

Agenda of Committee Meeting		FAS
Date:	24 Oct 2023	Chair: Bobby Manoo
Time:	19:00 GMT	Secretary: Asra Jilani
Venue:	Mycenae House	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ✓	
Attendees:	Bobby Manoo	✓
	Clive Inglis	✓
	Asra Jilani	✓
	Simon Hurst	✓
	Mike Meynell	✓
	Barry Cassells	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Paul May	✓
	Poly Philippou	✓
	Adrian Challinor	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Mark Jeffery	✓
	Gurinder Lall	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Roger Geeson (co-op)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Richard Summerfield (co-op)	✓
Tom Riley (co-op)	✓	

Coordinators:

Lectures and Talks Coordinator:	Paul May
Observing Coordinator:	Mike Meynell
Workshops and Events Coordinator:	Poly Philippou
IT Coordinator:	Simon Hurst
Media and Comms Coordinator:	Adrian Challinor

FAS Administration

Committee Structure (Simon, Bobby)

- The updated **Committee Structure** with roles have been shared with the RMG following the AGM. Bobby reminded the meeting that we can add co-opted members at any time during the season based on recommendation from committee members.
- The role of the Vice Chair will now include keeping an eye on the assignment of committee members to ensure that no one has too much on their hands or too little. All members were advised to discuss with Simon any changes or any issues in terms of bandwidth going forward. This will be an ongoing role which will be taken by the Vice Chair and the committee was in agreement with this going forward.
- **Simon** indicated that to help with the above, he will arrange Zoom meetings with the coordinators in between committee meetings as touchpoints to check on progress, bandwidth and availability to carry on with our planned events.
- Recommendations for FAS Honorary Membership has been agreed and confirmed.

FAS Membership

- Based on the last membership figures presented to Adrian, we have the following statistics on membership. There are still some delays in getting updated figures since the departure of Tessa and Adrian is keeping the figures updated as best as can be.

Membership	New	Existing	Lapsed	Dropped	TOTAL (N,E)	TOTAL (N,E,L)
Single	2	173	0	0	175	175
Concession	1	129	0	0	130	130
Joint	6	168	0	0	174	174
Honorary	0	12	0	0	12	12
Young Adult	0	1	1	0	1	2
Total	9	483	1	0	492	493

Finances

- As communicated previously, we have been informed that we would not be able to get a cash advance to cover the running expenses for the society as this goes against the finance protocols at the museum. As such, we will need to pay for any expenses and claim this back.
- **Bobby** will continue discussions with Chloe to see if the repayment time can be done earlier than the current 4 weeks.

Lectures and Talks Team

Main lectures – Paul, Mike

- Update on Main Lecture talks for the Season.
 - o **Paul** to get onto the FAS email system within the next few weeks. The ROG volunteer pass should be processed this week and then we can get him onto the FAS mail system to take over the main lecture comms from Mike.
 - o No issues on the schedule, or the main lecture talks.
 - o It was recommended to get some signs to reserve seats at the back of the Lecture Theatre for those who are assisting in the refreshments. **Mark** has volunteered to get 6 'Reserve' signs laminated and will bring these for the next lecture.

- Update on volunteers for Short Talk (Sky this month/Astro News)
 - o We have had 3 responses to these from Members, Jan, Feb, Mar has been taken and we will keep following up on the other months.
- Update on volunteers for refreshments.
 - o At the next main lecture, we will ask for volunteers to help with refreshments. This can be done at the end of the talk and after this, we can create a schedule accordingly.
- Discussion on opening up the Main Lecture to non FAS members. Reference to prior communication sent to the committee by Bobby.
 - o After initial discussions, it was recommended to explore the option of members bringing a guest to the main lecture. For this to work, the lecture team can evaluate all the members' bookings around the Wednesday before the main lecture. If we have available spaces, we can then send an offer to members to bring a guest. This can be communicated via email and a register of guests will be kept based on the email responses. The names can then be added to the list of attendees and checked off at the door.
 - o The committee has agreed to go with this option starting with the next lecture in November.
 - o This will be evaluated after a few months to then determine if anything more needs to be considered.

