

# Macarthur Astronomical Society

*Amateur Astronomers in South Western Sydney, New South Wales, Australia*

Founded in 1996

*Stargard Sunset*

## Annual Reports

April 2024

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# 1. Notice of Annual General Meeting

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2024



**Notice is given that the Annual General Meeting of Macarthur Astronomical Society Monday will be held on 15th April and will commence at 6.30 pm for a 6.45 pm start**

Please join the meeting at the earlier than usual start time, so that we may proceed in a timely fashion to our normal monthly Macarthur Astronomy Forum.

The meeting will be held at the University of Western Sydney, in the small lecture theatre located in **Building 30, School of Medicine**. It will also be conducted online via Zoom and a link will be e-mailed to all members.

To be eligible to vote (in person or online) you must be a financial member for 2024-25 prior to the meeting.

## Agenda

1. Opening of meeting, welcome and apologies.
2. Minutes of previous AGM, 17th April 2023\*\*
3. Business arising from the minutes.
4. Presentation of 2023-2024 Annual Reports\*\*
5. Presentation of Membership Awards\*\*
6. Appointment of Returning Officer.
7. Election of Management Committee for 2024-2025.
8. Other Business directly relevant to the AGM.
9. Close of Meeting.

\*\* Minutes, annual report documents and membership awardees are included in this single document.

Seven positions are available on the committee and nominations for election to the committee closed at noon on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April. Seven nominations were received before the closing date.

Following the conclusion of the AGM, the meeting will continue as an Ordinary General Meeting (Macarthur Astronomy Forum).

**Roger Powell**  
**Secretary**  
5<sup>th</sup> April 2024

## 2. President's Annual Report 2023-2024

John Rombi



**Dear Members,**

**Well, it's AGM time again, and the beginning of a new year for The MAS.**

At the close of nominations for Committee positions, as of Monday April 1st, we have 7 nominations for the 7 positions available. So, for the 28th year in a row, we have avoided an election!

I would like to thank Noel Sharpe (VP), Roger Powell (Secretary), Andy Milton (Treasurer), Phil Kidd (CM, Outreach Officer), Greg Bradford (CM, Telescope Loan Wrangler & Director) and Dave Manning (Membership Officer). I value their friendship, humour and dedication to The MAS. Their hard work & service has kept The MAS, strong, relevant and financially secure.

My sincere thank you goes to Roger Powell, our Webmaster. Roger has kept our website up to date, and easy to use. Thank you must also go to our Auditor, Graeme Bellamy.

After Andy's passing, Noel took over the position of Acting Treasurer. He had to wade through a large amount of paper work. His never ending commitment to ensuring financial fidelity for The MAS has given the Society a clean bill of health. I am forever in his debt.

### **Western Sydney University**

After a fruitless year (2022-early 2023) in finding a way to return to WSU Campbelltown, I decided to contact WSU Provost, Prof Greg Kolt. We spoke a few times on the phone, where I briefly brought up the association between The MAS & WSU over the last 28 years. I organized a time to meet him in person in July 2023.

Unfortunately not long after this, I came down with a severe case of Glandular Fever which put me out of action for two months. This is when the great group of people that are our committee swung into place. Roger & Noel put together a brief to present to Prof Kolt, and visited him in July. By the end of this meeting Prof Kolt made sure that The MAS had a continuing place at WSU. Prof Kolt stepped down from the position of Provost from the end of 2023.

On Tuesday March 26th, Roger & I visited the new WSU Provost, Prof Sarah Lewis at the Campbelltown Campus. The provost of any university is the main driver and overseer of events and relations with the general public. The main reason for the visit was to introduce ourselves and The MAS to her.

We, at The MAS, have always had a strong relationship with all the provosts. What was supposed to be a 1/2 hour meeting, turned into a 1 hour meeting. Prof Lewis asked many questions about The MAS, and our involvement with WSU over our 28 years. She was impressed by our involvement, and gave us the go ahead to continue with our Forums and to plan our public nights at The Domes. This will mean collaborating with Dr Ain de Horta, the resident astronomer at Campbelltown.

Prof Lewis is new to Campbelltown, after 23 years at USYD. I know that we will continue our strong bond with WSU, through her.

### **MAS Forum Speakers**

A big thank you to all our Professional Astronomers and Astrophysicists, from all disciplines of science. They have informed and educated us at our Forums, as they took us on a trip through the Universe.

I would also like to acknowledge our Patron, Professor Geraint Lewis (USYD) for his continuing support of The MAS.

In August 2023, we held our first Forum at WSU, post covid. A daunting time indeed, Noel chaired the first Forum in my absence.

