

## West Indies Philatelic Study Group AGM Minutes and Committee Reports 11 May 2024

### AGM Minutes 2024

1) Chairman's Opening Remarks

Steve Jarvis welcomed everyone to the Meeting. There were 22 attendees.

2) Apologies for absence were noted (Kevin Darcy, Alistair Kinnon, W Guy Kilburn, Elmar Dor, David Druett, Jonathan Guy, Daryll Fuller, James Gavin, Richard Stupples, John Seidl).

3) Minutes of Previous Meetings and Matters Arising

The notes of the previous AGM were accepted as a true account. Actions arising had been:

- The Publishing Manager Vacancy – filled by Paul Farrimond
- The Appointment of an Accounts Independent Examiner – filled by David Taylor
- The establishment of new WIPSG bank accounts (UK and USA) for the merged society – now in place. Ray Stanton was thanked for having progressed the merging and accounting for the society
- The actions were all supported

4) Committee Members' Reports (In the interests of speed these were taken as read, having been available on the website and now at the end of these minutes). There were no questions arising)

5) Election of Officers - Proposed by the Committee:

- Not for election:
  - o President for life- Simon Richards
  - o Chairman until 2025 - Steve Jarvis
- Secretary - Susan Taylor
- Treasurer - Ray Stanton, supported by Geoff Richards
- Auction Manager - Simon Richards supported by John Jordan, Charles Kennard and James Podger
- Publications and Book Sales - Paul Farrimond and David Druett
- Journal Editor - Darryl Fuller
- Awards - James Podger
- Americas Representatives - John Seidl and Steven Zirinsky
- Webmaster - Steve Jarvis
- Social Media - James Gavin & Jonathan Guy (Zoom)
- Committee (in addition to the above) - Richard Stupples, Peter Fernbank has resigned.

Any volunteers were invited to put their name forward to [info@wipsg.org](mailto:info@wipsg.org). The above officers were all unanimously accepted as was the election of the Accounts Independent Examiner - David Taylor

6) Organisational Matters

- It was proposed that the 2025 AGM & Auction – be deferred to Autumn 2025 to coincide with the WIPSG Convention, due to Europhilex 2025 in the Spring. Proposals for a venue and date would be made in the near future.

7) There was no further Business

## Chairman's Report – Steve Jarvis

My thanks to the members of the Society Committee for all their work over the last year. In particular, I would like to thank Peter Fernbank, who is retiring from the Committee at the AGM, for his service to the Society. He has been a committee member since 2006 and has always provided wise counsel. I am also pleased to announce that he has been awarded the Association of British Philatelic Societies 'Award of Merit' for 2024.

We are always looking for new volunteers and if you think you can contribute in any way, please contact Susan Taylor or myself.

I have always found it dangerous to list awards received by members – it is easy to miss someone out and where do you draw a dividing line for notable awards that should be mentioned! However, the following have come to our attention:

- James Gavin has been winning awards for his websites, most recently Large Gold + Felicitations for his Bahamas site – 18th NZ National Philatelic Literature Exhibition 2023
- Peter McCann Dominica of the Leeward Islands - a Large Gold and two special prizes at the 2024 Sarasota National Exhibition.
- Jazad Ali *The Stamp Cancelling Machine Slogan Postmarks of Trinidad and Tobago 1923 - 2023*, has won philatelic literature awards around the world:
  - CHICAGOPEX 2023 Stamp Show - Large Gold Medal
  - ABPS 2024 Gold Medal
  - THAILAND 2023 World Stamp Championship - Large Vermeil Medal
- Juan Riera - Silver Medal in Literature Competition Sarasota National Stamp Exhibition 2024 *for Aviation Rivalry Spurred on by Air Mail*.
- Susan Taylor, Graham Stockdale and Julian Waldron's *Anguilla's Quest For Identity - The Philatelic Story* won Large Gold at ABPS 2024
- In addition, at the Perth (Western Australia) National Exhibition:
  - Pat Capill, Barbados KGV Line Engraved Definitives – Gold medal
  - Darryl Fuller Leeward Islands Postal Stationery – Large Gold medal
  - Simon Richards, Grenada Postal Stationery – Large Gold medal
- At EXPO FILABRAS 2024, James Gavin won Gold for his Bahamas Philately site (part of his Digital Philately site – <https://thedigitalphilatelist.com/about-us/bahamas-philately/>).