HOA talks - **Mark**

- Mark presented an update on upcoming talks for the season.
- Mark intends to book the HoA sessions on the Thursday following the main Lecture as this seems to get the best responses.
- The plans include a session where various books that members have read on HoA can be presented and discussed among members.
- Sue Davies has been scheduled to give a talk for March.
- Allan Chapman is being considered for an online talk.
- Sian Prosser has been recommended by Mike for a talk as well as Graham Dolan.
- Bobby thanked Mark for putting together a great lineup for this season.
- For HoA sessions, we can also consider including Guest members after we have had a chance to do this for the main lecture. Mark will consider this and decide if it can be introduced and when.

Observing Team

Blackheath – **(Mike)**

- BH has been going great so far, we have had near perfect conditions and the response from the volunteers have been fantastic and the turnout from the public has been great.
- For the rest of the season, we were looking at 2 sessions per month but is it best not to do this in the cold winter months. Instead it is proposed to have 4 dates per month with 3 backup dates, Sat, Sun of new moon and Sat, Sun of first QTR. This should increase the hit rate of at least 1 out of the 4 being run.
- Social media posts, particularly on FB have been great, the last post had 4,500+ hits and many people say that they find out about the events from these social media posts.

Solar **(Mike)**

- We will leave this item for the next Committee meeting.

ROG team GET and AMAT sessions (**Barry**)

- Barry wanted to send a huge thanks to Simon, Mike and especially Gurinder for the team effort in getting these events organised.
- Due to limited availability of astronomers, we have fewer events planned than we wanted but we have agreed 5 dates with the RMG: 2 in November and 1 each in January, February and March. The first event is scheduled for 7 November and is already fully booked.
- Eight committee members have volunteered to help run these events and we have a full roster of 3 volunteers for each evening, so we're able to ensure that we have a good mix of more and less experienced volunteers each time.

Workshops and Special Events Team

Practical workshops (**Clive**)

- The following sessions have been organised for this season:
 - o Telescope workshop in Oct, 32 booked so far.
 - o Astrophotography in Nov
 - o Electronically Assisted workshop, BM, Mike, Richard
 - o Citizens Science
- We have also considering fitting in the following:
 - o Sketching Workshop by Mary.
 - o Solar Imaging workshop if Mary cannot make it.

FAS Visits/Trips (**Poly**)

- Poly has reported on the following events being planned.
 - o Talk to the Bromley Girl Guides on 6th November.
 - o In Spring 2024 we will plan for a visit to Jodrell Bank.
 - o In Summer 2024 we will consider a visit to Norman Lockyer Observatory.
- We also have in plans a visit to UCL Observatory
- We also have a planned BAA – FAS collaboration on Astronomy Back to Basics, 30th Nov 2024. A planning meeting was held this week and plans are progressing. Poly mentioned that she indicated that they may be renovation work planned at the RMG site which may impact on the venue.
- We will also consider rerunning the Intro to Astronomy Talks by Bobby but this time in person. We may need to leave this to next season depending on if the topics may clash with the BAA session.

Program of outreach to Young Adults (**Tom, Richard**)

- Update on initial meetings based on proposals by Tom and Richard.
- Tom described the Application of Astronomy (AoA) concept. See notes in Appendix.
- It should be ok for us to accommodate this within our schedule.
- We should consider getting a teacher to come along to each of these lectures to accompany the attendendees.
- There was agreement from the Committee to go ahead with this plan from November 2024.
- **Simon** to get in touch with Gurinder about the DB Checks for young adults.

- **Poly** to organise a follow up meeting to firm up plans for this, include Tom, Richard, Bobby, Mike, Simon and perhaps ask Gurinder if she would like to be included.
- **Richard's** proposal was to reach out to senior citizens as part of the community service, not to increase membership.
- Agreement to perhaps reach out to one group/contact and then move with this rather than send an email to the membership. Suggestions were Modern College Blackheath, Caribbean Forum was also suggested by Mark.
- Planning for this to be included in the meeting that **Poly** is organising to take this forward.

