

SIGMA AGM– Friday 7th June 2024

ITEM	SUBJECT
1	<p>Apologies Howie Firth, Malcolm and Yvonne Newton, Alan Tough, Jean Stocks, Michael Reid, Bill Leslie, Graham Milton, Penny Straiton and John Rosenfield conveyed their apologies.</p> <p>Other Pete welcomed the Membership and Committee to the Meeting.</p> <p>Minutes of the last meeting. The minutes of the last AGM were approved as no comments had been received.</p>
2	<p>Matters Arising. No matters arising</p>
3.	<p>Events Manager Club Programme 2024 Update and 2025 Events Chris outlined the program of planned talks for 2025 and the remainder of 2024. Chris noted that the planned programme for the remainder of 2024 consisted of an Equipment Evening (July), Pete Sherman (August), Dr Hugh Hudson (September), Pauline McRae (October), Prof Andrew Cameron (November), Christmas Quiz (December). With the early 2025 meeting consisting of an Equipment Evening in January with talks being given by Ray in February and Rich in March. As of June 2024 Chris had emailed 10 local Scottish speakers to ask them to talk and was seeking a speaker for the GFM Lecture.</p>
4.	<p>Chairman's Report</p> <p>I think you will agree this has been another very successful year for Sigma. There has been a wonderful array of speakers and talks coving many subjects. With well attended and enthusiastic meetings, both online and here at Lhanbryde.</p> <p>It has been decided that we will now go back to in person only and to use Zoom as a back up in the winter should we encounter any weather issues. Local speakers will be used, when possible, for the winter months to ease these issues. This includes talks from club members too. We are therefore inviting any of you that feel that you would like to do a talk or presentation then please get in touch with Chris and he can fit you into the program. If you feel like you want to do a talk but feel nervous about doing it. Tim has offered to do some presentation couching to help build your confidence.</p> <p>Again, contact Tim if you would like to take up this offer.</p> <p>In July last year we seen the observatory erected which has proved to be a major asset to the club. A big thank must go out to Rich, Anne,</p>

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Paul, and John for helping to build it. Having been used by many members over the observing season it proving to be popular. Now online with the livestreams this makes the telescopes more accessible to more members, all be it remotely.

So far, the livestreams have just been of the Sun, but I plan to do planetary and deepsky livestreams from September. This could be a better way to use the observatory to enable more members to benefit from it than just two members at a time. Of course, that doesn't mean that you can't come and do some optical viewing or imaging if you want to. All though, users of the observatory have commented on how quickly to cold gets to them very quickly. So maybe remote viewing is the future.

OUTREACH

The outreach program is now gaining momentum. Over the last twelve months SIGMA were present at the RAF Lossie friends and family day, Freshers Day at Moray UHI, and two visits to Kinloss Scouts. Once again a big thank you to all of you that made these event possible and to all the members that help out. You know who you are and there's to many of you to be able to thank individually.

WORKSHOPS

This year seen the start of the workshops which have proved to be very popular and well attended. These workshops are designed to be a knowledge sharing platform, where any member can share something with others. If there is a subject that you would like to present at a workshop please let one of the committee know and we will get it organised.

OBSERVING

Once again, the weather's been pretty awful over the last observing season. There has been a few good evenings but usually when we have a full moon or high winds. But now with the Sigma observing group (SOG) for short, being run by Rich Oakley Jackie and Robbie Eddie and partially by me we hope to get more observing done in the coming seasons.

MEETING VENUE

The committee is aware of concern that have be raised by some members about Lhanbryde Hall. Such a parking, Disruption from the football teams and now there is an issue with us having access to the kitchen.

We are currently looking into a new meeting venue. But, finding a location that is available on the first Friday of the month every month, and in a location that is suitable for most members is proving to be a little problematic. We will continue to investigate options and update you in the future.

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IN CONCLUSION

So, in conclusion I think Sigma is going from strength to strength with new strings having been added to the bow over the year, as mentioned previously. SIGMA is still proving to be a club which provides a superb educational facility which is held in a friendly and fun atmosphere.

The membership is holding steady with new members seeming to join regularly and obviously on the flip side of that we do have some members that leave every year which is totally understandable due to personal circumstances. But on the whole the membership is holding constant but more about that from Mick in a while.

Going forward I am sure that Sigma will carry on improving, with new and returning speakers. The list of which is growing all the time. We have a very successful platform which I see no reason to change. If something isn't broke don't fix it is my motto. Though we will endeavour to do more of these workshop and observing type events in the future, to give you even more value to your membership fee.

Thanks

I know that I'm going to forget to thank someone here, and I'll apologise now for that now. It's not that I'm not applicative of you, but more that there's so many of you that have helped the club out in many ways over the last twelve months.

I'll start with the committee:

Secretary

Richard, my right-hand man. Richard has been the club's secretary for the past five years and has done a superb job. And he communicates with me and other committee members regularly to ensure that all the cogs that keeps the SIGMA machine running smoothly are correctly messed. As with all the committee members we are all volunteers and have regular jobs. Richard also has many other committee rolls within other clubs all taking up his time. But despite this he completes his secretarial tasks in a timely fashion. This includes but not exclusively, Meeting and greeting the speakers, Arranging the accommodation and meals, preparing agendas and minute, and organising the refreshments with his wife Glenis.

