



## **HIGHLANDS ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY**

Unaudited Statement of Receipts and Payments

29 February 2020

*Charity Number: SC037209*

**Trustees (and members of the committee)**

Paul Jenkins	Chairman (Demitted Office August 2019)
Eric Walker	Chairman (from September 2019)
Rhona Fraser	Secretary
Andrew Brough	Treasurer
Arthur Milnes	(Vice Chairman till August 2019)
Pauline Macrae	
Pat Escott	
Sharon Lloyd	
James Hitchmough	
Antony McEwan	(ex-officio-equipment consultant)
Gerry Gaitens	(ex-officio - Observatory Manager)
David Davidson	(Vice Chairman from September 2019)
Gael Hillyard	(from October 2019)

**Independent Examiner**

Neil Johnstone  
26 Leys Drive  
Inverness  
IV2 3JA

**Bankers**

Bank of Scotland  
2-6 Eastgate  
Inverness  
IV2 3NA

**Contact Address**

5 Boswell Crescent  
Inverness  
IV2 3ET

Andrewbrough1977@gmail.com

## **Trustees' Annual Report**

The trustees present their report and receipts and payments account for the year ended 29 February 2020.

## **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 £1,500.

## The JSL Observatory.

The JSL Observatory houses a fully computerised **Meade 14" catadioptric telescope** within a Pulsar 9 foot dome. The main telescope supports an **80mm refracting telescope**. The adjacent observing station has disabled facilities including a lavatory and a laptop with a large wall mounted screen which is used to view telescope images remotely. It also houses the Society's library, and has room to allow us to hold small groups. We have a computerised EQ3 mount for use on our smaller telescopes, a **Skywatcher MAK90, a 60mm refractor and a 4" Vixen refractor telescope**. These offer alternate views from smaller telescopes. We also have an **8 inch Vixen Schmidt – Cassegrain**. We were kindly donated a radio telescope for use on cloudy nights. We can also offer 4 pairs of 10 x 50 binoculars which are available for loan to society members and visitors. We have a **12-inch Dobsonian telescope**, which is too large to lend out, and a **Lunt solar telescope**, which is too precious to lend out.

During the year we established a link between the Astro-cam attached to the Meade 14" in the dome and the flat-screen in the warm room in a Project called 21C-ObSee. This 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.

We are most grateful to the National Trust for Scotland for allowing us to locate the observatory on their property at the Culloden Battlefield. During the year we mended the damaged perimeter fence.

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

## Activities and Achievements

We meet once a month in the Smithton-Culloden Free Church. Guests are very welcome at our meetings. We have been lucky enough to have had knowledgeable and informative guest speakers during the course of the year, and a number of members also gave excellent talks. Each talk is preceded by a children's group for 8 to 14 year olds ("Youngstars"), and is followed by a post-talk discussion and by break-out sessions on subjects such as equipment, astrophotography, or beginners' basic astronomy. The Youngstars sessions are led by Pauline Macrae and Trina Shaddick.

Interest in the Society has been steady since the opening of the observatory in 2008. We often receive requests for visits to the observatory from organisations such as the local cub scouts and girl guides. Visits by local schools are also arranged, as astronomy features in the curriculum. This year the observatory been visited by special interest groups twice and by youth groups three times.

As part of our outreach activities, on two Fridays and Saturdays a month (those without moon-shine during the evening) we open the observatory for both member and public viewing. These sessions are advertised on our website and are very popular. This year we have also tried to include some lunar sessions as well. All visitors are offered an explanatory 'tour of the skies' using planetarium software, and a short talk referring to whatever is visible through our main (or other) telescope. During the summer, we hold Solar Saturdays (or Sundays) pop up solar sessions using our Lunt telescope to view the Sun in Hydrogen Alpha light, if it is visible!

In June we celebrated our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the 50<sup>th</sup> of the first Moon Landing with a buffet and talk by Howie Firth during an indoor meeting.

## *Highlands Astronomical Society*

At the end of August we participated in Highland Council's 'Doors Open' initiative which usually gets a good response. However due to the bad weather we had very few visitors at the Observatory.