Media and Comms Team

Email Administration – (Adrian)

- Social media accounts in relation to FAS events and outreach.
 - o Instagram (reference to Tom's proposal and minutes in the Appendix.)
 - o Suggestion to use Instagram for images and a lot of young adults use this platform. We can also take some images from our members astrophotography to post on IG. Agreement for Mike to create an IG account for FAS. Tom has agreed to work with Mike on FB and IG social media interactions.
 - o Mike wanted to raise the following items regarding Facebook.
 - o Mike has indicated that Twitter is not experiencing a lot of interaction from FAS members, this has to do with recent changes to Twitter subscriptions. Mike has been using both FB and Twitter for Blackheath and feedback from twitter is not encouraging. However, FB has taken off in terms of hits - 4500 interactions on one of the Blackheath posts.
 - o **Mike** recommends that we focus on FB. We will therefore need to have a discussion about Facebook with Adrian on his return.

IT Team

IT technical (Simon)

- Simon suggests handing over the control room sheet which assigns roles for Main Lectures to the Main Lecture Team rather than sitting under IT. This has been with IT since we were running sessions online, but now that we are back in person, it is better to have Paul coordinate this together with all other items for the Main lectures.
- Paul and Mike are in agreement that this should be with the main lecture team and not IT.
- **Simon** to pick this up with Adrian firstly and arranges to hand this over to Paul.
- Update on rollout of FAS Newsletter
 - o Chloe has done an updated ROPA document and has agreed to share this with FAS once it is ready.
 - o We should have a response from the Museum in about 2 weeks as key staff members are on leave. There is nothing pending with the FAS team and it is expected that we will get the required approvals to go ahead with the newsletter.

AOB

- Feedback on Ticket Tailor is that it is working well and we will continue to use this.
- Feedback on possible collaboration with an Observatory in Croatia – **Bobby** reports that the discussion has not yet happened and will follow up on this in the coming weeks.
- Discussion on options for a Social Event for Members, refer to prior email sent to the Committee. The committee has agreed to go with 2 social events, one for Christmas and another for Summer. We can find a venue in a local Pub and have attendees contribute towards the bill. We will not be able to use FAS funds to pay or part pay for this. **Poly** and **Asra** to oversee this and to meet to shape up plans accordingly.
- Alternate Venues
 - Bobby suggested that we look at alternate venues to Mycenae House due to the accessibility issues with the staircase.
 - Committee members have agreed to put feelers out and send feedback to Asra who will collate then and then an agreement can be made. **Clive, Poly, Mike** and others to look at options and send to Asra.

Meeting ended at 21:02

Minutes of Meeting		FAS
Date:	03 October 2023	
Time:	19:00 GMT	
Venue:	Mycenae House	
Attendees: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ✓	Bobby Manoo	✓
	Mike Meynell	✓
	Tom Riley	✓
	Richard Summerfield	✓
	Simon Hurst	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Poly Phillipou	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1. Proposal submitted by Tom Riley was reviewed first and the following discussed. This document is attached below.
2. The first 3 items for A level students, university lectures and observational skills were discussed together.
 - a. We need to consider that if we target any students who may be a potential candidate in enrolling on the ROG courses then this may be seen as a conflict of interest with the ROG. As such, we will need to either make a different offering or use a different target audience.
 - b. We have however, run successful Introductory to Astronomy sessions in the past without any conflict as they were for our members, this will be going out to non-members so we will need to consider the content and reach.
 - c. We can consider to package this as both astronomy theory with an application to Naked Eye astronomy, telescopic setup and possibly astrophotography.
 - d. Suggestion was to look at maybe 5 workshops targeting young audience and members. We can work out the details subsequently.
 - i. 3 talks on theory relating to Astronomy and observing
 - ii. 2 workshops on telescopes, observing and astrophotography
 - e. In terms of timing, we can perhaps consider to start this in late November. June was considered also but we will need to think about the impact that exams will finish towards the end of June and into July and then summer will start for students.
 - f. Greg from the museum and possibly Tom Kerss can be considered to deliver part of the talks.
 - g. The name of the series can be “The **Applications of Astronomy (AoA)**.”
 - h. The next step will be to take this to the Committee and get feedback and put a group together.
3. In terms of improving outreach, the following was discussed:
 - a. We can send through some of the FAS leaflets to schools and see what the feedback will be. Tom has offered to do this with his school first.
 - b. The Astronomy Ambassadors program is a good idea and we can perhaps get in touch with Jess and see how we can promote FAS to the AA program.