Treasurer

Stuart, also has been treasurer now for many years. He does a sterling job at controlling the clubs' finances with meticulous records, and a balance sheet that correct to the penny every year. Like Richard, he to has many fingers in other committee pies.

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Not forgetting The Space News segment, he does at the meetings.

Membership

For another year Mick has done a wonderful job of controlling the membership records. With reports of meeting stats coming out within hours of the meeting ending. He follows up on any membership enquiries ensuring we have a steady stream of new members joining. With Helen's help Mick designed an online membership form. Which is making it much easier for people to join.

And not forgetting the monthly sky guide he puts together and presents so well.

Events

Similarly, Chris has done a stunning job with arranging such a variety of speakers and talks. Which really is no easy task to do and takes a lot of organisational skill. Especially with the limited spare time he has what with his job and other interest.

Website

Often, I get comments from people saying, what a wonderful and professional looking website SIGMA has. This is totally down to Helen's IT skills and knowledge. As the website is usually any potential new members first point of contact, I believe this is an important part of the club.

As well as the website Helen in the lead in the new newsletter along with Rich's, Mick's and Tim input I think we have a professional looking newsletter too.

She also keeps the SIGMA Flickr page updated with the photos you send in.

Ray

Ray since joining the committee two years ago has been busy writing articles about the club for inclusion in Astronomy Now and The Sky at Night magazines. This year he's had an image published in Astronomy Now. You'll know that he is an accomplished astro imager who has shared his skill in the workshops. And, is always happy to advise members on their imaging queries. Not forgetting last years Christmas Quiz.

Kevin

Kevin is always a fantastic help, I know I've said this before, he's what we call the ideas man. At most committee meeting he always come

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out with some superb ideas that I'm sure none of us would have thought of. He also controls the Health and Safety of all aspects of the club.

Tim and Bill

Our club presidents Tim Schroder and Bill Lesley are a fantastic asset for SIGMA. I know Bill would love to be able to be more active with in the club, but due to family ties and health issues this is not possible. Though he does follow what is going on via the emails, and always responds with ideas and picks me up on any issues he feels needs attending to.

Tim as you know is very active during meetings and events, this year seeing the introduction of Tim's Teatime Teaser. And he is just as active behind the scenes too helping and advising the committee. And I appreciate their input so very much, as it brings a wealth of knowledge and a certain type of stability to club.

Speakers

I must also thank all of the fantastic speakers we have had over the last 12 months. Both visiting speakers and SIGMA members. And all those who contributed their bits within the meetings too.

All these meeting don't just happen they take a lot of time, organising and planning. These meetings are as good as they are because of all your dedication and hard work. And keeps SIGMA image looking professional.

Members

I have to thank you the members. After all it is all of you that that makes the meetings and events so vibrant and active. It is always so great to hear the atmosphere that we have here at our physical meetings. Indeed, sometimes it's very hard to get you to be quiet to start the second-half of the meeting, but that's fine it just goes to show that everyone's enjoying themselves. Which is the way I would like it to be. So once again thank you all for turning up to the meetings and events and for supporting Sigma over the last 12 months and I look forward to more exciting times in the coming year.

Finally, I think it's fair to let you all know I have decided that 2024/25 will be my last year as Chairman of SIGMA. I have thoroughly enjoyed the post since 2019 and this will mark my sixth year as Chair. I feel that the time is right for me to hand over the reins to someone else to take the club forward into the future. This will give me more personal time to follow my other interest. And to concentrate more on the observatory and observing. I want to personally thank all of you collectively for the support and help over the years, indeed for the coming year and for supporting this fantastic club.

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Thank you all,
Peter Sherman Chairman

5. **Membership Secretary Report**

1. In the first slide I've put up the attendance figures so you can get an overview of how things are recently especially as you can't see how many are there when we're having online meetings (highlighted in green).
2. The Last column shows the percentage of members in attendance at that meeting. The total membership of 58 was used for Jul – Jan as an assumption was made that the membership would be the same figure in January. This total number of members was then updated monthly from the Feb.

Month	Sigma Members	Guests (incl Speaker)					Total Guest s	Total	% of Sigma membership
Jul-23	15	HAS	AAS	CAG	NRAS	Other	1	16	26%
		0	0	0	0	1			
Aug-23	26	HAS	AAS	CAG	NRAS	Other	5	31	45%
		0	0	0	0	5			
Sep-23	23	HAS	AAS	CAG	NRAS	Other	2	25	40%
		0	0	0	0	2			
Oct-23	30	HAS	AAS	CAG	NRAS	Other	5	35	52%