Unfortunately the planned observing of the Transit of Mercury on the 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at the UHI Campus was cancelled due to bad weather. We planned to observe the occultation of a bright star by Vesta on the 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020 but yet again were thwarted by bad weather. During the Christmas period we scheduled several extra early evening sessions during the school holidays.

Persistent poor weather during this year meant our visitor numbers fell during this year to about 180

We continue to campaign for dark skies. We 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](http://www.spacegazer.com)
- **Facebook & Messenger:** Highlands Astronomical Society
- **Instagram:** highlands.astro
- **Flickr:** HAS Spacegazer

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

This is written in a knowledgeable and enthusiastic way by Pauline Macrae and is sent by email to members and those who live too far away to attend meetings. Recently we have also started included an article on the 'Constellation of the Month' by David Davidson.

### **Inverness Courier Articles and the News Media**

We submitted articles to the Inverness Courier once a month until May 2019 after which this was discontinued due to financial reconfiguring of the newspaper. Unfortunately, this has an unwanted affect on our budget income. We are most grateful to past regular contributors.

Our meetings are now being advertised in 'Astronomy Now' and local advertising magazines each month.

### **External Educational Activities**

We give talks to local societies and organisations promoting astronomy, our society and its facilities. This year we gave talks to 2 Youth groups, 2 primary schools and lectured to five adult special interest groups.

In May we took a stall at the Inverness Science Festival where we had a promotional and educational display of space and astronomy related items, had a number of activities for children and distributed literature regarding the activities of the Society.



We also had a stand at Belladrum from the 2-4<sup>th</sup> August 2019 which was really well attended and another at Smithton School in March 2019.

Once again, some members were able to attend the annual 'Astrofest' in London where they heard the latest up-to-date astronomical information. In September 2019 some attended the Orkney International Science Festival. One member attending this Festival gave several talks- both to the main programme but also for children and families.

### **Fund-raising Activities and grants**

Pre-arranged visits and 'special events' at the observatory over the course of the year have gained us useful donations on each occasion. As usual Arthur Milnes has done a sterling job promoting our monthly raffle at the Society meetings, raising £401 over the year.

### **Membership**

The Society's membership has remained steady this year. Members have joined and left as usual, but overall we reached a membership level of 69. We have discussed at length at Committee ways of increasing our membership.

### **Other Astronomical Societies**

We have maintained close links with our fellow amateur astronomers at the adjacent societies, SIGMA in Moray and the Caithness Astronomy Group, and we maintain our 'twinning' relationship with the Dunedin astronomical society in New Zealand. We have offered advice to Aberdeen Astronomical Society re. Their new observatory and acted in an advisory role to the Cabrach and Tomintoul Dark Sky Site. We are now in frequent communication with newly formed North Ronaldsay Astronomy Group and have been asked for advice on their developing endeavours.

### **Governance**

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). Andrew Brough, our Treasurer, is working away from home and we have organised new arrangements to deal with this.

We have scrutinised the roles and responsibilities of trustees so that tasks are allocated as fairly as possible and have carried out long-term forward planning for major equipment replacement.

All HAS policies, in particular Child Protection Policy (CPP), were updated. These were placed on the website.

### **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 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.

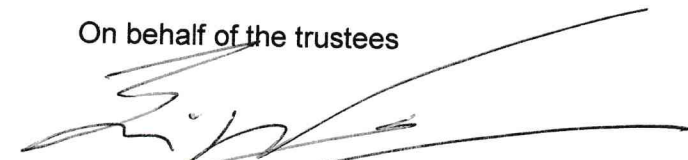
Although there is still a reduced level of membership which has resulted in lower income additional

*Highlands Astronomical Society*

funds were received from the sale of some old equipment, £521 from old telescopes and the claim of backdated Gift Aid of £736. Total cash reserves of the society at the end of the year stood at £1885 and £406 is due to be claimed for Gift Aid for 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