- c. In terms of social media, we had discussed with the Committee some time ago and decided not to create any FB groups or Whatsapp. We tried Telegram as well and there are some data protection issues. We can however, consider using Instagram but we will have to look at content, frequency etc.
 - d. All of these outreach items will be taken to the committee for feedback.
4. Richard has also suggested to reach out to OAPs.
- a. This will be part of the Community Outreach service which can be provided by FAS.
 - b. We can also consider talks to Women's institutes, Women's Guild, Men in Sheds, Women in Sheds, Rotary Clubs, Age Exchange in Blackheath – just to name a few.
 - c. The talks itself can around the Sun, Moon, Solar System objects and understanding and also how to put a telescope together. We can also take snippets from the Introduction to Astronomy series which was done by FAS some years back. The content can be refined when we get some more details around this.
 - d. As a first step, we can consider reaching out to the members to see if they have any suggestions or contacts for any groups which may be interested in a talk on Astronomy. Richard was asked to draft an email which can be sent out once confirmed that we can go ahead with this.
 - e. This item will also be taken to the committee for feedback.

Proposal submitted by Tom Riley

FAS Engagement and outreach for young adults

Possible events:

1. A level/ (GCSE+) lectures

This could be a series of lectures/interactive talks aimed at students currently studying a level physics with an interest in astronomy. Talks could support the current curriculum, bolstering student's knowledge and inspiring them moving forward into higher education. GCSE+ lectures would be aimed at students leaving Y11 and going into sixth form.

2. University taster lectures

Talks/lectures could be given on introductory astrophysics/physics topics found in various university courses. This could inform and inspire anyone looking into higher education related to astronomy.

3. Developing observational skills

This could be a workshop/series of workshops aimed at making young people competent and confident in observational astronomy. Lessons on naked eye and telescopic astronomy would both be relevant (planetarium would be suitable). Lessons on astrophotography and the relevant software could also help further inform young adults moving on from visual astronomy.

Improving outreach:

1. Advertising through schools and universities

An easy way to target young adults would be to advertise inside sixth forms at schools and inside relevant departments inside the university of London. Sixth forms would also be ideal places to present the previously mentioned A level/ university taster lectures.

2. Astronomy Ambassadors

Flamsteed could collaborate with the ROG AA on any of the mentioned events. The AA can also advertise directly through the observatory, members of the AA come from further than Greenwich. Conversely FAS could advertise the Astronomy ambassadors, young people in FAS are more than welcome to attend ambassadors' events and meetings.

3. Communicating with Young adults

Many young people check emails sporadically (myself included from time to time) so notifying younger members about events via email may not always be successful. It would be worth sending notifications about events via other media. Idea: a WhatsApp group specifically for notifying people about events (non admin could be muted etc.) this way effective text alerts could be sent out which young adults are more likely to react to. Advertising through schools and universities is also a suitable way to achieve this communication. Other social media apps are also suitable to use.

General notes.

Personally I have particularly enjoyed observing events on the heath and the GET events, the astronomy sketching workshop and the lecture by Matthew Bothwell with the Flamsteed Society. With the Astronomy Ambassadors, I particularly enjoyed speaking to the astrophysicists and other staff about careers in astronomy.