### **Zoom**

Has been a life saver for the last four years, keeping us in touch with one another. Last year we decided to extend this service, even though our Forums were now being held in person at WSU. We now have an audience of members that for one reason or another cannot be at the Forums.

The service allows all members to watch our speakers and keep up with all the latest MAS information from home. It also allows us to source speakers that would not normally be present with us at WSU. As of March the service is working well.

New equipment was purchased last year to allow us to offer our Zoom service. A Web camera, tripod, microphone plus all the bits and pieces that go along with this setup and recently, a new laptop. This complete kit is not only beneficial at Forum evenings, but we can also use it at public outreach events.

I am eternally thankful to Greg Bradford for not only purchasing all the equipment, on The MAS's behalf, but also ironing out the "bugs" in our broadcasts and there have been many. I would also like to thank Tony Law for being able to share his expertise with Greg. It certainly helped to bring this service to fruition.

### **Public Outreach**

I was absent from the events that we held in 2023 - please see Noel's VP report - but I would like to thank ALL the members, especially Phil Kidd for organising the events and attending on the respective days/nights to share our Universe with the public.

### **Financial Status**

The MAS bottom line is a very healthy one, and will certainly allow us scope to take up new ventures. For further information, please refer to the financial report by our Interim Treasurer, Noel Sharpe.

### **Storage Facility**

In November 2021 the committee decided to rent a storage facility to house all MAS assets. Over the years the assets have been spread through different committee members houses. This made it almost impossible to keep track of each item. We now have key holders for the unit, and our assets are stored there.

### **Return And Earn**

I would like to thank Greg Bradford for all his hard work, in putting together the R&E system and cards. Your recyclable glass, plastic bottles and cans will earn money for The MAS; all you have to do is take your bottles and cans to the nearest TOMRA recycling plant.

You can use this service throughout NSW, and still collect monies for The MAS. Unfortunately, this service has not had the traffic that we had anticipated! So, please support YOUR CLUB!

### **Our Observing nights**

Have continued over the last year, though I must say the weather has had a great impact on the cancellation of quite a few of our sessions. With a more stable weather pattern forecast for Autumn and Winter, hopefully the number of successful observing nights will increase.

### **Beginners Night**

A BIG thank you goes to Greg Bradford for commencing this service for our members. We have had many successful nights of mentoring our new members and also some of our longtime members, that needed to remove the rust from their astro-sessions.

### **Wooglemai Education Centre**

We had a rocky start last year, the initial agreement was going to place an un-needed financial burden on The MAS. With further discussions a simpler payment method was agreed to. If you would like to visit our new observing site, the cost is \$30 per member, whether you stay for the evening or the full night. There are sleeping quarters, kitchen and toilets/showers for your use. And new for 2024, the road has been graded, making the trip to Wooglemai a lot safer and smoother. Please contact our VP, Noel Sharpe for further information.

I would like to thank Barry Moore and Noel for taking care of all the behind the scenes discussions, in making this site available to The MAS.

### **Social Media and Website**

The MAS is active in this area with a healthy FaceBook presence as well as a profile on X.

Visit our website [www.macaastro.org.au](http://www.macaastro.org.au) with its clearer and added features. There are two photo gallery areas, one for your dedicated high quality astro-images and another for your general images of our scopes and most importantly, OUR Members!

### **Membership**

I would like to thank Dave Manning for managing our very important membership list. If you haven't renewed, please contact us at [membership@macastro.org.au](mailto:membership@macastro.org.au) and we will help you with this. You have until April 30<sup>th</sup>, otherwise a joining fee of \$17 will apply.

Dave Manning will be stepping down as MO as of The AGM. I would like to thank him for his diligence in carrying out this important work. But, I'm glad to see that he will continue as a member of the Society.

### **Merchandise**

We had a large intake of the yearly ephemeris, *Astronomy 2024* and large planispheres. I would like to thank MAS member, Colin Pettit for providing this merchandise at an exceptionally low price. If you wish to purchase a book(s) on any subject. Please go to Dymocks at Neutral Bay or visit them on the web.

### Loan Telescopes

You would love to buy a telescope, but don't know which one? The MAS has a large and diverse selection of telescopes for financial members to borrow. Contact Greg Bradford, our Telescope Wrangler, on [macdob@macastro.org.au](mailto:macdob@macastro.org.au) to secure your scope. I would also like to thank Greg, for servicing and repairing our equipment.

### Big Thanks

Apart from the "Official people" in The MAS, I would like to thank others for their untiring dedication to our Society. Thank you for renewing your membership. We will be more active in the community and I will be calling for your help. Without volunteers, The MAS would grind to a halt!

