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The Athenaeum Astronomy Association (AAA) First Annual General Meeting

held at 7.30pm on Thursday 28 September 2017
in the Function Room at Nowton Park Cafe

The Agenda

Members Present:-

Joan Brame	Judith Carr	Philip Carr	Ruth Clarke
Peter Corbett	James Dale	Daniel Foulsham	Linda Harper
Lloyd Hughes	Hubert Kerry	Mike Kirkham	Phil Leigh
Nigel Osborne	Nick Proctor	Tom Sharman	Marian Shaw
Brian Shepherd	June Snowdon	Richard Young (Director)	

Guests:-

Deborah..... Kinetic Science Foundation
David Murton – Orwell Astronomical Association, Ipswich. (OASI)
Paul Whiting - OASI
Gary Quilter – West Suffolk Parks and Open Spaces Manager

1. · Chairman's Opening Remarks and Welcome

A warm welcome was extended to all those present, both members and guests. This was the AAA's first formal Annual General Meeting, a milestone in the development of the Association, and the first time that Nowton Park's Function Room had been used as an AAA Meeting space.

2. · Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from members

Malcolm Brearley	Alan Broadway	Simon Parton	Mark Proctor
Stephen Valach	Ann Williams	John Williams	

And from invited guests

Adrian Grenville Mary Grenville
Dwaine Gray, Senior Ranger, Nowton Park
Damien Parker, West Suffolk's Operations Manager: Culture, Leisure and Communities.

3. · Minutes of previous EGM, held on 02 February 2017.

3.1 This Extraordinary General Meeting had been called for the purposes of agreeing an interim Constitution and electing an interim Committee, pending this first formal AGM scheduled for the end of September 2017.

The Constitution was adopted and a Committee of eight members was elected. As Director, Dr. Richard Young was appointed to serve as an ex officio member of the Committee.

3.2 These Minutes were accepted by the Meeting as being correct.

4. · Matters arising from the Minutes of 02 February 2017

During the interim period since then of more than seven months, the elected Committee has established the AAA as a fully-fledged, independent, bona fide organisation with its own procedures and Bank Accounts.

5 ·Presentation of Chairman's Annual Report

5.1 The AAA could not have established itself so successfully at Nowton Park's Walled Garden without the much appreciated help from our valued supporters, West Suffolk Officers, Damien Parker and Gary Quilter; Dwaine Gray, Senior Ranger and Phil Ewing of Realise Futures, in whose greenhouses we hold our fortnightly meetings.

David Murton, Chairman of OASI, and Paul Whiting also have given their support and the AAA has benefited from their experience and advice. In addition David has introduced the AAA to other Astronomy groups within the East Anglian region.

The AAA looks forward to developing a partnership with Deborah of the Kinetic Science Foundation, through which outreach work can be developed, especially with younger people.

5.2 The AAA motto of Bringing the Stars Closer to Home describes aptly the AAA's ambitions for the future, through not only its broad, educational programme, but also its aim to raise public knowledge and appreciation of the town's heritage via the Athenaeum Observatory and Telescope Restoration Project.

5.3 The AAA's achievements so far have been:-

- The establishment of regular, fortnightly meetings
- Creating a website and the use of social media
- An AAA Handbook for new members
- Providing the programme for the Council's Star Parties – one in March and two are due at the end of October
- An educational trip to the Royal Observatory at Greenwich
- Support for OASI's 50th Anniversary Event with a display at Suffolk University's Waterfront Building in Ipswich
- Gradual building up of resources – a projector, screen, three telescopes, a spotting scope have been acquired or donated during the year.
- Members are willing to research a range of astronomical topics and to share their findings with the group via talks and presentations.
- The AAA is proud of its achievements; it has tried to have fun as well as being serious students, and is beginning to be recognised as a group within the area.

5.4 In answer to a Member's query concerning the progress of the Restoration Project:- The AAA is in the final stages of an agreement with the Borough Council, which is almost ready to sign. The Borough is being very supportive; the Town Council also is very keen. The AAA now needs to formalize the structure of its Committee, to enable the Restoration work progress.

The Chairman's 2017 Annual Report is attached

6· Adoption of Annual Report

Members accepted the Annual Report

7· Presentation of Accounts (Treasurer)

7.1 Copies of the Annual Account up to 30 June 2017, the end of the AAA's Financial Year, were tabled, having been examined and duly signed by Peter Corbett, independently of the Committee.

7.2 The main items of the account were highlighted and explained, specifically the two separate accounts for the dedicated Restoration Funds and the on-going every day income and expenditure associated with the general AAA account.

