the proof.

3.13 ASTRONOMY 2024 AND STAR-WHEELS

JR: placed an order for 41 Astronomy 2024 & 12 star wheels. The costs to members were: Astronomy 2024: \$22.00; Star Wheel (Large): \$22.00; postage for one or both: \$7.80. The order was received on 5th November. The merchandise will be available for collection at our next Forum in December. One copy of A2024 was given free to our Patron Prof Lewis and one other book remains unpaid.

The committee is grateful to MAS member Colin Pettit and his Wife (owners of Dymock's Book store at Neutral Bay) for making this order available at a lower price from previous years.

3.14 GENERAL MERCHANDISE

Ongoing.

3.15 WEBSITE

RP: Observing Planner document for 2024 is on the website for comment. Forum and Stargard dates are listed. Wooglemai dates can be added when a decision is made. Web Hosting fee of AU\$257.93 (US\$155.88) has been paid to DreamHost.

Website page visit statistics to 28th November:

Last 30 days: 4,698
Year to date: 50,633

3.16 MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

The survey will be conducted by JR e-mailing a questionnaire pdf file to each member, asking them to respond to the questions. JR and GB will analyse the responses. Ongoing.

4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

5 CLOSE OF MEETING

Next meeting: Tuesday 9th January 2024. Meeting closed: 8.16 pm

Minutes by: Roger Powell, Secretary	Issue 0: 30 th November 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>	