### MAS Awards

At this time of year we acknowledge the continuous support of our members. Congratulations to all the recipients. Your certificate/Badge will be sent to you, or you may collect it at the next observing night. Please let our membership officer know of your preference.

5 Year Awards			10 Year Awards		
358	Howard	Pew	238	Masayoshi	Nagaya
361	Joan	Powell	243	Suzanne	Adijans
374	Marie	Curley	246	Allen	Williams
375	Isabella	Curley	250	James	Wall
376	David	Kind	251	Rob	Moscrop
378	Sanjay	Sengupta	253	Ralph	Imber
379	Manisha	Basu	257	Shirley	Imber
383	Damian	Case	258	Phillip	Carey
390	Neville	Arnott	260	Bob	Siegel
391	Rita	Currie			
393	Eric	Kingston	15 Year Awards		
397	Alison	Ford	138	Mohammed	Baddah
398	Eric	Brown	140	Jennifer	Rombi
400	Sarkis	Garabedian	144	Carol	McVeigh
401	Andre	Sarkis			
20 Year Awards			25 Year Awards		
	NONE		17	Lou	Timpano
			23	George	Cruickshank
			24	Ursula	Braatz
			26	John	Rombi
			27	Lloyd	Wright

Cheers, John.

**John Rombi**

**President**

5<sup>th</sup> April 2024

### **3. Treasurer's Annual Report 2023-2024**

#### **Noel Sharpe**

**Was with great sadness that we learned of Andrew Milton's passing in late December, was unexpected and another great loss to the MAS family. Andy served as the Society's Treasurer for over 5 years and fulfilled that role with distinction and dedication.**

I was given the responsibility to complete Andy's work and compile the end of year reports for presentation.

The reports have been audited by the Society's auditor Graeme Bellamy and I cannot express enough how much I appreciated Graeme's assistance and advice. I wish to also thank past treasurers Barry Moore and Tony Law for their offers of assistance should it be required.

#### **Statement of Financial Performance**

##### **INCOME**

##### **Membership fees**

There has been a significant improvement in income, the prepaid membership renewals of \$4762.94 received prior to the end of 28/2/23 can now be accounted for as income in the statement of financial performance.

Additionally, an amount of \$2306.17 in membership fees were received from 1/3/23 to 29/2/24, total represented is \$7069.11. Please note we have received renewals in advance of \$343.25, this is recorded as a liability on the Balance Sheet, but will carry forward as income for the next annual report ending 28/2/2025.

##### **Donations**

We received a donation from our outreach event at Warragamba Public School of \$76.00. Forum donations of \$42.00, pre covid outreach donations of \$105.00 now being brought to account, also a personal member donation of \$200.00 was received, producing a total of \$423.00. The \$200.00 was gifted to the Society on behalf of the late Andy Milton by his family. We are very appreciative for this donation and all others that we have received.

##### **Interest**

Our Term Deposit was receiving monthly interest payments, over a 4-month period from 1/3/23 until 24/6/23 totalling \$84.31. On maturity, 24/6/23 the committee decided to add surplus funds from our general account to the value of \$3701.17 to the Term Deposit.

We changed the term from monthly to 12 months to receive a higher rate of return. A six-monthly payment interest payment was added 24/12/23 for \$495.53, when the previous monthly interest of \$84.31 is added for we have a total interest payment of \$579.84.

##### **Sales of Merchandise**

Represented by sales of Astronomy 2024, Planispheres and postage payments received, added in are sales of two jackets and two caps from our general merchandise stock. Total received is \$1517.29.

##### **Ground Hire**

The amount of \$780.00 was received as member hire fees for Wooglemai our dark sky site. The total hire fee paid by the Society was \$980, a deficit of \$200.00 which is in keeping with arrangements. Stargard has not been invoiced for ground fees at this time.

### **Tomra Return and Earn**

Income received has been impressive at \$1266.90 compared to last year's figure of \$146.90.

The Society thanks everyone making contributions, all the smaller amounts do add up over the year. Special mention to Trump It Cyclers for continuing to make bulk donations over the course of the year.

### **EXPENDITURE**

#### **Storage costs and fit out.**

There were no fit-out costs to record this year, this is reflected as a positive variance of \$798.86. Also noted is we no longer hold a PO Box, so no expense recorded.

#### **Equipment Purchased**

Represents the forum AV equipment purchased to enable Zoom presentations to be provided from and into the lecture theatre, an additional monitor was also purchased to assist with public outreach. A small adjustment of \$21.82 is acknowledged to the balance sheet position.