Last year we agreed that the BWISC Library should be wound down. So far, I have transferred about 50% of the items from Ian Jakes's garage to my custody and I am working through cataloguing and sorting. The RPSL has submitted a wants list and we will donate these to their library, where anyone can consult (by prior appointment). The rest of the material will be offered for sale (in 2025).

I think the Society is in good health but we should not be complacent. Please keep the journal articles coming (we recently agreed to increase the standard number of pages to 44) and encourage any other collectors with interests in West Indies philately to join us. At only £8/\$10 for paperless membership, it should not break the bank for anyone.

## Secretary's Report – Susan Taylor

The Secretary's report has three components: Administration, Membership Secretary and Meetings.

Administration -The Secretary responded to the usual range of administrative queries: Members enquiring about data access, members who could not get their password to work, members who were unwell, or sadly had died, and individuals seeking an answer to a philatelic query.

Membership – Recent safeguarding has finally stopped scamming and phishing attempts on the website (for now anyway). Once again it was necessary to chase members to pay their dues. It would be appreciated if everyone could make an effort to pay their membership fees for 2025 at the end of 2024, and certainly before the end of January.

The WIPSG post-merger had 381 members, plus 18 complimentary members (philatelic organisations) in 2024. Today there are 360 members, 25 complimentary members, and 2 temporary members. The Society plans to offer RPSL members a free one year trial digital membership in 2025, in an article about Tobago Covers that is being published concurrently in in September in the London Philatelist and WIPSG Journal. Past trial membership efforts have brought new members onboard. Please help the Society and encourage philatelic friends to join up. We all have a responsibility to do so.

Meetings – The WIPSG Committee met on 14 October, at the Guildford WIPSG Convention. The Convention itself (14-15 October) was well attended and the presentations were all of a high standard. The facility was excellent, the only issue being the fact that there was not accommodation on site.

The Secretary additionally attended the following events, representing the Society:

The RPSL (Crawford Festival) – ‘Writing articles for Journals’ 27 June 2023.

The Axa Public Library, Anguilla 2 December 2023 – Presentation on *Anguilla’s Quest for Identity – The Philatelic Story*.

### **Treasurer’s Report 2023 – Ray Stanton**

The Accounts (attached) accompanying the report are the first set for the WIPSG following the merger of the BWISC and the BCPSG on the 1st January 2023. The WIPSG is administered, and the accounts prepared, in sterling with conversion of dollar assets at balance sheet date or for income and expenses at the average rate for the year with any differences arising dealt with through the exchange reserve shown on the balance sheet.

The accounts have been prepared on a similar basis to those of the BWISC in previous years, one of the main principles being that no value is shown for the stocks of books and publications on hand on the basis that nearly all sales of new publications take place in the first year of sale and it is therefore difficult to place a value on any remaining stocks. The aim as far as practicable is to match sales of books from previous years with the production costs of new books each year.

At the time of the merger in January 2023, the BCPSG had a number of life members. It was agreed that these would be capped at 10 years so that the future liability is covered by funds transferred from BCPSG to WIPSG. Each year the liability will be reduced proportionally with a sum transferred to subscription income to defray the printing and distribution costs of the printed journal sent to life members. Bank accounts are being maintained in both the US and the UK with funds divided between sterling and dollars.

The accounts for the year to the 31st December 2023 show a resulting surplus of £609 after covering the costs of the UK convention in October of £1,397 net of recoveries. Subscriptions and advertising income more than covered the costs of producing the journal including distribution, and the donation from the auction team was more than that of BWISC in the previous year due to the continuing success of the Study Circle auction.

