



The  
ASSOCIATION  
for  
ASTRONOMY  
EDUCATION

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## AIMS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Association for Astronomy Education (A.A.E.) was founded in 1980 to promote the teaching of astronomy at all levels in our educational system.

Its principal aims are:

1. To encourage a greater interest in, and an awareness of, the place of astronomy in education at all levels.
2. To increase the effectiveness of astronomy teaching through the exchange of information and experience by means of meetings and publications.
3. To establish and maintain co-operation among astronomy educators by the development of a network of astronomy resource centres in the U.K. through which practical support and advice can be given to those directly involved in astronomy education.
4. To provide informed and authoritative assessments and advice on the role of astronomy in education.
5. To develop and co-ordinate the use of teaching aids, and to provide advice for teachers of astronomy generally.

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The Association extends a hearty welcome to all those who wish to see Astronomy re-introduced to the educational system.

## MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to anyone who is either engaged in teaching astronomy at any level or who is interested in the promotion of astronomy education.

Membership is also open to teaching institutions which have an interest in including astronomy as part of the school or college curriculum.

The A.A.E. also welcomes affiliation from any organisation or society whose objective is the study and development of astronomy and the promotion of interest in it.

The individual annual subscription is £4.

AN APPLICATION FORM IS INCORPORATED ON THE BACK COVER OF THIS BROCHURE.

## ACTIVITY

The A.A.E. is currently organising a network of resource centres and area committees, details of which appear on the following pages.

Each term a newsletter is published giving details of A.A.E. activities, with notes, reviews and articles related to astronomy education.

Further information may be obtained from:

Dr. Percy Seymour,  
Secretary, Association for Astronomy Education,  
57 Hermitage Road,  
Plymouth, Devon, PL3 4RX

(Telephone: 0752 668505)

## RESOURCE CENTRES

Both a report issued by the Department of Education and Science in 1976 and the report of the subsequent working party set up to investigate the possibility of re-introducing astronomy into the school curriculum, issued in 1982, drew attention to the need for a network of teaching resource-centres. It was envisaged that their function would be to assist teachers in schools and colleges to develop the teaching of astronomy.

The concept is essentially one of utilising the availability of planetaria, observatories and museums, both for schools' visits and as centres where teachers can obtain help in materials, teaching aids, study notes, and so on.

The magnitude of this task is considerable. Many of the school visits which take place at the present time lack prior preparation or subsequent follow-up because many teachers themselves lack adequate knowledge of the subject.

Not only that, but the number of planetaria and observatories in the U.K. is very limited and they are unevenly distributed round the country.

Nevertheless there are areas where nuclei of resources exist. Typical examples are places like Jodrell Bank, and the Merseyside County Museums' planetarium in Liverpool; at Hatfield Polytechnic, the London Planetarium and the London Schools' Planetarium; the Old Royal Observatory at Greenwich, and Planetarium; Plymouth Polytechnic's Planetarium Armagh Planetarium, and so on.

## AREA COMMITTEES

The structure of the A.A.E. was also, from the start, planned to include the formation of area committees. Teachers of astronomy are widely dispersed and it is hoped that much of the Association's activity will be in the form of area events organised by area committees. These may themselves be based, in some cases, upon resource centres as outlined above.

It is hoped that area committees could:

1. Run short courses for teachers or encourage institutions such as the Workers' Educational Association or local education authority adult education centres to do so.
2. Provide a forum for discussion groups, which anyone interested in astronomy education could attend and exchange ideas on teaching methods, materials, course structure and so on.
3. Liaise with local teachers' centres, science advisors, local astronomical societies and bodies such as regional branches of the Association for Science Education. Many local astronomical societies can provide valuable assistance for youngsters interested in astronomy, and for would-be teachers of it.

Details about setting up area committees are available from the Secretary or the Public Relations Officer (Mr. Geraint Day, 7 Poulton Street, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN2 1BH).

Part of the task of the A.A.E. will be to try to encourage resource centres as mentioned overleaf (these in most cases already have valuable links with schools), to become focal points for astronomy education in its widest sense.

It is envisaged that not only would visits and lectures take place but also that courses for teachers might be developed. Area committees would provide stimuli.

ASSOCIATION FOR ASTRONOMY EDUCATION

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Name (BLOCK LETTERS) .....  
Address .....  
Telephone No. ....  
Qualifications .....  
Address of school/college/institution, etc. ....  
.....  
Post held .....

To which address do you wish A.A.E. post to be sent?  
.....

Circle any of the following astronomical societies to which you belong:

R.A.S. B.A.A. J.A.S. F.A.S. B.I.S. I.A.S.

I.U.A.A. I.A.U.

I enclose my annual subscription of \*.....

Signature: .....

\* Subscription rates: individual - £4  
retired person - £3  
primary school - £4  
secondary school - £6  
tertiary institution or other - £9

Cheques should be made payable to the Association for Astronomy Education

Please return to: Capt. Peter Richards-Jones (Membership Secretary), London Schools' Planetarium, Wandsworth School, Sutherland Grove, London SW18 5PT