#### **Cost of Goods Sold**

We benefited from an excellent trade deal which greatly aided in the purchase costs of the Astronomy 2024 and Planispheres, this resulted in positive variance of \$1071.21, see below for details.

#### **Subscriptions**

This amount combines the annual Zoom fees of \$295.56, Website hosting of \$257.93 and Telstra Mobile Wi Fi payments of \$120.00. Total represented is \$673.49.

#### **Dinners, Gifts and Catering**

Expenses incurred include the Wooglemai BBQ, \$99.02. Forum Catering tea, coffee, milk, biscuits etc at \$73.60 and Guest Speaker gifts and dinners at \$179.71, total of \$352.33.

#### **Advertising**

The amount of \$409.96 represents the stand-up banners used for forum and outreach purposes.

### **OVERVIEW OF FINANCIAL POSITION**

We are very pleased to announce an operational surplus of \$4944.53, represented by strong income growth across nearly all categories. We cleared the previous year's deficit, paid all expenses and purchased new equipment. We note a turnaround in the overall finances of \$7650.73.

Despite expenses of Audio-Visual equipment, advertising banners, subscriptions and ground hire our expenditure spend was relatively flat with a modest increase in overall expenditure of \$88.10.

The Society is in a very sound financial position. Net member equity has improved and we are well placed to account for future expenses.

Continued revenue is expected from membership renewals, new members joining and return and earn donations.

The decision to alter the way our Term Deposit is invested will provide a guaranteed rate of return; I anticipate 2 payments of interest totalling around the \$980,00 approximately. We may also add some surplus funds to the deposit in June, this will be discussed within the committee in the near future.



## **Acknowledgements**

We wish to thank and acknowledge MAS member Colin Pettitt who owns Dymocks located at Neutral Bay. Colin offered the Society a generous trade deal on our bulk purchases of the Astronomy 2024 and Night Sky Planispheres, The A2024 was secured for \$16.50 each and the Planispheres for \$15.00 each. Depending on where members shop savings of \$8 to \$10.00 could be expected over normal retail. On behalf of the Society we greatly appreciated Colin's support. We passed on savings of A2024 and the Planispheres to our members and at the same time created income for the Society.

I also wish to thank and acknowledge MAS member Greg Bradford, Greg instigated our Return and Earn programme and acts as liaison with Tomra who administers the scheme. Greg was able to have our Society classed as a "on screen donation partner". We have exceeded the previous year's income by \$1,120.00 which is outstanding. On behalf of the Society, I pass on our thanks and appreciation.

**Noel Sharpe**

**Treasurer**

5th April 2024

## 4. Annual Financial Statements 2023-24

### Macarthur Astronomical Society Statement of Financial Position YEAR ENDED 29TH FEBRUARY 2024

	2024	2023	Movement
<b>Balance sheet</b>			
<b>Accumulated funds</b>			
Funds at beginning of year	\$36,373.20	\$39,079.40	-\$2,706.20
Surplus (Deficit) for year	\$4,944.53	-\$2,706.20	\$7,650.73
<b>Net members equity</b>	<b>\$41,317.73</b>	<b>\$36,373.20</b>	<b>\$4,944.53</b>
<b>Represented by</b>			
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Merchandise stock	\$724.86	\$894.86	-\$170.00
Cash at bank and in hand	\$11,382.02	\$14,661.06	-\$3,279.04
Fixed term deposit	\$25,517.24	\$21,236.63	\$4,280.61
Paypal balance	\$1,211.38	\$2,126.61	-\$915.23
Prepaid insurance	\$784.38	\$784.48	-\$0.10
Prepaid storage rental	\$1,282.50	\$1,282.50	NIL
Audio Visual Equipment	\$758.60	NIL	\$758.60
Petty cash advances	NIL	\$150.00	-\$150.00
	<b>\$41,660.98</b>	<b>\$41,136.14</b>	<b>\$524.84</b>
<b>Non Current Assets</b>			
Plant and equipment	\$6,774.83	\$6,016.23	NIL
Depreciation	-\$6,774.83	-\$6,016.23	NIL
Total Assets	<b>\$41,660.98</b>	<b>\$41,136.14</b>	<b>\$524.84</b>
<b>Less Current Liabilities</b>			
Membership fees in advance	-\$343.25	-\$4,762.94	\$4,419.69
<b>Total Assets less Liabilities</b>	<b>\$41,317.73</b>	<b>\$36,373.20</b>	<b>\$4,944.53</b>