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		0	0	1	0	4			
Nov-23	16	HAS	AAS	CAG	NRAS	Other	13	29	28%
		0	0	1	0	13			
Dec-23	25	HAS	AAS	CAG	NRAS	Other	0	25	43%
		0	0	0	0	0			
Jan-24	31	HAS	AAS	CAG	NRAS	Other	11	42	53%
		1	1	2	0	7			
Feb-24	32	HAS	AAS	CAG	NRAS	Other	6	38	57%
		0	1	2	0	3			
16-Feb-24	23	HAS	AAS	CAG	NRAS	Other	6	29	38%
		1	1	0	0	4			
Mar -24	34	HAS	AAS	CAG	NRAS	Other	1	35	55%
		0	0	0	0	1			
Apr-24	31	HAS	AAS	CAG	NRAS	Other	1	32	48%
		0	0	0	0	1			
May-24	28	HAS	AAS	CAG	NRAS	Other	5	33	44%
		0	0	0	0	5			

Moving onto the Membership figures:

Once again, we are losing members and gaining members as the year progresses but our numbers are up from 2023, having dropped below 60 members then.

- Of the 2023 members, a total of 13 members haven't renewed their membership for 2024. Only 5 of those informed us they wouldn't be renewing, one of whom stated the main factors for leaving were the ongoing Zoom meetings which they couldn't or wouldn't watch and they also complained that they were often struggling to

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hear the speakers. We intend to overcome both of these by firstly concentrating on physical meetings as the priority again and also in using the Club's PA system with the wireless microphones. We do understand this has had limited success so far but will look to improving this through training and setup of the equipment.

5. However in the last 6 months or so, we have had an excellent uptake of new members including one or two returning members which is fantastic. My optimism at the last AGM for an increase in membership numbers as we are returning to in-person meetings has been thankfully fulfilled.

6. Membership breakdown is as follows:

Membership Totals 08 May 2023

Members at end of 2022 69

Notified as not renewing in 2023 3

Life Members 7

Free Membership (Auditor) 1

Free Membership (For 2023) 0

New Members in 2023 8

Members renewed for 2023 42

Total Membership at AGM 2023 58

Membership Totals 09 May 2024

Members at end of 2023 63

Notified as not renewing in 2024 5

Total not renewed for 2024 13

Life Members 8

Free Membership (Auditor) 1

Free Membership (For 2024) 0

New Members in 2024 13

Members renewed for 2024 42

Total Membership at AGM 2024 64

Membership 2024

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	<p> UNDER 16 0 UNDER 18 1 ORDINARY 54 LIFE 8 FREE 1 STUDENT 0 Total Membership 2024 64 </p> <p>7. Obviously, the more members we have, the better in terms of income, cost spread, social interaction and a pool for volunteers.</p>
6.	<p>Membership Fees</p> <p>It was recommended to keep membership rates for 2025 as:</p> <p>Ordinary - £28 Student - £14 Child – Free</p>
7.	<p>Treasurers Report</p> <p>Stuart noted that there was an excess of expenditure over income and as a result the balances had declined further from their position at the end of 2022. Stuart suggested that the increase in membership fees and the scrapping of concessionary membership would help to address this, (these increases and changes are not reflected in these accounts).</p> <p>Income for the year totalled £1377.88 being principally comprised of membership £961.50, sales of teas and coffee at meeting £247.20, Raffle takings £129.00 and bank interest of £28.06.</p> <p>Expenditure for the year totalled £2653.94 with the main outgoings being speaker expenses £551.60, room hire £164.00, refreshments £246.99, Google workspace ££298.04, Website £364.00, Zoom £184.78 and other expenses £483.44.</p>

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8.	Resolutions					
	Resolution Number	Resolution	Proposed	Seconded	For (Proxy)	Against & Abstain
	24.1	To accept the Minutes of the 2023 AGM	John Straiton	Stuart Brookes	26 (5)	
	24.2	To accept the 2023 Accounts	Kevin Stocks	Ray Palmer	26 (5)	
	24.3	To change paragraph 2.2.1 of the Constitution	Donna Williamson	Tim Schroder	26 (5)	
	24.4	To change paragraph 4.2.1 of the Constitution	Mark Benson	Sam Robinson	26 (5)	
	24.5	To change paragraph 4.6 of the Constitution	Mick O'Donnell	Ray Palmer	26 (5)	
	24.6	To change paragraph 4.10 of the Constitution (Social Media Groups)	Ray Palmer	John Straiton	26 (5)	
	24.7	To change paragraph 4.10 of the Constitution. Define	Kevin Stocks	Mick O'Donnell	26 (5)	

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		under 16 and 16-18 Membership				
	24.8	To change paragraph 7.1 of the Constitution	Mark Benson	Stuart Brooks	26 (5)	
	24.9	To appoint Pete Sherman as Chair	Tim Schroder	Helen Williamson	26 (5)	
	24.10	To appoint Richard Oakley as Secretary	Helen Williamson	John Sinclair	25 (5)	1 abstain
	24.11	To appoint Stuart Brooks as Treasurer	Tim Schroder	Sam Robinson	25 (5)	1 abstain
	24.12	To appoint Helen Williamson, Mick O'Donnell, Kevin Stocks, Ray Palmer and Chris Stradling as Committee members	Rich Oakley	Jackie Eadie	26 (5)	
9.	AOB & Comments There were no issues raised under AOB.					
10.	The AGM finished at 20.55					