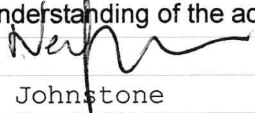
Date: 21/04/2020

Rhona B. I. Fraser

Signed: Rhona B. I. Fraser, Secretary

Date: 16/04/2020

# Examiner's report

		Independent examiner's report on the accounts						
<b>Report to the trustees/members of</b>		Highlands Astronomical Society						
<b>Registered charity number</b>		SC037209						
<b>On the accounts of the charity for the period</b>		Period start date				Period end date		
		Day	Month	Year		Day	Month	Year
		01	03	2019	to	29	02	2020
<b>Set out on pages</b>		9 to 11						
<b>Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner</b>		<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>						
<b>Basis of independent examiner's statement</b>		<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>						
<b>Independent examiner's statement</b>		<p>In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and</li> <li>to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>have not been met, or</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.</li> </ol>						
<b>Signed:</b>							<b>Date:</b>	21/4/2020
<b>Name:</b>		Neil Johnstone						
<b>Address:</b>		26 Leys Drive Inverness IV2 3JA						



## Highlands Astronomical Society – unrestricted funds

### Statement of Receipts and Payments

for the year ended **29 February 2020**

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Membership Subscriptions	1,390	1,282
Grant Aid for Equipment	0	517
Gift Aid Refund (including interest)	736	0
Donations (note 5)	589	257
Fundraising	713	127
Outreach Income (Courier mostly)	75	275
Raffle	401	366
Bank Interest	2	0
Sundry Income	155	365
HAS Events and Outings	0	0
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>3,189</b>	<b>3,189</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Venue Costs	870	870
Public Liability Insurance - HC	500	540
Observatory Ground Rent	158	158
Observatory Maintenance	96	0
Observatory Electricity	0	160
Observatory Comms	76	443
Observatory Equipment	0	307
Grant Aided Equipment	0	572
Speaker Expenses	814	1,133
Secretarial	0	0
Outreach Costs (Youngstars & Obs Visits)	86	0
Sundry Costs	200	111
HAS Events And Outings	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>2,800</b>	<b>4,294</b>
Net Receipts(Expenditure) for the period	<b>1,261</b>	<b>(1,105)</b>
Fund Balance brought forward	646	1,751
Fund Balance carried forward	1,885	646

## Highlands Astronomical Society

### Statement of Balances

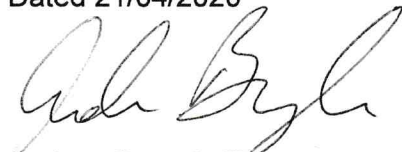
As at **29-Feb-20**

	2020 £	2019 £
<b>Cash at Bank and on hand</b>		
Cash at Bank	1,830	591
Cash on hand	55	55
<b>Closing Balances</b>	<u>1,885</u>	<u>646</u>
<b>Reserves</b>		
Unrestricted Funds	1,885	646
<b>Closing Balances</b>	<u>1,885</u>	<u>646</u>
<b>Assets</b>		
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	406	690
	<u>81,656</u>	<u>81,940</u>

Approved on behalf of the Trustees and authorised for issue on  
**2020**

Signed Andrew Brough

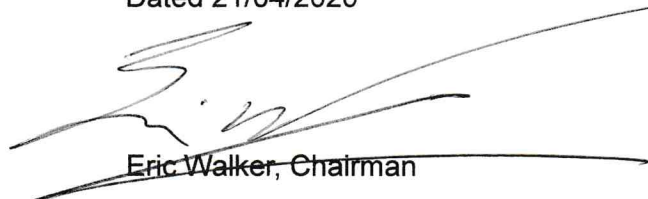
Dated 21/04/2020



Andrew Brough, Treasurer

Signed Eric W. Walker

Dated 21/04/2020



Eric Walker, Chairman

## Notes to the accounts

for the year ended **29 February 2020**

### 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 £1,500 against unforeseen eventualities.

### 5. Donations and grant assistance received

	2020	2019
	£	£
Miscellaneous donations	589	257
Total	589	257