



HIGHLANDS ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

Unaudited Statement of Receipts and Payments

28 February 2014

Charity Number: SC037209

Highlands Astronomical Society

Office Bearers and Advisors

Scottish charity number SC037209

Trustees (and members of the committee)

Arthur Milnes - Chairman
Paul Jenkins - Treasurer
Caroline Woods - Secretary (Resigned 22 October 2013)
Barbara Cohen - Acting Secretary 23 October 2013 to 13 January 2014
Liz Grafton - Secretary from 14 January 2014
Pat Escott
Gerry Gaitens (became ex-officio 1 March 2013)
Bill Jappy (Resigned 21 August 2013)
Michael Marett-Crosby (Resigned 22 October 2013)
Antony McEwan
James McTaggart (Resigned 22 October 2013)
Maarten de Vries
Pauline Macrae from 11 June 2013
Kenneth Cormack from July 2013 (Resigned 11 February 2014)
Philip Cohen from 20 August 2013
Barbara Cohen from 20 August 2013
Rhona Fraser from 10 December 2013
Ronnie Fraser from 11 February 2014

Independent Examiner

Neil Johnstone FCCA

Bankers

Bank of Scotland
2-6 Eastgate
Inverness
IV2 3NA

Contact Address

Meikle Kildrummie
By Nairn
IV12 5NY

Highlands Astronomical Society

Trustees' annual report

The trustees present their report and receipts and payment account for the year ended 28 February 2014.

Origins

The Society was formed in 1993 as the Inverness Astronomical Society, merging the next year with the Moray Astronomical Society to form the present Society. A formal constitution was drafted in 1996. It meets on a monthly basis in Inverness, Scotland.

Governing document

The Society is a charitable unincorporated society, and the purposes and administration arrangements are set out in our constitution.

Objects

The Highlands Astronomical Society exists to promote and extend the awareness of, interest in, and enjoyment of astronomy within a friendly and stimulating environment, hosting educational, practical and social activities in the local area, accessible to all ages and levels of knowledge.

The Society seeks to achieve its aims through a varied programme of meetings, activities and events, including talks, exhibitions, observing sessions open to the public and social events. The Highlands Astronomical Society also aims to contribute worthwhile observational data to national and international astronomical organisations.

Astronomy is one of the few remaining sciences where valuable contributions and discoveries are still being made by amateurs. These facts are recognised and actively encouraged by professional astronomers and scientists.

The Society also maintains a website at www.spacegazer.com

Trustees

The trustees during the year were as listed on page 2; where shown some also held the title 'Office Bearer'. Any new appointments as trustee are made following approaches to suitably qualified people, who then agree to accept appointment. New trustees are given the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator pamphlet Guidance for Charity Trustees to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities, and are asked to sign as having read them.

The Office Bearers are appointed or reappointed by the members at our annual general meeting which is held in April each year. The Committee members are appointed by the Office Bearers when required. The trustees do not receive any remuneration for their services.

Highlands Astronomical Society

Risk management

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the trust, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate such risks.

Reserves

The Society aims to have unrestricted funds at any one time of at least £1, 500.

Activities and achievements

The JSL Observatory

The JSL Observatory houses a fully computerised Meade LX200R 14" catadioptric telescope within a Pulsar 9 foot dome. The adjacent observing station has disabled facilities including a lavatory, and electronic equipment to allow the remote viewing of telescope images on computer screens. In addition the facility houses the Society's library, and has facilities to allow us to hold committee meetings there. We are also most grateful to the National Trust for Scotland for allowing us to locate the observatory on their property at the Culloden Battlefield.

Since the opening of the observatory in 2008 we have found that interest in the society has been sustained at high levels. We have articles published monthly in the Inverness Courier, and we have taken part in the BBC's "Stargazing Live" initiatives. In addition we receive regular requests for visits to the observatory from various organisations such as the local brownies and girl guides. Visits by local primary schools are a particular feature as astronomy features in their curriculum.

As part of our outreach activities, on two Fridays a month (those where moon-shine is not an issue) we open up the Observatory for public viewing. The sessions are advertised on our website, on local radio and in the local papers, and they have proven very popular. We have had occasional poor weather during the season, but visitor numbers have nonetheless been reasonable. On the following Saturdays we hold members-only sessions. During the Summer months we hold Solar Saturdays using our Lunt telescope to view the Sun in Hydrogen Alpha light.