7.3 Final Balances for the AAA's Financial Year to 30 June 2017 were £637.16 in the unrestricted general AAA Account and £794.66 in the restricted Restoration Fund.

The 2017 Account Statements are attached

8 · Adoption of Accounts

The Accounts were adopted formally by the unanimous vote of the members present at the meeting.

9. Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2017/18

By universal agreement of the members, Peter Cordell was appointed as Independent Examiner of Accounts for the financial year 01 July 2017 – 30 June 2018.

10 · Election of Officers and Committee to the Athenaeum Astronomy Association.

i). At this point the Director, Dr Richard Young, supervised the election of Mike Kirkham to his position as Chairman. Proposed by Nick Proctor, Seconded by Nigel Osborne, and unanimously elected. Mike then continued to chair the meeting.

ii) The election of Officers and Committee continued as follows:-

POSITION	VOLUNTEER CANDIDATE	PROPOSER	SECONDER	VOTE
Chairman	Michael Kirkham	Nick Proctor	Nigel Osborne	Unanimous
Treasurer/Membership Secretary	James Dale	Lloyd Hughes	Tom Sharman	Unanimous
Committee Secretary	** Linda Harper <i>Initially for a two month trial period</i>	<i>Philip Carr</i>	<i>Ruth Clarke</i>	<i>Unanimous –</i>
Deputy Chairman / Resources Officer	Brian Shepherd	Philip Carr	Linda Harper	Unanimous
Webmaster/Social Media	Mark Proctor	Ruth Clarke	Philip Carr	Unanimous
Programme / Events	Philip Leigh	Tom Sharman	Lloyd Hughes	Unanimous
<i>AAA Meeting Support</i>	Linda Harper	<i>Simon Parton</i>	<i>Stephen Valach</i>	<i>Position on hold</i>
Membership Support	Joan Brame	Peter Corbett	Judith Carr	Unanimous
Committee Member	Judith Carr	Philip Carr	Ruth Clarke	Unanimous

11. Proposals to be put to the AGM -

11.1. Revised Constitution

Based on the experience of the past few months, the Committee is proposing some minor changes to the original interim constitution.

These are mainly to do with tightening up some presentation points in order to make the meaning more clear; rationalizing the date of the Membership Year, this now beginning of 02 January each year instead of just before Christmas.

This also enables a smooth transition between the end of the financial year on 30 June, any decision-making at the AGM during September, and the beginning of the Membership Year in January.

These changes were agreed and accepted by members.

11.2 - Future Planning

- i). An AAA meeting is being held at **West Stow Visitor Centre** on 09 November, free of any charge, for members to assess the facilities there and to consider the dark sky opportunity for observing. The issue of accommodation space is becoming more crucial for the AAA: the use of the greenhouse area and the cooperation of Realise Futures is very much appreciated, but there are constraints attached to the greenhouse use which, as the Membership increases, sometimes makes meetings difficult. West Stow may offer another possibility...
- ii). Deborah elaborated on the work and future plans for the Kinetic Science Foundation, <http://kineticsscience.co.uk>, with suggestions for ways in which the AAA can cooperate to the mutual benefit of all. In particular she mentioned the first Suffolk Science Festival, due to happen in February 2018, and being held on four sites in Bury St Edmunds. The chosen theme encompasses astronomy and space, and offers an exciting opportunity for the AAA to be involved.

12. Any Other Business

David Murton recalled the first time he met Richard Young, at one of OASI's Star Parties, and encouraged him to form an Astronomy group in Bury St Edmunds. The group now has a good membership, and good plans for the future. Its reputation is spreading and it now is a force to be reckoned with in the region's world of astronomy.

David offered his congratulations on a task well done!

13. Closing remarks

i). There being no other business, the meeting closed, and there was a short interlude whilst **Paul Whiting** prepared to give members a short talk on the **astronomy outreach work** he does. This involves work with both adults and schools, in a variety of places, both indoors and out. Paul highlighted the necessary attributes such a varied task requires. It drew the evening to a very interesting and informative conclusion.

ii). Before closing the meeting and on behalf of the members, a presentation was made to Marian, who was vacating her post as Secretary to the AAA, a position she had held since May 2016. The kind thoughts and the overwhelming generosity of the Members were very much appreciated, leaving Marian with many happy memories of the AAA's achievements during the past seventeen months.

iii). Members were able to enjoy some light refreshments before the meeting eventually ended at 21.50hrs.

MLS for AGM, 28.09.2017