



(ex-officio - Observatory Manager)
(ex-officio - equipment consultant)

Gery Gaters
Antony McEwan
Lisa Paterson
Pat Escoll
Lorena Shepherd
Pauline McEwan
Internal Secretary
Treasurer
Secretary (IT)
Vice Chairman
Chairman

HIGHLANDS ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

Unaudited Statement of Receipts and Payments

28 February 2022

Charity Number: SC037209

Independent Examiner

Neil Johnstone
26 Lays Drive
Inverness
IV2 3JA

Bankers

Bank of Scotland
2-6 Eastgate
Inverness
IV2 3NA

Contact Address

5 Boswell Crescent
Inverness
IV2 3ET

Andrew.brough@bt.com

Trustees (and members of the committee)

Eric Walker	Chairman
David Davidson	Vice Chairman
Rhona Fraser	Secretary (till September 2021)
Andrew Brough	Treasurer
Pauline Macrae	Interim Secretary (from October 2021)
Lorraine Shepherd	Membership Secretary
Pat Escott	
Lisa Pattenden	
Antony McEwan	(ex-officio - equipment consultant)
Gerry Gaitens	(ex-officio - Observatory Manager)

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Andrewbrough1977@gmail.com

Trustees' Annual Report

The trustees present their report and receipts and payments account for the year ended 28 February 2022.

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.

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 aims to promote and extend the awareness of, and interest in, all branches of astronomy and cosmology. We host educational, practical and social activities in the Highlands of Scotland, within a friendly and stimulating environment, 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.

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's booklet 'Guidance and good practice for Charity Trustees' to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities, and are asked to sign as having read it.

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

We have in use a child protection policy (CPP) that reflects current Scottish legislation. New trustees are given the link to our policy to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities, and are asked to sign as having read it.

Risk Management

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed including those at the Observatory, and 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 £2,500.

The JSL Observatory.

The JSL Observatory dome houses a fully computerised **Meade LX200R 14" catadioptric telescope** within a Pulsar 9-foot dome.

We have a **Skywatcher MAK90 (with tripod)** for white light solar observing, a **4" Vixen refractor telescope (with tripod)**, a **6" Celestron telescope (with tripod)**, an **8-inch Vixen Astrograph telescope (with tripod)**, a **12" Dobsonian telescope** and a **Lunt Ha telescope (with tripod)** for solar observing. These offer alternate views from our main telescope and are especially useful when we have a large number of people at the Observatory. We also have an **80mm refracting telescope** which sometimes piggybacks the main telescope as well as a computerised EQ3 mount to use with our smaller telescopes and we can also offer 4 pairs of 10 x 50 binoculars society members and visitors to use.

We were kindly donated a radio telescope to use on cloudy nights.

The adjacent observing station (warm room) has disabled facilities which includes a lavatory as well as a large wall mounted screen which is used to view telescope images remotely via a laptop. The facility also houses the Society's library, and has room to allow us to hold small groups of visitors.

A link between the Astro-cam attached to the Meade LX200R 14" in the dome and the flat-screen in the warm room, in a Project called 21C-ObSee, allows views from the eyepiece to be seen in comfort and encourage visitors and recruit new members. Youngsters and people with limited mobility will also be more able to partake in astronomical observing. Unfortunately, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, this has been put on hold.

The Covid 19 pandemic, has also meant only occasional visits to the Observatory have been made and only when deemed safe to do so, initially to members only and then to members and guests. Numbers allowed into the observing station were restricted. In addition to the poor weather this year, work at the Culloden Battlefield where the Observatory is situated, has entailed no water at the Observatory and a disrupted car park so we have been unable to hold regular observing sessions.

However, now that Society is opening up and restrictions have reduced, we were able to host a group of Explorer Scouts in the Observatory. Altogether we have had only 19 visitors to the Observatory.

Members of the Observing Team have carried out security & inspection visits to the observatory throughout the year to ensure our assets are protected & maintained. The Puraflo system, which is part of the septic tank, was inspected by authorised personnel and deemed in good condition although it may need work carried out in a couple of years.

We have continued to give advice on buying and setting up telescopes to members and the public.

We would like to acknowledge Gerry Gaitens for all his work as Observatory Manager.

We are most grateful to the National Trust for Scotland for allowing us to locate the observatory on their property at the Culloden Battlefield.