### BANK BALANCES AND RECONCILIATION 29/02/2024

	29/02/2024	28/02/2023	
No 1 Society Cheque Account	\$11,378.36	\$14,657.41	-\$3,279.05
No 2 Bank Account -	\$3.66	\$3.64	\$0.02
Outstanding Deposits	nil	nil	
Outstanding Cheques to be presented	nil	nil	
Society Interest Bearing Deposit	\$25,517.24	\$21,236.63	\$4,280.61
Paypal Account Balance	\$1,211.38	\$2,126.61	-\$915.23
	<b>\$38,110.64</b>	<b>\$38,024.29</b>	<b>\$86.35</b>

**Macarthur Astronomical Society**  
**Statement of Financial Performance**  
**YEAR ENDED 29TH FEBRUARY 2024**

	2024	2023	Movement
<b>Income</b>			
Membership fees	\$ 7,069.17	\$ 1,305.00	\$ 5,764.17
Donations	\$ 423.00	\$ 40.00	\$ 383.00
Interest	\$ 579.84	\$ 97.97	\$ 481.87
Sales of merchandise	\$ 1,517.29	\$ 2,067.50	-\$ 550.21
Ground Hire	\$ 780.00	\$ 240.00	\$ 540.00
Tomra Return and Earn	\$ 1,266.90	\$ 146.90	\$ 1,120.00
Miscellaneous revenue			
	\$ 11,636.20	\$ 3,897.37	\$ 7,738.83
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Filing fees	\$ 106.44	\$ 48.21	-\$ 58.23
insurance	\$ 784.38	\$ 784.38	NIL
Miscellaneous expense	\$ 27.09	NIL	.
Postage printing and stationary	\$ 438.26	\$ 303.40	-\$ 134.86
Po box rental	NIL	\$ 144.00	\$ 144.00
Storage costs and fit out	\$ 1,282.50	\$ 2,081.36	\$ 798.86
Equipement purchased	\$ 780.42	NIL	-\$ 780.42
Cost of goods sold	\$ 856.80	\$ 1,928.01	\$ 1,071.21
Subscriptions	\$ 673.49	\$ 423.13	-\$ 250.36
Grounds	\$ 980.00	\$ 614.00	-\$ 366.00
Dinners Gifts and Catering	\$ 352.33	\$ 277.08	-\$ 75.25
Advertising	\$ 409.96	NIL	-\$ 409.96
Total Expenditure	\$ 6,691.67	\$ 6,603.57	\$ (88.10)
<b>Reconciliation</b>			
Total Income	\$ 11,636.20	\$ 3,897.37	\$ 7,738.83
Less Total Expenditure	\$ 6,691.67	\$ 6,603.57	-\$ 88.10
<b>Operational Surplus/Deficit</b>	\$ 4,944.53	\$ (2,706.20)	\$ 7,650.73

**Noel Sharpe**  
**Treasurer**  
5th April 2024

## **5. Auditor's Statement 2023-24**

**Graeme Bellamy**

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### **Macarthur Astronomical Society**

#### **Audit Report**

#### **Year Ending 29th February 2024**

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**The Committee is responsible for compiling and supplying information supporting the Financial Statements.**

The scope of my Audit was to ensure that the data supplied complies with all necessary Australian accounting standards and that Governance requirements have been maintained

I have reviewed and examined this data and in my opinion it complies with Australian Accounting Standards and reflects a true and accurate fair view of the financial position of Macarthur Astronomical Society for the year completed.

The enclosed accounts and qualifying statements by the Society Honorary Treasurer reflect the true movements of performance in Income and Expenditure and reconciled to Balance Sheet depicting Members Equity.

Special thanks must be extended to Noel Sharpe for his exemplary contribution in taking over the Treasury role after the passing of Andy in the latter part of the year. A very quick learner of the highest ethics.

**Graeme Bellamy**

**Hon. Auditor**

4<sup>th</sup> April 2024

## **6. Vice President's Annual Report 2023-24**

**Noel Sharpe**

**It has been both a challenging and rewarding year, also a sad one with the passing of our treasurer Andy Milton and previous committee member Penny Reid.**

Our respects and sympathies extend to their friends and families.

### **Macarthur Astronomy Forum**

We held our first live forum last August, our last one was February 2020, it was always our intention to resume our forums as soon as we could, however circumstances beyond our control delayed our return.

The Society needed to re-establish our connections with Western Sydney University. Our president John Rombi, in conjunction with the Society's Secretary Roger Powell, was busy making the arrangements and presentations needed for our return, however as you know John was unfortunately unavailable to progress this further due to a serious illness. As the Society's Vice President I am required to undertake the Presidents responsibilities when required.

I was so happy that John recovered quickly enough to join us for our September forum, although his full recovery took some time. John and I work very closely together, it is an enjoyable partnership and friendship. The Society is highly rewarded in having such a great President.

