

Report from the President.

Another year ends with continued growth and change in the Society.

Once again, the SPSP was blessed with fine weather. The event grows with participants turning up on Tuesday, they were lucky to get in early.

This year was the first year at preregistration only. This is common with many Star Parties and enabled us to balance numbers with the facilities and camping areas. We had around 320 participants. Although there was a waiting list no Society members who applied were denied entry. Pre-registration is here to stay.

The major changes to the Wiruna site were the completion of the kitchen fit out with stainless steel cooking and preparation benches. The prior month to the Star Party saw 30 members sit down to a roast dinner in the new kitchen in comfort.

The Lounge area is complete with clear rollup blinds on the South wall. Unfortunately, the fireplace smoked during the Star party. This has now been rectified.

The defective batteries in the breeze way have been replaced. This provides us with ample power even in a cloudy long weekend. Next item is to replace the water pipes to the utilities block. A slight leak turns the pump on. The water pump is responsible for 60% of our power take-off.

Thanks to Chris Ross for overseeing these changes.

Work in progress is trimming the trees along the round which limits the Southern sky for the observatories. Also, the road boundary fence will be replaced.

At the house, new solar panels were installed, along with a new water heater and repairs to the toilet area.

Crago.

Our lease renewal is ready for signing. We will be required to do some remedial work on the grass areas and comply with OH&S. Thankfully Warren Neal is qualified to guide us in this area.

Upgrades to the telescope are underway.

Crago is well placed to cater for those members and non-members who cannot get to Wiruna for two or more nights. However to develop the use of this facility we need to broaden the base of members who are accredited to run the site.

Friday nights at the ECC have been well supported by professional Astronomers both local and overseas. The quality of these presentation is outstanding. Chris Ross once again has excelled at a challenging task.

Membership numbers are static. We gain around 50 and lose the same number each year. Many of these new comers do not appear to participate in Society Activities. The Committee has started to look into the reason for this and define corrective activities.

While we have a very healthy Financial position thanks to our generous benefactors our finances continue to grow. Your Committee is looking at balancing operating income to operating expenditure. SPSP and membership fees are under review.

Member presentations at Friday night meetings is one aspect we need to broaden participation. We have a few members who will fill in but we need more.

Universe continues to be a strong voice for the Society. Thanks to the untiring efforts of Lesa Moore. I have noticed more member contributions which is great.

The Astroimaging group is our strongest subgroup expertly lead by Geoff Smith. It is well set up to solve queries/problems that any member has. I recommend this group to any aspiring Astroimages. It has its own mailing list and welcomes non-society members.

Michelle Elliot has taken on the role of Liberian. The aim is to eventually have a useable collection of books available in suitable cabinets at Wiruna. We will also celebrate the astro sketches of Scott Mellish in a suitable display.

I would like to recognise the ongoing efforts of your committee that keep the wheels running.

I see in the future a move to longer term planning from an experienced and devoted committee.

This year saw the wider use of skype to allow our far away members to participate without the hassle of travel.

For family reasons, I will not be able to continue in my role. I thank the committee and particularly the efforts of Lesa Moore (and Peter). The dedication and time they donate to the society is immeasurable.