

Ewell Astronomical Society AGM 2022

Secretary's Report 2022

Following the disrupted years of 2020 and 2021, we finally managed to complete a full 12 months of physical meetings hosted at our normal venue of Nonsuch High School. Most of our guest speakers visited us in person and, having had some success hosting meetings virtually during lockdowns, we decided to maintain this option by additionally streaming the talks on Zoom. The hybrid option was available for the rest of 2022 allowing those members unable to attend in person to join the meetings online.

At the beginning of 2022 we managed to reinstate our group Observing Sessions at Ranmore Common, and our first session was held at the end of January. This proved popular and was subsequently followed up with more sessions in February and March before cloud finally saw us postpone the April one. Steve Roebuck continued to organise further sessions along with a number of ad-hoc ones at Warren Farm throughout the rest of the year whenever the conditions were favourable.

Thanks to Steve Roebuck for organising these sessions for us.

2022 also saw us restart some of our outreach activities and in March we gave a presentation to the Rainsters 2nd Ewell Scout Group as well as holding a short Observing session for them.

Unfortunately however, due to cost and access issues, we were unable to reinstate our User Group Sessions. These sessions were originally held on the roof of Nonsuch High School and comprised a surgery for helping users with equipment, questions and other issues and where we had the use of the School's Observatory housed 11 inch SCT. For 2023 we will be looking to reinstate these sessions; perhaps in a different format. Watch out for further announcements on this.

In September we also managed to reinstate our annual Picnic and as in previous years again proved popular.

Committee

I'd like to thank Anita King for the leadership, hard work and dedication she has provided to the Society and committee over the past year as Chairperson.

The committee membership remained unchanged during the year and comprised the same 8 members throughout. These were:

Anita King (Chairperson), Peter Scott (Secretary/Webmaster), Steve Roebuck, (Treasurer), Shirish Phade (Registrar), John Davey (Newsletter), Ron Canham (Sky at Night), Ron Johnson (MGO/Secretary) and Paul Evans (MGO)

The committee met six times during 2022, with all meetings taking place via Zoom and held on the following dates: 12th Jan, 9th March, 11th May, 5th July, 19th Oct and 7th Nov.

This year has seen the committee revisit the Maurice Gavin Observatory project which has the aim of building the Society's own Observatory. The project unfortunately had to be put on hold during the previous 2 years and so Ron Johnson worked to re-cost the project in light of the large increases in materials that have occurred since. Paul Evans and Ron also worked on writing a proposal and preparing documentation for the stakeholders and any subsequent funding applications. The proposal and documentation pack has been sent to the stakeholders for their review.

I'd also like to give a special thanks to Ron Johnson for stepping in and undertaking the Secretary role for the 2021 AGM and for the first committee meeting whilst I transitioned into the role.

Meetings

Having reinstated our in-person meetings back in September 2021, 2022 saw us enjoy a full year of physical meetings held at our usual venue. These meetings were also streamed via Zoom, with the majority of members choosing to attend in person.

Hybrid meetings did not however come without issues and on several occasions, we experienced some technical difficulties whilst trying to display the presentation or broadcast the sound within the room to our remote attendees. These issues generally consisted of our remote members not being able to hear the sound from within the room or with difficulties displaying slides from the speakers laptops.

All of the talks given this year have truly been excellent with many of them being given by experts in their fields. I for one enjoyed them all. From the list of speakers we have scheduled for next year, it looks as if 2023 will be just as good.

Thanks to all those who located our speakers for the year.

Online presence

The society maintained its Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp accounts throughout the year as well as continuing to support the ewellastronomy.org website.

WhatsApp proved particularly popular for communication and has been used to broadcast notifications of upcoming observing sessions, especially at short notice, and for members to share their own Astro Images. It has proved invaluable during live events such as the recent Partial Solar Eclipse where members, although not physically together, could chat and experience the event as if they were viewing together. WhatsApp has also been used by members to exchange information about online courses and details of publicly available talks and events.

The website regularly gets hits, especially in the run up to the monthly meetings and, although it remains mostly unchanged, it has had some minor improvements and en-

hancements. The monthly copy of Janus available via the website, has also proved popular and has gone from strength to strength containing loads of information and interesting articles thanks to the hard work of John Davey and some regular contributors. Previous editions are also now available from the Newsletter page on the website.

So as we approach 2023 we look forward to another great year for the Society. We have some great speakers lined up, our Observatory project is back on-track again and we have plenty of potential Astronomical events and Observing sessions lined up. All we need is clear skies!

I would therefore like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and look forward to a great 2023 of Astronomy.

Peter