

Thank you for the opportunity to present the reports for the 2012-2013 year.

2012-2013 has been a year of small but significant changes for the better within the society.

The numbers of people attending meetings has improved slightly. This is due to notice of meetings and speakers being posted out early enough with reminders just before meeting. The quality of speakers has been very high this year and thanks must go to our technical officer Chris Ross for his work in getting such great speakers, not always an easy task, as Chris is away with work a lot of the time. Earlier this year we replaced the data projector with something that offers higher resolution and matched it with an electronic screen so that the presentations by our guest speakers are being shown at their highest quality. This has been a major success. It has the added bonus of not having our screen used by others who are not as careful with it as we would be.

The society Journal, Universe, has gone out on time and full of great articles each month. The Journal is still a very important part of our society and is still the main avenue of notification of meetings and society business to the members. I would like to give a special thanks to Rozainah Kendrew for the effort she has put in in helping get the journal out this year. As you know we have not had an Editor for the last 12 months and a lot of the work in producing a journal for the members has been done by Lesa Moore. Having been an Editor in the past, I can appreciate the amount of work that goes into getting a Journal out. The major problems is getting enough articles to fill journals, so if each member could write just one article, we would have enough for two years!

The society is in a very strong financial position as the following treasury report will show. This will allow us to make more improvements at both Crago and Wiruna and also help in making meeting facilities better for the membership.

With some of the improvements planned for the next 12 months, it should see us using enough funds to ensure that we stay under the \$500,000 auditing threshold. We have been fortunate enough in the past to have some members bequeath to the society and these funds are invested to guarantee the future of the society. We have been able to use the interest from these investments to fund improvements, whilst not using the capital. However, with interest rates dropping, our reliance on interest may need to be reassessed.

Lesa Moore has done an outstanding job again this year managing the society's funds. The treasurer job is one that is probably the largest and mostly thankless as it is not seen by members too often. The size of the ASNSW is large and makes for lots of transactions. Lesa also runs the I2A or Introductory to Astronomy course that the society runs every year as well as running workshops at the SPSP. So, on behalf of the members, I would like to thank Lesa for the efforts she does for our society.

The job of society secretary is another large job and one that members have most contact with. Our secretary Neville Lupton has done a sterling job this year. He has become one of the main movers within the committee, he pushes things along so that projects get done as close to schedule as possible. I would like to thank Neville for the work he does for our society.

The South Pacific Star Party this year had numbers down just a little but with the circumstances of a star party the month before and we did it in school holidays and on Mother's Day, we were very happy with the number who did come along. It was a very comfortable crowd size and the event ran very smoothly in spite of some small breakdowns of equipment. Whilst the star party is the main form of fund-raising that the society uses each year, we do acknowledge the efforts put in by many people. The society has made a generous donation each year to the Kandos Scout group for their continued support in feeding everybody. This year we again were able to make that donation. To the members who come along and give freely of their time both in preparing for the star party and during the star party to ensure its smooth running and the enjoyment of the attendees and guests, I say thank you so very much, it could not be done without you.

Our school nights this year have suffered bad weather and have not been the success of previous years. Our participation in the Macquarie University Open Night this year was a great effort. We had 10 telescopes in the field and a manned display desk inside. We get a lot of people learn of the society from this open night.

I would like to make a special thanks to a member who has been very active in almost all events that the society takes part in. He has attended nearly all school nights for almost 20 years, comes to meetings of the society and imaging group and in recent years has been the main person looking after the house at Wiruna. He had fallen on ill health earlier this year but still managed to come to the star party and has since been able to get back to Wiruna to enjoy the sky and camaraderie. To Barry Gerdes, I say a personal and special thank you for all your help to the society during your long membership.

This year the committee has proposed changes to the constitution of the society to bring it in line with both the new model constitution and the 21st century. Most of those changes are to do with electronic mail and notifications to members, also to allow membership applications online. There are some proposals to alter the makeup of the committee in the hope that it will encourage members to become involved by standing for positions. One of the changes that is being proposed is to change the cutoff date for renewals from 30th June to 31st March.

Changes to constitutions are never easy and do require a lot of discussion and debate and whilst the proposals are on the society website, we encourage you to have a read and please make comment to the committee. There will be a meeting on 18th October where the proposals are open to discussion amongst members. This will be recorded and the outcomes put into the journal for all members to read and comment. The committee will ensure that every opportunity will be made to fully debate any changes prior to calling for a ballot on any changes.

It is hoped that in the earlier part of 2014 that we will be able to hold a Special General Meeting to put these proposals to a vote and be able to make these changes happen.

There have been some changes at Wiruna this year and it will continue to evolve more this coming year. The committee held a meeting during the star party where it was decided to upgrade the equipment that had failed, to ensure that it would not happen again. A new pump has been ordered and will be installed very soon to ensure that water pressure is maintained for the amenities blocks, a new gas regulator has been installed to ensure hot water is available to all showers and a new water tank has already been purchased and installed to replace the old metal tank that had rusted out in the bottom. The old tank has since been cut in half and is now used as wood storage sheds for firewood. We hope to be able to have a more detailed plan for the communal kitchen to put forward and implement that will make this building suitable for the expanding numbers that use it. Additions to solar panels are planned to be placed on the hall to increase power production, whilst we are looking at more storage batteries. A new rubble pit to take grey water from showers out of the septic system and to be run off into the trees is going to be done in the spring to ensure we do not have an overflow problem as experienced at SPSP. The committee has recently purchased a phone to be housed at Wiruna to be used for emergency calls. It also allows members' families to call Wiruna in cases of emergency. Members can also call prior to leaving home to check weather conditions. It may also help with new members and guests able to ring for directions in case of getting lost, which happens from time to time. It's on a long term prepaid system and costs the society only \$70-00 per year, well worth it.

In the last 12 months our Vice President for Crago, Les Sara, has been in negotiations in regards to the renewal of our lease at Bowen Mountain. We are very close to finalising this renewal and some changes will then take place. We have been reluctant to do much at Crago until the lease is renewed. Crago has also experienced a large number of observing weekends with bad or inclement weather, however, there have been a number of newer members going to Crago to observe and I can only encourage members to try to get along and see one of the society's best assets.

This year we had 35 new members join our society, I have written to and welcomed each of them to the ASNSW and have had the pleasure of meeting many of them. I hope that they are enjoying what the society has to offer its members.

Joining ASNSW has never been easier since we implemented the online application forms and we have had a steady growth of new members. Renewals were a little slow this year but eventually most members did renew. The system in place now makes it easier to renew and as we keep making refinements to that system it will become even better. I

must thank the members who continue to maintain this very important system, it is a behind-the-scenes job that benefits the society and is done by only a few people.

Our thanks should once again go to our public officer Richard Jaworski for the work he does in keeping society records and the work he does on the society's behalf.

Lastly to the members of the committee who served this year I thank you for the great job that you have all done and it has been a privilege and pleasure to serve with you all. To the members being elected tonight I look forward to working alongside you this coming year.