

MEETING OF DUNDEE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY, 28 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 7.30PM IN THE MILLS OBSERVATORY

June Gilchrist welcomed members to the meeting.

She announced that David Gavine's ashes would be interred in the family plot at Dundee's Eastern Cemetery on March 28th at 1pm. All DAS members are respectfully invited.

Ken Kennedy and Bill Samson presented their tribute to the memory of our Honorary President, Dave Gavine, who passed away in January 2020.

Ken started by pointing out that Dave was due to speak at this evening's meeting.

Dave was the third President of DAS and was rightly proud of the society, which he created.

Ken knew Dave for 62 years.

Dave was born in 1937.

In 1960 he gained a BSc from St Andrews, specialising in Geology.

In 1969 he was awarded an MA in Geography from Aberdeen University.

In 1982 he was awarded a PhD by the Open University for his thesis on the history of astronomy in Scotland.

In 1956 Dave and his good friend Harry Ford set up Dundee Astronomical Society with the help of physics teacher, Bill Dow.

Ken showed extracts from letters and minutes of those early days. Ken attended his first meeting in 1958.

Bill Samson spoke about his introduction to the society in 1961. Bill was brought up in Forfar and took an interest in astronomy from an early age. He built several telescopes and was introduced to the Lloyd-Evans brothers, Tom and Bob, in 1961. They lived in Kinettles House near Forfar and between them had built a telescope and cameras for meteor observations. Tom told Bill about DAS and invited him to go with him to a meeting and that was where he met Dave for the first time.

On the occasion of one such meeting Bill had driven to Dundee with two friends, in his dad's car. At the end of the meeting they were giving Dave a lift

home when Dave suggested they go to the society's observatory at Powrie. Dave turned the Mertz 4 5/8" refractor on wonderful objects like M81 and M82, double stars, clusters and time flew past. The roads were icy and it was after midnight that Bill and his friends arrived back in Forfar. Bills dad was furious and grounded Bill for weeks afterwards!

Bill struck up a friendship with Dave due to their common interests in astronomy and music. When Bill left Forfar in 1966 to study in Edinburgh he and Dave continued to correspond, with Dave's letters invariably illuminated with surreal cartoons, often on very obscure subjects!

Ken recalled happy evenings listening to Wagner and drinking cider at Dave's house in the 1960s.

Dave left Dundee to teach in Fort Augustus Abbey School, where he taught Geography and Science for several years.

In 1979 Dave became a lecturer in navigation at Leith Nautical College and retired in 1995.

Dave became Honorary President of DAS in 1979 and remained president until his death.

Dave was a member of the BAA from his teens and made a great contribution to the work of the BAA:

1978-2004 Assistant Director of the Aurora section.

2005–2010 Director of the Aurora section.

2011-2017 Assistant Director of the Aurora section (again)

He was awarded the Lydia Brown Medal for his long service to the BAA.

He was President of the Astronomical Society of Edinburgh (ASE) from 1983-1985, and again from 1991-1992

The ASE awarded him the Lorimer Medal in 1995.

Ken then went on to tell us about Dave's sense of humour, notably in his cartoons and correspondence with Ken.

The tribute ended with a video of a speech Dave gave on the occasion of his 80th Birthday.

June thanked Ken and Bill for their tribute to Dave Gavine.

Jim Barber presented his Sky Notes for March 2020. Ken presented the Moon Notes.

Ken won the Galaxy bar for being the first member to obtain an image of Comet Panstarrs.

Following the tea break and chat, the meeting closed at 9.30pm