The accounts leave the WIPSG with a balance in the Accumulated fund following the merger of £22,353, and in a healthy position to progress our activities going forward. I would like to thank David Taylor for being the Independent Accounts Examiner and for the advice and help he has given.

### **WIPSG Editor’s Report – Darryl Fuller**

The last year has seen a steady flow of articles to the editor and across a useful range of islands and topics. Although, I would note that both Jamaica and Barbados have more than average. However, given their size and/or importance of the two, this is not entirely surprising. I finally emptied the old BWISC email account and now use the WIPSG account plus my personal account.

I am catching up on old submissions and try to publish them in the order they arrive, but I also need to balance submissions across the islands. I appreciate all submissions but authors need to understand that articles should be directly relevant to the West Indies. If the link is only tenuous then the article may wait some time to be published. I have received a few articles that are quite relevant but sometimes lack detail or even have the wrong image attached.

Another area that would save me time is references. I need books to have author/s, Book Title, year published and by whom if possible. Another very important area within references is the web. It is better to quote the actual book reference rather than a web address for the book. Also, if you take material from the Web, then give the web address and date accessed. Both these save me time and I don't have to spend time looking them up.

If you are sending in an article please send in Microsoft Word or Apple Pages, at least for now. I am happy to receive a pdf also in case you want to show me the approximate layout. I can never promise to keep it exactly the same.

Overall, I feel the journal is going well and at 44 pages has the right balance of articles, news/reports and advertising. Keep the articles rolling in. If you are wondering what to write, then take a look through your collection and see if you can update one of the general aspects of philately, such as postmarks, censor marks or pitfalls rates (particularly airmail).

### **Report on our Annual Auction 2023 – Simon Richards**

Our 51st annual auction took place on 29 April, the first since our new WIPSG name was adopted. The catalogue was dominated by some 350 lots from Graham Booth's estate that had somehow not been swept up in all the main auction house sales. This was almost half the lots on offer and we managed to achieve the targeted probate valuation.

There were 26 other vendors and the overall sales percentage hit 80% which is the highest many of us can remember. 69 members bid on the book, there were 18 room bidders and 13 members acquired lots in the aftersale.

Overall, some £31,273 was spent; almost all members got something. There is no buyer premium, but the 10% commission provides useful income to the WIPSG.

The top price achieved was £420 for Lot 217, a British Honduras block of nine including the 'Bevenue' variety. 28 overseas buyers were successful and 14 of those were from the USA. Four of the vendors were also US based. Paypal provides the most widely used means of settlement now that we no longer have Bruce Aitken acting as our agent in the US.

This year anything 'Leewards' seemed to do well as did Jamaica. Barbados was much less strongly supported this year and very few seem to follow Bermuda.

The auction couldn't work without the team effort and my thanks to Charles Kennard for doing the scanning, to John Jordan for checking the condition, to James Podger for conducting the auction and to Steve Jarvis for turning my descriptions and Charles's scans into a printable catalogue.

The work began in August for the 2024 auction. We continue to have a good supply of postal history from our past President Graham Booth but we are on the look-out for other consignments. Two other estates may be offering material but we always need more. Material needs to arrive by mid-November and earlier is better, in order for us to adequately describe, scan and check to get the catalogue to the printers with the March Bulletin. Please do send a list with your lots and it is a good idea to e-mail me in advance. The full results of our auctions are available on the website.

### **Publications Report – Paul Farrimond**

#### **a) New books (recent & ongoing)**

- *Dominica* by Simon Richards is in preparation
- *Anguilla* by Taylor, Waldron & Stockdale sold out and has been reprinted in softback
- *Grenada* by Tim Pearce sold out and has been reprinted in softback
- *Lady McLeod* by Taylor Mohammed Park and Barrow sold out and is being reprinted

b) Future projects

- *Barbados Britannia issues* by Fitz Roett may be updated
- *Grenada*: suggestion for a similar book by Joseph Hackmey
- Jamaica: additional volumes of the encyclopaedia are planned (Steve Jarvis, Paul Farrimond & others)
- *Trinidad & Tobago Postcards*: proposed by Ed Barrow (maybe other colonies to follow)

c) General

- We are trying to find the digital files for previous books. Please contact Paul Farrimond if you can help.