Back in July last year when I was Acting President a meeting took place with the then Provost Gregory Kolt and Project Officer Marine Lye. It was a very supportive and encouraging meeting resulting in a lecture theatre being made available to us without cost, as per long held arrangements. I cannot thank Roger Powell enough for attending the meeting with me, and for all his hard work and support.

Roger came up with The New Dawn initiative to announce our return to the university and promote to our guest speaker Professor Joss Bland Hawthorn. Roger and I worked very hard to make our return a success, we made quite a team!

It seemed the best way forward for the MAS to try introducing Zoom capability into our live forums, so we could stay connected with our members who for any number of reasons may not be able to attend the forums in person. We could also provide for our guest speakers to Zoom in remotely.

The forums as presented today would not be possible without the technical knowledge and dedication provided by Greg Bradford, I know how much hard work Greg put into getting the Zoom conferencing up and running. Without Greg and Tony Law's support we would have struggled to get it up and running, nothing was too much trouble for them, it was great to all work together to make our August Forum return such a great success.

### **Stargard**

The construction of a new Multi-Purpose Building at the front of Dudley Chesham Oval is well under way, when finished we will have access to a storage room, kitchen, and toilets. This will create new opportunities for our Society, with good weather we may be looking at completion sometime next year. Stargard continues to be our primary observing site and we thank the Wollondilly Council for their continued support.

Unfortunately, the weather has been against us all year, including workshops we managed twelve visits. We have not paid a hire fee for some time, rather a partial credit invoice for \$33.50 is received every

month. This is a temporary good will gesture which is appreciated. I would expect some form of fee will be arriving in due course.

Due to work commitments, it is not possible for me to open up Stargard, so it is great that Phil Kidd or Tony Law has assisted with being the gate openers.

### **Wooglemai**

Wooglemai is our dark sky site that has overnight accommodation, large under cover areas, lounge area with fireplace, kitchen, and toilet facilities. The access road has now been graded and makes for easy access by car. We visited seven times over the last 12 months, a highlight was the big BBQ last November where ten of us attended, the food was great, but the night sky was completely clouded out when we started observing. I must pass on a big thank you to Phil Kidd who had the idea for the BBQ to help promote the site, he also organised the food and supplies, with the Society paying the cost.

Last month seven of us attended under clear dark skies however it did cloud out just after 12 am. I wish to also thank Barry Moore who is on the Guntawang Wooglemai committee for all his hard work in advocating on behalf of MAS to assist us in gaining access to the site.

We have secured bookings for 2024, the Society pays a hire fee of \$100.00 per outing and members pay \$30.00.

I wish to thank Barry, Tony law and Phil Kidd for opening the site as due to work commitments I cannot arrive in time.

### **Outreach**

I attended three outreach events last year, Campbelltown Girl Guides, Cobbitty Public School, and Warragamba Public. I cannot thank enough all of our amazing volunteers. These nights were organised by Phil Kidd, Phil gave talks at all three events and is a great communicator with children of all ages. We also attended Broughton Anglican College in August, it was mainly a static display and discussions during the day. MAS was well represented by Greg, Tony, Dave and Mike, great work!

I know I have probably left someone off the list of appreciations, so please forgive me if I have overlooked anyone's contributions.

Regards

**Noel Sharpe**  
**Vice President and Stargard Liaison Officer**  
5th April 2024

## 7. Secretary/Webmaster Annual Report 2023-24

**Roger Powell**

**The Society has now entered its twenty-ninth year. Membership peaked at 152 across the year 2023-24.**

John's President's Report records the friendship and dedication of committee members, membership officer and other helpers. I endorse John's remarks and briefly add that John is the popular public face of MAS and is a source of great inspiration for all of us in the Society.

Our Vice President Noel Sharpe became Acting President for two very busy months while John was seriously ill. He then took over as Acting Treasurer for four months. More inspiration!

Our esteemed Treasurer Andy Milton died suddenly in December. Andy wanted to continue in his role and so it was a shock to us when we suddenly learned that he was gone.

Sadly, we also record the death of Penny Reid, who served as a committee member in 2013-14.

The committee held eleven meetings in 2023-24. Logged on members can read the minutes on the website. The committee was down to just five members for much of the year but will be restored to seven following the AGM, when we will elect a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, membership officer and two additional committee members.

During the covid pandemic, Zoom technology was the glue holding MAS together but in August 2023 the *Macarthur Astronomy Forum* returned to WSU. Zoom now augments these live meetings for the benefit of members who cannot come in person and also allows us a wider choice of guest speakers.

To simplify our procedures, we've shortened the membership renewal period to two calendar months, and I urge all members to renew before the AGM.

