

Altrincham and District Astronomy Society

Meeting number **609** held on 6th September at 8pm

At Timperley Village Club

Apologies: Peter Bough

Members Present (in person): 17

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1. Election of Officers

The following officers were re-elected;

- Peter Baugh as Chairman
- Chris Suddick as Secretary
- Richard Bullock as Treasurer
- Bansa Singh Hayer as Events Secretary
- Ingrid Hogan as Minute Secretary
- Chris Lavender as Refreshments Secretary
- George Abraham and Gary Gilbert as Web Masters

2. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer gave out copies of the report and went through the contents, key points of which were as follow;

- They were cash accounts and therefore International Banking standards did not apply, this resulted in some spikes in the figures notably the spike in Web hosting, which should be seen as a three year cost.
- The increase from the previous year in the expenditure with BAA/FAS/Trafford Arts had been due to a change in the public liability insurer
- Overall there had been no real changes in expenditure from the previous year and a healthy bank balance was being maintained. The Society continued to break even. It was therefore proposed to keep subscription rates the same.
- In future collection of subscriptions by bank transfer would be encouraged rather than by cash/cheques
- The PayPal account would be cancelled as it was not being used.

SOCIETY MEETING – ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1) Future Speakers

There was a full programme of speakers up to February 2025: any suggestions for future speakers/toppics would always be welcome and should be passed on to Bansa to follow up.

2) Future Events

- a) The 60th Anniversary Party would be held at the "Old Hall" (near the golf club) in Altrincham on 16th November 2024, flyers had been sent to all members on the Society e-mail list. A buffet had been booked and there would be a pay bar. The cost of tickets (which had been subsidised by the Society) was £5. Payment was requested in advance, either by bank transfer or at the Sep/Oct meetings. Celebration mugs were being printed with the ADAS logo on and would be available to purchase at £5 each or £2 for children.
- b) The Timperley Country Fair was on 14th Saturday from 10am to 4pm and the Society was hosting its usual stall. All support would be welcome.

3) Observing Group

- a) The WhatsApp “ADAS Observers” group had been set up to facilitate organising observing sessions for members. The Group usually gathered on the nearby recreation ground by the sports club and had met about six times throughout the year. The last time they had met however had been at Devisdale to watch the Perseid meteor shower. If anyone wanted to be added to the WhatsApp Group they should contact the Secretary.
- b) The meeting that evening would be followed by a 30 minute observing session to review the night sky and check on T Coronae Borealis (suspected to go supernova any time in the near future).

4) Any Other Business

- a) The use of updated promotional leaflets to put in libraries at e.g. Sale, Hale, Wythenshawe, Stockport and on supermarket/shop notice boards was discussed.
- b) The meeting’s attention was drawn to the reported closure of Herstmonceux in 2026. The Canadian university was terminating its lease on the Science Centre and therefore it would no longer be possible to maintain the telescopes. Members were encouraged to go onto the internet to provide support to save the historic location.
- c) The Refreshments Secretary suggested that the Society purchase mugs/members donated mugs to reduce waste by removing the use of the recyclable cups.

There was then a short break before the evening’s presentation.

PRESENTATION

The presentation was given by Colin Henshaw and was entitled “Rho and Tau Cassiopeia”. Colin had begun to observe the variable star Rho Cassiopeia in 1969 using Tau as the comparison star, however Tau did not seem to be of the expected magnitude. Colin had therefore suspected that Tau was also variable and intensified his observations accordingly. A friend in the US and someone in Leeds and also come to the same conclusions i.e. that Tau was a variable star. In 1976 the data had been analysed but was found to be inconclusive. In 1985 Percy had observed the star photometrically and concluded that it was not a variable but all that could really have been concluded was that Tau had not been variable during the time period under review.

Later on Colin had acquired a couple of Canon digital cameras and had been able to monitor the two stars (Rho and Tau) more effectively. He entered observed magnitudes into an Excel spreadsheet and plotted the light curves of the two stars. Colin shared this data as part of his presentation, Rho was confirmed as a known variable star but Tau was shown to be stable so could be reinstated as a comparison star but with a revised magnitude. Three observers had however had their doubts about Tau Cassiopeia in the late 1960s/early 1970s and therefore it would always be under suspicion.

The presentation was followed by a lively discussion on variability and it became clear that this would make a good topic for a future talk.

Next meeting

The next meeting would be on 4th October 2024