Using a grant from Lifescan, Gerry purchased a large screen which has been very useful when hosting visitors at the Observatory, and particularly for those who cannot access the dome (the view from the telescope is transmitted through to the screen). In addition to our substantial library, the society also maintains five pairs of 10 x 50 binoculars which are available for loan to society members. We also have a Skywatcher MAK90EQ1 telescope and a 3" refractor telescope which are available for loan. There is a 12-inch Dobsonian telescope, which is too large to lend out, and a Lunt solar telescope, which is too precious to lend out.

We have established an automated telephone contact list for use in alerting our members when such as aurora become visible in our skies.

We have also been active in objecting to the development of 16 houses on Culloden Battlefield which threaten our dark skies. Actions included speaking to local councillors, contacting the Scottish Planning Reporter's office, hosting a link on our website to a petition against the

Highlands Astronomical Society

development, and seeking support from all Scottish Astronomical Societies.

We have sought the views of all Members on the Society via a questionnaire. The findings will inform our speakers programme and future activities.

Internet and Website

The number of visitors to our website has been maintained at high levels. We have a broadband connection at the Observatory which allows updating of weather reports and so forth.

Inverness Courier Articles

Articles are written for the Inverness Courier once a month and regular contributors include Pauline Macrae, Michael Marett-Crosby; James McTaggart, Gordon McKenna, Paul Jenkins and Pat Williams. We encourage other members to contribute articles.

The Monthly Newsletter, Observing Sheet (Highland Skies) and Stargazey Pie

These are written in a knowledgeable and enthusiastic way by Antony McEwan and Pauline Macrae, and are sent by e-mail or conventional mail to those who miss a meeting.

External Educational Activities

We have given and have an ongoing programme of public lectures to local clubs and other local societies and organisations promoting astronomy, the Society and its facilities.

We meet once a month in the Smithton-Culloden Free Church, and guests are very welcome at our meetings. We have been lucky enough to have had knowledgeable and entertaining guest speakers during the course of the year, and a number of members also gave excellent talks. Each talk is preceded by a youngsters' group ("Youngstars"), and is followed by a discussion, and by break-out sessions on equipment, constellations, etc. The Youngstars sessions are run by Pauline Macrae. During the year we continued a series of "beginners" break-out groups which aim to cover the basics for those new to astronomy.

Once again some members were able to attend the annual Astrofest symposium in London where they heard the latest and up-to-date astronomical information, bringing back information on light pollution for use by the Committee.

In December we held our sixth Society Christmas dinner. 20 members and partners attended the dinner and all agreed that it was a great success.

We have had several public events during the year. In September, as part of the annual 'Open Doors' scheme sponsored by The Highland Council, we organised day-time and evening sessions at our observatory at Culloden. As usual we were flooded with interested visitors, many visiting an observatory for the first time.

In January we again took part in the BBC's national 'Astronomy Live' initiative. The same weekend we took a stall at the Eastgate Shopping Centre and had our regular and successful annual open day; again we had a substantial promotional and educational display of space and astronomy

Highlands Astronomical Society

related items. As well as that we distributed literature regarding the activities of the Society. We opened up the JSL Observatory to the public on the Friday and the Saturday; were blessed with reasonable weather, and received over 70 visitors.

Fund raising activities

During the year, we held a number of fundraising activities.

At the observatory over the course of the year we have hosted a number of party visits as well as the Open Doors event, and gained useful funds in donations on each occasion. As usual Arthur Milnes has done a sterling job promoting our monthly raffle at the Society meetings, raising £570 over the year.

Membership

No doubt inspired by such as the BBC's Stargazing Live programmes, the Society's membership has again increased over the year. Members have joined and left as usual, but overall we reached a membership level of 112 members - the highest in the Society's history.

Other Astronomical Societies

We contributed a talk to the Orkney Science Festival in Kirkwall. We have also maintained close links with our fellow amateur astronomers at the adjacent SIGMA society at Elgin, and maintained our "twinning" relationship with the Dunedin astronomical society in New Zealand.

Governance

We have in use a child protection policy that reflects current Scottish legislation.

Monthly bank statements are scrutinised and initialled by the Chairman and the Secretary. The Society has three approved cheque signatories, with any two of the three to sign (as long as the cheque is not made out to one of them).

