

NEWCASTLE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY INC
MINUTES
28 March 2008

MEETING OPENED: 7.30 pm with 32 members and guests present.

CHAIRMAN: Mr Ghul Hussain.

MINUTES: The minutes for February 2008 were read and accepted (David Hough, Ken Hargreaves, carried).

APOLOGIES: Patrick Barry, Scott Alder

GENERAL:

- Ghul welcomed three guests to the meeting.
- Lydia was commended for her hard work and skill in rebuilding the NAS website to such a high standard.
- The viewing site is becoming quite overgrown, especially the track into the viewing area. Volunteers are needed to do some mowing.
- Not many members attended the mid-month viewing planned at the last meeting.
- A club telescope has been purchased. It is a twelve-inch Meade Lightbridge. Alan Meehan will bring it to the viewing site on Saturday. It will also be taken to the South Pacific Star Party by some of the members attending that event.
- Graeme Johnson gave a talk entitled 'A Brief History of the Neutrino, and the Solar Neutrino Problem'. The neutrino was postulated by Pauli and Fermi owing to the conservation of energy and momentum in nuclear reactions. Being very light and neutrally charged, neutrinos are exceptionally difficult to detect, nevertheless only one third of the expected number from the Sun were being detected. Graeme gave us an expose of the history and development of ever better neutrino detectors, in part designed to solve this mystery. It turns out that certain detectors only detect particular types of neutrinos and the total from different detectors adds up to the expected number, solving the solar neutrino problem. Graeme answered several questions from the audience with flare and expertise.
- Prof. Colin Keay screened a DVD entitled 'Apocalypse NO!' which debunked many of the propaganda myths associated with human production of CO₂ and climate change.
- The next meeting will be on 25 April 2008 starting 7.30 pm.
- The meeting closed at 9.20 pm and a light supper was served.