The MAS PO Box subscription has been terminated. We now rely on e-mail for everything.

Our summer observing sessions have been very limited. We scheduled twelve Stargard evenings between 1st November and 6th April, and only one has escaped cancellation. Hopefully we can turn this around and rebuild the post-pandemic attendances at both of our observing locations.

Now to the [Macastro website](#). The members *Private Messaging System* (PMS) has been restored, enabling direct contact between individual members. Web visits continue to increase in numbers:

Financial year:	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Page visits:	34,450	47,700 (+38%)	57,424 (+20%)

Special thanks to our astrophotographers for contributing to the *MAS Photo Gallery* and making it the website's most viewed feature, now containing over 260 high quality images. As clearer skies return I am looking forward to many more great photographic contributions from our photographers.

The *Members Library* is a place to submit your own astronomy related articles, where you can publish meaningful contributions which will remain visible to other members for many years to come.

Finally, I really do appreciate it when someone lets me know if something goes wrong. So, if you find a dead link; or a factual error; or if you have problems logging on, please do let me know.

**Roger Powell**

5th April 2024

## **8 Telescope Curator's Report**

**Greg Bradford**

### **Loan Telescopes**

**Our telescopes and binoculars may be loaned to members for free, except when being used for mentoring purposes.**

We have two 15cm Dobsonians and a recently donated 20cm Dobsonian telescope

Also available is a Meade ETX-125 optical tube mounted on a basic Celestron GOTO mount. This is a great telescope to learn the basics of using a GOTO telescope.

All telescopes come with a standard accessories kit for eyepieces etc, as well as a red light torch and adapter to mount a mobile phone camera to the eyepiece.

We also loan a pair of waterproof Saxon 10 x 50 binoculars. These are in addition to the Olympus 8-16 x 40 Zoom binoculars donated in 2019.

### **Workshops**

Workshops were introduced in March 2022. They are aimed at new members and those wishing to expand their basic astronomical and equipment skills. They are run the one of the Stargard fields with experienced MAS observers as mentors.

This financial year we were only able to run two workshops due to weather.


**Greg Bradford**

Telescope Curator

7<sup>th</sup> April 2024



## 9. Minutes of Previous AGM

<p>MACARTHUR ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY Incorporated</p>  <p>mas macarthur astronomical society</p>	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>of</p> <p><b>ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</b></p> <p>Online conference Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 6.30 pm</p>
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### 1. OPENING OF MINUTES, WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

President John Rombi opened the meeting at 6.40 pm. Thirty-one members were present:

Jenny Rombi	John Rombi	Noel Sharpe	Karyn Bradford	Greg Bradford
Jenny Kidd	Phillip Kidd	Joan Powell	Roger Powell	Andy Milton
Carol McVeigh	Tony Law	Suzanne Adijans	Masa Nagaya	Dick Everett
Ric Forster	Frank Alvaro	Bob Monckom	Allen Williams	Stephen Edwards
Robert McGoven	Mike Nicholas	Mark Fisher	Gusztav Belanszky	Colin Pettit
Neville Arnott	Ursula Bratz	Richard Curley	George Cruikshank	Anthony Muscio
Damien Case				

All attendees bar one had renewed for 2023-24. There was one apology, received from Dave Manning (Membership Officer). John Rombi thanked members for attending and proposed that Roger Powell be appointed to take the minutes. Accepted.

### 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The minutes of the 2022 AGM were circulated to members prior to the meeting and were taken as read.

Motion: *That the minutes be accepted as a true record of the 2022 AGM*", moved by Roger Powell, seconded by Stephen Edwards. Motion carried unanimously. The President ordered that the minutes be filed in the Society's formal records.

### 3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

There was no business arising from the previous minutes

### 4. MOTION TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION

Motion: *"That the proposed amendments to the constitution as displayed on the website be adopted"*.  
Moved: Roger Powell, seconded: Greg Bradford.

John Rombi advised that members who have not renewed for 2023-24 may not vote and if they do, their votes will not be counted. The motion was carried unanimously by a show of hands.

### 5. PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL REPORTS FOR 2022-2023

The 2022-2023 Annual Report document was distributed to members prior to the meeting. It included reports from the President (John Rombi), Treasurer (Andy Milton), Auditor (Graeme Bellamy), Vice-president (Noel Sharpe), Secretary (Roger Powell) and Telescope Curator (Greg Bradford).

John Rombi read his President's Report and the remaining reports were taken as read. Noel Sharp commented on his Vice-president's Report.