Activities and Achievements

We normally meet once a month in the Smithton-Culloden Free Church with Youngstars sessions led by Pauline Macrae and Trina Shaddick, half an hour before the main meeting. Guests are welcome. However, we have not had any meetings at our venue this year due to Covid restrictions preventing social gatherings. All our monthly talks have been given on Zoom and these have consisted of a main speaker, eight of whom have been external, and three of whom have been members of HAS. The main talk is followed by a constellation, Club news and astrophotographs taken by our members and given usually by Pauline Macrae and occasionally by Eric Walker and Dave Davidson. One meeting was a December Quiz, organised by SIGMA, and included members of other North of Scotland Astronomy Societies. Our Zoom talks are later edited and uploaded to our YouTube channel by Eric Walker.

Pauline Macrae still writes articles for the Youngstars who receive them each month by email.

Our AGM was undertaken using Zoom for a second time, with the members being sent the normal AGM papers by email. The required quorum numbers were reached and the report was passed without alterations.

Eric Walker built an AllSky camera which he has made available for all members to use to view the night sky in real time.

We usually take part in external activities such as Doors Open Day and the Science Festival but once again, due to The Covid 19 pandemic, these did not occur. However, the Orkney International Science Festival took place online and Eric Walker was again asked to become a member of the 2021 Online Technical Team & Presentation Team. This proved very beneficial to the individual and to our Club as the training and experience of OISF2020 helped him to design and construct live observing webcasts at 1080p with interactive co-host & audience participation – these are very popular & successful! In June, the partial solar eclipse was viewed live on our YouTube channel which was very enjoyable for our members and the public alike. Some of our members were able to participate by contacting Eric while viewing with their own telescopes. YouTube recordings of these webcasts have enabled us to appeal to another cohort and grow our membership.

We continue to campaign for dark skies, are a 'community consultant' to Highland Council.

Website & Social Media

Social media now plays a major part in our communications for existing & potential members and it also enables us to share our successes, including details of observing events & astrophotographs taken by our members, with both a local & global audience.

Our website, Facebook, and Instagram accounts are attracting increasing numbers of regular followers and this enables us to promote our Club activities and facilitates public outreach.

Our social media links are

- **Website:** www.spacegazer.com
- **Facebook & Messenger:** Highlands Astronomical Society
- **Instagram:** highlands.astro
- **Members only WhatsApp groups**, set up by our Membership Secretary, Lorraine Shepherd. This includes:-
 - **Nebulous News:** event alerts, especially short notice, such as aurora sightings, live observing webcasts, noctilucent cloud sightings
 - **Cosmic Convoys:** anything astronomy related

The Monthly Newsletter, 'Stargazey Pie' and Constellation of the Month

This is written by Pauline Macrae and now consists of Club News, what to look out for and the Constellation of the month as our talks can be seen on YouTube. The 'Pie' is sent to all members via email.

News Media

Our meetings are once again advertised in Astronomy Now magazine as well as on our website and on Facebook.

External Educational Activities

We give talks to local societies and organisations promoting astronomy, our society and its facilities. Obviously due to Covid 19 this contact has been limited but one visit to a Scout group (where the same talk was given twice to each half of the group) did take place.

Pauline Macrae helped advise Sandwick School in Shetland about their proposed observatory.

EW gave a talk to the BAA about a particular project of his – building an AllSky camera.

Fund-raising Activities and grants

Normally pre-arranged visits and 'special events' at the observatory have gained us useful donations. However due to the Covid pandemic, this has not occurred.

We have, however, put together a calendar for our members to showcase the astrophotographs we took during 2021.

Our long-time member, former Chairman and Vice Chairman, Arthur Milnes, who died in August 2020 donated £1000 to our Society and it is with grateful thanks that we accepted a cheque of this amount from Lorna, Arthur's wife.

Membership

The Society's membership has remained steady this year despite the pandemic. Members have joined and left as usual, but overall we reached a membership level of 66. We have discussed at length at Committee ways of keeping our current members and of increasing it.

Other Astronomical Societies

The Covid 19 situation has promoted a collaboration with North Scotland based Astronomy Clubs/Groups (SIGMA in Moray, Caithness Astronomy Group, Aberdeen Astronomical Society and North Ronaldsay Astronomy Group), loosely forming the North of Scotland Amateur Astronomy Association ("NOSAAA not NASA"). We have all come together to share our online talks.

We have maintained our 'twinning' relationship with the Dunedin astronomical society in New Zealand by sending links to our YouTube channel.

Governance

Monthly bank statements are scrutinised by the Chairman and the Secretary via email due to the Covid 19 pandemic and this has also encouraged increasing use of Online banking services. 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

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 their backing and effort. As well as the Committee, of course, it is the support and participation of the members which makes this a highly recognised and active astronomy club in the heart of the Scottish Highlands.