Closing Remarks

Finally, the Chairman would like to express his sincere thanks to all of the Society Committee for their invaluable support. His job throughout the reporting year could not have been done without the support of Pat E, Pat W, Gerry, Bill, Michael, James, Pauline, Caroline, Antony, Philip, Barbara, Liz, Ronnie, Maarten, Paul, and Rhona. As well as the committee, of course, he must also acknowledge the support of the members – again this is very gratefully acknowledged and remembered.

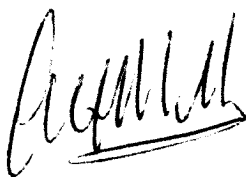
Financial results

The Society has had a successful year financially; we have maintained our liquidity and a satisfactory level of reserves throughout. During the year we invested in the purchase of further equipment including a second hand focuser, adaptor and Telrad finder for the Dobsonian, and a storage shed for our larger equipment. We also purchased a new dew shield for the LX200 telescope.

All of the funds were unrestricted, and therefore free to use at the discretion of the Committee.

At the beginning of this 2013/14 financial year the members agreed a reduction in subscriptions in order to reduce the rate at which money was accumulating in the bank account. The net income for the year subsequently amounted to a loss of £10, a small reduction as intended. The total cash reserves of the Society at the end of the year stood at £4,446 (2013 - £4,456). This does not include the assets owned by the Society, which have a value of approximately £90,000.

On behalf of the trustees



Arthur Milnes, Chairman



Paul Jenkins, Treasurer

Date: 20 March 2014

Independent Examiner's report to the trustees on the unaudited Statement of Receipts and Payments of the Highlands Astronomical Society for the year ended 28 February 2014

In accordance with your instructions, I have examined the receipts and payments account of the Highlands Astronomical Society for the period ended 28 February 2014 which comprises the Statements of Receipts and Payments, the Statement of Balances and the related notes 1 to 5 from the accounting records and information and explanations you have given to me.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and independent examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10 (1) (d) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply.

It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44 (1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations

have not been met, or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Neil Johnstone FCCA
Independent Examiner
Barony House
Stoneyfield Business Park
Inverness, IV2 7PA

March 2014

Statements of receipts and payments for the year ended 28 February 2014

Highlands Astronomical Society – unrestricted funds

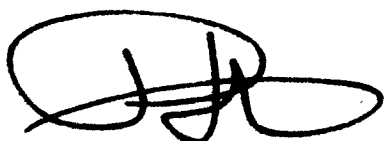
	Note	2014 £	2013 £
Income			
Membership subscriptions		1,493	1,949
Email subscriptions		50	60
Gift Aid refund including interest		323	447
Donations	5	194	734
Fundraising		848	618
Raffle		570	537
Bank interest		0	0
Sundries		159	4
HAS outings		774	975
Total Receipts		4,411	5,324
Expenses			
Fundraising expenses		0	0
Venue costs		685	600
Highland Council insurance		432	383
Observatory ground rent		120	120
Observatory equipment		623	1,010
Observatory maintenance		473	863
Speakers' expenses		880	489
Presents to non members for assistance		0	0
Secretarial		77	332
Sundries		246	316
HAS outing		885	929
Total expenditure		4,421	5,042
Net receipts for the period		-10	282
Fund balance brought forward		4,456	4,174
Fund balance carried forward		4,446	4,456
Governance costs			
Included above are governance costs of:			
Independent Examiner's costs		30	30

Statement of balances

as at 28 February 2014

	2014	2013
	£	£
<i>Cash at bank and in hand</i>		
Cash at bank – Highlands Astronomical Society	4,401	4,411
Cash on hand	45	45
<i>Closing balances</i>	<u>4,446</u>	<u>4,456</u>
 <i>Reserves</i>		
Unrestricted funds	<u>4,446</u>	<u>4,456</u>
<i>Closing balances</i>	<u>4,446</u>	<u>4,456</u>
 <i>Assets</i>		
Observatory at estimated market value	65,000	65,000
Astronomical equipment at cost	22,844	22,621
Computing equipment at cost	1,900	2,000
	<u>89,744</u>	<u>89,621</u>

Approved on behalf of the trustees by the treasurer and authorised for issue on 20 March 2014.



Paul Jenkins



Liz Grafton