The Treasurer's Financial Statement by Andy Milton indicated that total assets were \$41,136.14 compared to \$39,462.40 twelve months ago. Graeme Bellamy's Auditor's report certified that the financial statements comply with all necessary Australian Accounting Standards and reflect a true and fair view of Macarthur Astronomical Society for the year.

Andy Milton said that it was much more difficult to prepare the financial statements this year, due to a catastrophic data loss. He will be proposing the purchase or rental of new accounting software. He also warned that it would be necessary to provide substantial funding beyond membership fees to match the expected expenditure.

The latest membership report from Dave Manning indicated that the current membership for 2023-24 is already 130. Three members have indicated they will not renew and 43 members have not yet renewed.

Motion: "That the Annual reports for 2022-2023 be accepted".

Moved by John Rombi seconded by Suzanne Adjians. Motion carried unanimously.

There was no business arising from the reports. The President ordered that the 2023 Annual Report be filed in the secretary's formal records.

## 6. PRESENTATION OF MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

John Rombi announced the following membership awards, which will be posted to the awardees or presented in person where possible:

Five year certificate:	Karyn Bradford, Greg Bradford, Jackie Carpenter, Craig Elson, Carole Ann Lane, Sam Mathanarajan, Nenad Arsovic, Paul Myhill, Debra Taylor, Dave Manning.
Ten Year badge and certificate:	Laura Bach, Richard Curley, Paul Auer, Mark Johnston.
Fifteen year certificate:	Jessie Clark, Michael Clark, Ray Armstrong.
Twenty-five year certificate:	Daniel Ross.

## 7. APPOINTMENT OF RETURNING OFFICER:

John Rombi thanked all members for their support during the year and proposed Carol McVeigh as the Returning Officer. The proposal was endorsed by the meeting and John Rombi vacated the chair.

## 8. ELECTION OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FOR 2023-2024

Carol McVeigh took the chair and thanked John for his truly outstanding leadership of the Society. She declared all management committee positions for Macarthur Astronomical Society Inc. vacant and advised that six nominations had been received prior to the closing of nominations on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2023.

POSITION	NOMINEE	NOMINATOR	SECONDER
President	<b>John Rombi</b>	Jennifer Rombi	Roger Powell
Vice-President	<b>Noel Sharpe</b>	John Rombi	Roger Powell
Treasurer	<b>Andy Milton</b>	Jennifer Rombi	John Rombi
Secretary	<b>Roger Powell</b>	Joan Powell	John Rombi
Committee Member	<b>Greg Bradford</b>	Karyn Bradford	John Rombi
Committee Member	<b>Phillip Kidd</b>	Jennie Kidd	Roger Powell

The validity of the six nominations were certified. There being no duplicate nominations, Carol McVeigh declared each of the six nominees duly elected to the Macarthur Astronomical Society Inc. Management Committee for 2023-24. The declarations were unanimously endorsed by the meeting.

On behalf of the membership, Carol McVeigh congratulated the new management committee and wished them well for the coming year. She then vacated the chair for the incoming President John Rombi.

## 9. OTHER BUSINESS DIRECTLY RELEVANT TO THE AGM.

There was no other business.

## 10. CLOSE OF MEETING

The President, John Rombi thanked the membership for their participation and support. The Annual General Meeting closed at 7.13 pm and continued as a Monthly General Meeting (Macarthur Astronomy Forum).

## APPENDIX

### Amendments to Constitution Roger Powell & Greg Bradford

The changes proposed are a mix of the requirement of DOFT to address certain matters and the committee's desire to improve the Society's practice.

Section	Proposed alteration
1	Improved definitions.
4.6	Redefined the meaning of "Full Member" to include Family, Student, Pensioner and Honorary memberships (but not Associate Membership).
4.8	New clause to tighten limitations on the availability of members private information.
5.1	Added role of Returning Officer at AGM ballot. Placed no limit of consecutive terms served by an office bearer or committee member. Added a specific time for nominations for election to be lodged. Added required action by committee in event of no candidacy for a position. Relaxed the strict requirement to terminate a committee member who does not attend three committee meetings.
5.7	Confirms the power of the committee to determine the use of electronic methods where deemed appropriate.
6.1 to 6.4	General revision to formalise the current practice that Ordinary General Meetings (i.e. Macarthur Astronomy Forum) are informal meetings where formal business is not conducted and which are exempt from the strict formal procedures required for Annual General Meetings and Special General Meetings. Permits the chairperson to overrule a request for a formal ballot when such a ballot would be impracticable.
7	Added a description of income sources.

*Minutes:*  
*Roger Powell,*  
*Secretary*  
*18th April 2023*

*Chair:*  
*John Rombi*  
*President*  
*18th April 2023*