

14TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE FLAMSTEED ASTRONOMY SOCIETY

Held on Monday 16th September 2013 at 7.00 p.m. in the lecture theatre of the National Maritime Museum.

1. **Present:** Malcolm Porter (Chair) and 79 members of the Flamsteed Astronomy Society
2. **Apologies:** No apologies were received.
3. **Matters arising:** There were no matters arising from the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Monday 1st October 2012.
4. **Chair's address:**

Malcolm welcomed members to the 14th Annual General Meeting of the Flamsteed Astronomy Society and gave an overview of what was an extremely busy 2012/13 season.

Media and Public Highlights

- Successful support of the BBC at Stargazing Live in January 2012;
- Supported the BBC with the production of the first Sky at Night after the death of Sir Patrick Moore;
- Provided first level media support on behalf of the RMG to the BBC, Sky and BBC Radio;
- Ran a pilot 'basic' imaging session for Flamsteed members with the view to providing similar to the public in 2013/14;
- Reintroduced the telescope workshop for Flamsteed members with a view to subsequently providing similar to the public in 2013/14.

The Flamsteed and Royal Museums Greenwich

This time last year we presented to the AGM the proposed the Strategic Way Forward which, in essence, provided a working partnership framework between the parties and which was subsequently agreed by both the RMG and the Flamsteed Society;

For the record, a few years ago, a Memorandum of Understanding was agreed and signed by both the then Maritime Museum and the Flamsteed Society and this has now been updated to include the various agreed principles within the Strategy and this was subsequently signed by the Museum Director and your Chairman;

This year has been about the process of turning the strategy into tactical actions that endeavour to improve our members experience and our impact upon the public understanding and enjoyment of astronomy and, at the same time, provides support to the RMG in areas where we have considerable experience – for example, in dealing with the media and supporting the RMG when they put on high profile exhibitions.

Flamsteed Membership and Financial Position

Total Membership including 'lapsed' increased as follows:-

- April 2012 236 paid + 43 lapsed
- April 2013 295 paid + 58 lapsed
- August 2013 297 paid + 37 lapsed
- September 2013 305 paid + 41 lapsed

We provided approximately £5,000 in 2011 from the previous gross surplus to the Museum to buy support items such as a new solar telescope, a solar outreach kit for schools and binocular sets, etc.

The gross surplus at the end of the financial year 2012/13 is again approaching the maximum allowed of £10,000 and therefore we will, this year, need to agree with the RMG where a proportion of that money might be spent in order to meet our obligations under the MoU and in order to support the Museum in its activities.

Some Key Activities during the 2012/13 Season

- Ran 10 quality lectures;
- Successfully supported the BBC at Stargazing Live and also with the recording of the Sky at Night both in January;
- Supported the RMG at the Member's Christmas Party and the two previews of the opening of the Visions of the Universe exhibition;
- Added the Sky this Month summary to the beginning of each lecture session;
- Staged a number of successful public viewing sessions on Blackheath;
- Enjoyed a number of Flamsteed viewing sessions with the 28-inch refractor;
- Arranged several visits to Martin's observatory near Romney Marsh;
- Enjoyed a significant number of pub social evenings;
- Ran a series of public solar viewing sessions at the ROG;
- Over 50 events arranged in total during the season.

Special Interest Groups

For some time we have successfully run public solar viewing sessions within the environs of the Observatory utilising the expertise of the Solar Viewing Group.

In order to continue to encourage social and scientific interaction we have now added

- The Radio Astronomy Group
- The History of Astronomy Group

The intention now being to add an Observing and Imaging Group during 2013/14 for which help will be needed!

Proposed Activities for 2013/14

All lectures are now scheduled up to the New Year with the rest to be put in place in the next month or so

Continuance of:

- The Radio Astronomy Group;
- The History of Astronomy Group;
- Plus the Observing and Imaging Group;
- Pub Social Meetings;
- Public viewing sessions including Solar Viewing, possibly augmented with demonstrations of Solar Radio and meteor activity;
- Potential public Imaging and Telescope Workshops.

It is also intended that two or three of the 28-inch refractor sessions will be given over to 'project' work.

Also, we plan:

- Continued media support for the RMG and the BBC including Stargazing Live and the Sky at Night (next session has been confirmed for October 18th);
- Visit to CERN near Geneva later this month;
- Possibly organise a Flamsteed 'dark site' camp.

Finally...

Let me thank the following for their support in what has been a full and challenging year:

- Our Vice Chairmen - Mike and Grey who do the majority of the 'front office' work;
- Your Committee, who have worked hard on your behalf;
- Mike Dryland for successfully getting the latest of our special interest groups, the History of Astronomy Group, up and running;
- Lin Potter, Jane Bendall, Mike Dryland and Eddie Yeadon and others who have who have done so much over the years to make the Flamsteed Astronomy Society into the strong society it is today;
- Lesley Hodgson, the RMG Membership Manager, who took over at a difficult time and who, with her staff, has worked with us to meet our collective objectives;
- And, last but not least, you, our members, who have turned out in numbers when we needed you and 'prodded' us when we needed it!

5. **Election to the Committee:**

Jane Bendall, Brian Evans, Peter Kitcherside, Chris Mann and Deborah McGarvey have stepped down from the committee.

Three nominations have been received:

Christina Chester was proposed by Mike Dryland and seconded by Jane Bendall; Nick Phillips was proposed by Lin Potter and seconded by Eddie Yeadon; Rupert Smith was proposed by Chris Mann and seconded by Ian McDowell.

As there were no other nominations an election was deemed unnecessary and Christina, Nick and Rupert were duly appointed as new committee members.

6. Election of Office Holders (Chair and Vice-Chair):

Office holders of the Flamsteed Astronomy Society were then elected.

Malcolm Porter was re-elected as chair of the society. Grey Liplely and Mike Meynell were re-elected as vice-chairs of the society.

7. Any Other Business:

In recognition of the nine years that Lin Potter spent as chair of the society, a presentation of honorary membership was made to Lin.

As there was no other business, Malcolm Porter closed the meeting.