### Awards Committee Report – James Podger

As recorded in the minutes of the Committee Meeting held 14 October 2023:

It has been decided by the WIPSG committee to withdraw the Collett Award and the two scrolls will be lodged with the Royal Philatelic Society London under their safekeeping in the Museum & Archives. Two new biannual awards have been announced: The 'Freeland Award' for the publication in book form, and the 'Booth Award' for the best article published in the WIPSG Bulletin. The committee has decided to widen the reach of the publication in book format to include those that are published by other organisations, or self-published, provided that the book is on an area covered under the scope of the WIPSG.

The Committee was reformed with James Podger as Chair, and committee members Steve Jarvis, Simon Richards, Michael Medlicott, and Ray Stanton. There is a further vacancy, ideally to be filled by a USA member.

### Webmasters Report – Steve Jarvis

The web site has been stable, and content continues to evolve.

The Barbados and Trinidad Early Cover Census continues to have items added and a recent exhibit supplied has been Robert Lebow's fine Barbados collection.

We were also delighted when the WIPSG achieved Gold at EXPO FILABRAS 2024. The judges' comments were:

*"Very impressive site and hard to find anything wrong or missing. Very carefully constructed and obviously the product of many years of painstaking research. This is an important philatelic and historical resource. The "accordion" boxes are very good and the exhibits galleries are top class."*

### Social Media Report – James Gavin

#### Facebook Group

We currently have 119 members of the WIPSG Facebook group and this number continues to grow as we establish ourselves in the social media space.

I encourage members to participate as posts frequently are requests for assistance.

#### YouTube

Our YouTube channel now has three videos on it with 9 subscribers and 99 views. We need more content. I recommend that we encourage members to prepare 10-15min presentations with Powerpoint slides to help increase traffic.

**WEST INDIES PHILATELIC STUDY GROUP**

**INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2023**

	<u>2023</u>
<b>INCOME :</b>	
Subscriptions	6,154
Publications - Sales less commissions	2,400
Auction donation (net of costs)	1,788
Other donations	12
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b><u>10,354</u></b>
<b>EXPENDITURE :</b>	
Journal Printing & distribution costs	5,929
Less : Advertising	<u>(1,753)</u>
	4,176
Publications : Preparation, Printing & Distribution costs	2,565
Convention costs net of recovery	1,397
Other room hire & meeting costs	440
ABPS affiliation fee	364
Officers administration - Stationery, postage, telephone etc	181
Insurance	140
Bank charges	48
Website	434
	<b><u>9,745</u></b>
<b>SURPLUS FOR YEAR</b>	£'s <b><u>609</u></b>

**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2023**

<b>ACCUMULATED FUND :</b>	
Balances of BWISC & BCPSG at 1st January 2023	20,932
Add : Surplus for the year	609
Exchange conversion reserve	812
	£'s <b><u>22,353</u></b>

<b>REPRESENTED BY :</b>	
Cash at banks	30,351
Debtors - amounts due to us :	
Journal Advertising	2,333
Book Sales	1,824
Other Debtors – Amounts due to us	<u>141</u>
	4,298
	34,649
Less : Subscriptions received in advance	(3,046)
10 Yrs Subscriptions Liability ( Ex BCPSG Life)	(8,406)
Other creditors - Amounts due by us	<u>(844)</u>
	(12,296)
	£'s <b><u>22,353</u></b>

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT**

I hereby certify that the income statement for the year ended 31st December 2023 is in accordance with the books, vouchers and explanations given to me; and that the Balance Sheet at the 31st December 2023 shows the financial state of the West Indies Philatelic Study Group as at that date.

David Taylor : Independent Examiner