Financial results

The society has an increased liquidity compared to recent years and has retained a satisfactory level of reserves by year end.

Whilst membership levels remained similar to the previous year, a reduction in costs, the backdated claim for gift aid and a very generous donation from the estate of long serving member Arthur Milnes have contributed to the increase in liquidity. Total cash reserves of the society at the end of the year stood at £4,822 and £288 is due to be claimed for Gift Aid this year.

The above does not include the assets owned by the Society, which have a current value of approximately £81,250.

On behalf of the trustees


Signed: Eric W Walker, Chairman


Signed: Pauline S Macrae, Secretary

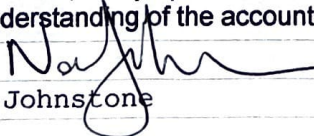
Date:

26 APRIL 2022

Date:

26th April 2022

Examiner's report

		Independent examiner's report on the accounts					
Report to the trustees/members of	Highlands Astronomical Society						
Registered charity number	SC037209						
On the accounts of the charity for the period	Period start date Day Month Year 01 03 2021			to	Period end date Day Month Year 28 02 2022		
Set out on pages	9 to 11						
Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner	<p>The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) 2005 Act 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.</p>						
Basis of independent examiner's statement	<p>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.</p>						
Independent examiner's statement	<p>In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 <p>have not been met, or</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached. 						
Signed:				Date:	26 April 2022		
Name:	Neil Johnstone						
Address:	26 Leys Drive Inverness IV2 3JA						

Highlands Astronomical Society – unrestricted funds

Statement of Receipts and Payments for the year ended 28 February 2022

2022

2021

Income

	£	£
Membership Subscriptions	1,303	1,369
Grant Aid for Equipment	-	-
Gift Aid Refund (including interest)	719	-
Donations	1,113	130
Fundraising	322	261
Outreach Income	-	-
Raffle	-	33
Bank Interest	-	-
Sundry Income	-	20
HAS Events and Outings	-	-
Total Receipts	3,457	1,813

Expenses

	£	£
Venue Costs	-	73
Public Liability Insurance - HC	314	306
Observatory Ground Rent	317	-
Observatory Maintenance	100	-
Observatory Electricity	-	-
Website	95	54
Observatory Equipment	-	-
Grant Aided Equipment	-	-
Speaker Expenses	398	330
Secretarial	222	81
Outreach Costs (Youngstars & Obs Vis-its)	-	1
Sundry Costs	-	42
HAS Events And Outings	-	-
Total Expenditure	1,446	887

Net Receipts for the year

2,011 **926**

Fund Balance brought forward

2,811 1,885

Fund Balance carried forward

4,822 2,811

Highlands Astronomical Society

Statement of Balances

As at **28 February 2022**

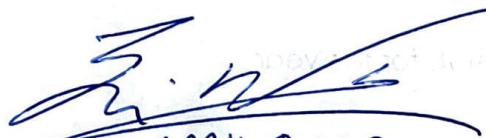
	2022 £	2021 £
Cash at Bank and on hand		
Cash at Bank	4,787	2,776
Cash on hand	35	35
Closing Balances	<u>4,822</u>	<u>2,811</u>
Reserves		
Unrestricted Funds	4,822	2,811
Closing Balances	<u>4,822</u>	<u>2,811</u>
Assets		
Observatory at Estimated Market Value	64,000	64,000
Astronomical equipment at estimated market value	17,000	17,000
Computing equipment at estimated market value	250	250
Unclaimed Gift Aid at year-end	288	690
	<u>81,538</u>	<u>81,940</u>

Approved on behalf of the Trustees and authorised for issue on

2022


26 APRIL 2022

Signed: Andrew Brough, Treasurer
Dated


26 APRIL 2022
Signed: Eric W Walker, Chairman
Dated

Notes to the accounts

for the year ended **28 February 2022**

1. Accounting policies

Reserves

All funds are unrestricted funds which may be applied to any purposes as decided on by the trustees, so long as these are within the objects of the charity.

Income and expenditure

Income and expenditure is recognised at the time of receipt or payment.

2. Nature of funds

The Highlands Astronomical Society Fund is a general purpose fund into which all the ongoing income is placed and the operating costs of the Society are met.

3. Trustees' and other remuneration

No trustee receives any remuneration for their services. The Society has no paid employees.

4. Reserves

The Society has a policy of holding a reserve of £2,500 against unforeseen eventualities.